

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED IN JOHN 14-16: ABIDE IN JESUS

INTRO

When we study doctrinal issues or theological dilemmas in the Bible, we need to know passages in the Bible that explain the truth. We can refer to verses like Acts 2:38 when teaching baptism, or Gal 1:8 regarding the authority of the scriptures, but sometimes we need more than single verse proof texts. Consider how sincere believers have perverted the relationship of faith and works by isolating specific verses in Romans. In some cases a short answer is more desirable, but as earnest disciples we need to have a vast understanding of the Bible, not just a list of verses.

The Holy Spirit is a complex and widely misunderstood element of the Bible. People have many different interpretations of the Holy Spirit's purpose, and how He functions today. To have a firm grasp of how the Holy Spirit affects us today we need to have full knowledge of His purpose in the times of the Apostles. Studying John 14-16 will give us vivid insight into the role of the Holy Spirit then, and today.

This passage will not tell us everything that we need to know about the Holy Spirit, but it will give us a healthy knowledge of Him, and help us interpret other passages about the Spirit.

CONTEXT OF JOHN 13

Jesus teaches some deep concepts to His apostles in John 14-16. Let's first consider the context of John 13 to know the climate that prompts His lecture.

John 13 is when Jesus eats His last supper with the Apostles. He reveals that one of them will betray Him. He also predicts that Peter will deny him thrice. This troubles the Apostles.

The Apostles are in a time of confusion, unrest, and anxiety. It appears to them that their plan is failing, and they will be left all alone without Jesus. They aren't sure what lies ahead, or what to do when these things take place.

In John 14:1-4, Jesus tells His apostles to be at ease. He is returning to His father's house to prepare a place for them. He tells them that they know the way. 14:5 shows that they don't fully understand. They don't know where He is going, and they don't know how to get there. In 14:6, Jesus reminds them that He is the way to the father.

THESIS

John 14-16 is about Jesus comforting His Apostles by telling them how to get to the father. He goes on to explain how the Holy Spirit will enable them to tell the rest of the world how to get to the father.

1. Jesus declares that the way to the father is by abiding in Christ.
2. The way to abide in Christ is by following Jesus' commands.
3. The Holy Spirit brings us to the father by teaching us Jesus' commands.

The role of the Holy Spirit is to bring us back to the father by revealing Jesus' commands.

ABIDE IN CHRIST; KEEP HIS COMMANDS

Keep His commandments

Jesus is the way to the father. What divine guidance does He give to the Apostles?

- Jn 14:15: If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
- Jn 14:21: The one who keeps His commandments is the one who loves Him. That one is also love by Jesus and the Father.
- Jn 14:23: If we love Jesus, we will keep His word and be loved by the father.
- Jn 14:24: The one who does not obey His words does not love Him.
- Jn 15:14: We are His friends if we obey Him.

Jesus is obviously stressing that we show our love for Him when we obey Him. To emphasize his point, He tells a parable that shows this obedient relationship, and how it relates to the Father.

The Parable of the Vine and Branches: Abide in the Vine

Jn 15:1: Jesus is the vine, and God is the vinedresser.

- What does the vinedresser desire from His vine? He desires fruit (Jn 15:8).
- God raised up the vine, and we are the branches growing from the vine.
- Our purpose is to bear fruit. The fruit is our obedience.

Jn 15:2-5: Bear fruit

- If we don't bear fruit, we are removed.
- If we bear fruit, God prunes us to aid us in bearing more fruit.
- We, the branches, cannot bear fruit without abiding in Christ, the vine.

God is pleased when we bear fruit. God has given us Christ so we can bear fruit. How do we bear fruit? We bear fruit by abiding in Christ.

How do we abide in Christ? We keep His commandments.

- Jn 15:9-10: We abide in His love when we keep His commandments.

The Apostles knew how to abide in Christ

- Jesus affirms that they, the Apostles, are already "clean" because He spoke to them the words "abide in me" (Jn 15:3-4).
- Jn 14:25: Jesus has told them these things while dwelling with them.
- The Apostles knew the words of Jesus, so they knew how to abide in Him.

How does this lesson serve as a comfort to the Apostles?

The Apostles do not know what is going on, or what is going to happen, but they do know how to abide in Christ because they know His commandments. Knowing how to abide in Christ is all they need to know to get back to the father. Whatever trials lie ahead, they can always be assured they are loved by the father if they keep Christ's commands. Understanding this clarifies Jn 14:2-4.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Jn 14:21-22: Jesus tells His apostles that He will "show Himself" to them if they keep His commandments. Judas then asks a very important question: why will you show yourself to us, and not the rest of the world?

- What is Judas' concern? He is concerned about the rest of the world.
- Why is he concerned about the rest of the world? They do not know Jesus' commands.

Judas should be praised for his insight and sincerity. He has quickly realized that only by obeying Jesus can we see the father. Now Jesus will explain to him and the rest of the disciples how he will "show" himself to the rest of the world.

Jesus sends the Helper

- Jn 14:16: Jesus will send them the Helper, so that He may be with you forever.
- Jn 14:26: The Helper will teach them all things and help them remember all His teaching.
- Jn 15:16-27: When the Helper comes, He will testify about Christ. The Apostles will also testify.
- Jn 16:13-14: The Spirit will reveal the mind of Christ to them.

These verses tell us that God is sending the Helper sometime in the future to aid them in testifying about Christ. Can we see how the Holy Spirit will aid the world in knowing the father? The Holy Spirit is going to teach the world the commands of Christ so we can abide in the father.

When is the Helper coming?

Jn 16:5-7: Jesus is going to the father.

- Why is this an advantage?
- What does this tell us about the coming of the Holy Spirit?

It is clear the Jesus is telling them that the Holy Spirit will come to aid them after He is gone.

What will the Holy Spirit do?

Jn 16:7: The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin and righteousness.

How will the Holy Spirit do this?

- Jn 15:22-24: In these verses, Jesus shows that He condemned the world by teaching and working miracles.
- Because Jesus did these deeds among them, He is able to judge them righteous by belief and obedience, or sinful by disbelief and rejection.
- Likewise, the Holy Spirit will teach and work miracles through the Apostles so that all may come to know Christ's commands.
- When all know His commands, He can judge them righteous or sinful.

Ex 4:15-16: This passage shows Aaron being the spokesman for Moses. Moses is to put the words into Aaron's mouth, and be God to him. The Apostles guided by the Holy Spirit are acting like Jesus to us. If we imagine Jesus teaching His disciples, we can imagine what the Holy Spirit is trying to do for us. He is trying to tell us God's desires and expectations so we can abide in Him.

CONCLUSION

This vast passage has many, many more lessons and applications, and deserves more study, but we can see how a significant historical event can teach us so much regarding complex ideas in the Bible. This passage truly shows us the function of the Holy Spirit, and why He is needed after Jesus is gone.

The Holy Spirit came when Jesus left, and helped the Apostles teach us Christ so we could see Him, and abide in the father.