

# The Gospel of John

## The Witness of the Holy Spirit

### John 15:26-27

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

For many weeks now, we have been experiencing the night before Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

In our scripture text this morning, Judas has left to betray Jesus. Christ and His disciples have left the upper room and they are on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. During this journey, Jesus continues to prepare His disciples for what lay ahead of them.

Our text this morning opens up our understanding concerning the testimony and true ministry of the Holy Spirit so that we can glorify Him and worship Him in a way that He deserves. Before I read the text, I want to set the scene for you a little bit.

In chapter 17, we have the record of our Lord's prayer to the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane. In that prayer He asks the Father to fulfill all that He has promised, not only for the eleven, but for all who will believe in the future.

However Jesus has also just warned the disciples that they were going to experience hatred from the world.

As Christians we are living simultaneously in two different worlds. We live in the world of God's kingdom. We live as children of God, and God's love for us causes Him to lavish us with spiritual blessings. We are loved infinitely by God, and we are blessed with the expressions of that love, and the assurance that all of His promises will be fulfilled.

At the same time that we are loved by God, we are hated by the world that is being ruled by Satan. We are hated by the world because we are not of the world and do not act like the world. Even though we live peaceably with joy and love, the world is convicted by us because we shed light on their sins. Thus we are hated because they hated our Lord first. We are hated because they do not know God.

So on the one hand, we are lavishly loved by God and we are strongly hated by the world. God pours out all blessing on us; the world pours out all its anger and persecution on us, even to the degree where believers through history are killed.

Satan through the world hates everything concerning God. They hate Christ, the Bible, the gospel, and even the believers. Now our Lord has made all these wonderful promises to His disciples and warned them about hostility and persecution and in the same breath He is telling them that He is leaving them.

That raises the question then, How will those promises be fulfilled? And how will we be able to reach the hostile, hating, persecuting world with the gospel? Jesus, if you leave us, who will deliver to us all the promises that you have made and empower us to survive in a world that hates us?”

The answer is the Holy Spirit.

## **Stand and Read Scripture**

### **John 15:26-27 (NASB)**

<sup>26</sup> “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *namely*, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me, <sup>27</sup> and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

## **Prayer**

As Jesus spent His last night on earth, the disciples were filled with confusion, sorrow, and fear. Their love for Him was so intense that they were convinced that they would rather die with Him than to live without Him.

But Jesus predicted that, despite their love for Him, they would all abandon Him. This seemed utterly impossible to the disciples.

### **Matthew 26:31-35 (NASB)**

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus \*said to them, “You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ <sup>32</sup> But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” <sup>33</sup> But Peter replied to Him, “*Even* if they all fall away because of You, I will never fall away!” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you that this *very* night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” <sup>35</sup> Peter \*said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” All the disciples said the same thing as well.

I am sure that in the back of their minds, they were wondering how in the world are we going to be able to face the whole world without you. We will be lucky just to stay alive without you.

So Jesus reminds them once again what he had told them in the upper room that night...

### **John 14:16-17 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever; <sup>17</sup> *the Helper* is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know *Him*; *but* you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you.

## **BODY:**

### **I. THE FATHER WILL SEND THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.**

#### **John 15:26a (NASB)**

<sup>26</sup> “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *namely*, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father,...

Jesus promised the disciples that once He is gone He will go to the Father and ask Him to send the Spirit of truth to them. Who is going to be the one who will fulfill all the promises? None other than the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, who will come to you and be with you forever. In fact, not just **with** you, but **in** you!

He had also told them how the Holy Spirit would make it possible to face the whole world with the Gospel. They would not have to face the whole world in their own strength!

### **John 14:26 (NASB)**

*26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you.*

And He did that, of course, by inspiring the writers of the Scripture to write it down so that every generation has His teaching and His Word accurately recorded.

Then I would like to draw your attention to another truth that He will tell His disciples shortly.

### **John 16:7 (NASB)**

*7 But I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I am leaving; for if I do not leave, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.*

What He is saying is, It is better to have the Holy Spirit **in** you than to have Me **with** you. That is because Jesus will have to die on the cross to pay for our sins. That will set up the gospel message of salvation to the whole world. Then He will go to the Father and ask that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, be sent to us.

Jesus died on the cross during the Feast of the Passover. He was buried and arose from the dead three days later and appeared to the disciples and many others for forty days. He then ascended to Heaven and the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father on the Day of Pentecost, just ten days later, fulfilling the promise that Jesus had made.

Luke records the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. And what an arrival it was!

### **Acts 2:1-7 NASB)**

*2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together (the disciples) in one place. 2 And suddenly a noise like a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And tongues that looked like fire appeared to them, distributing themselves, and a tongue rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with different tongues, as the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak out.*

*5 Now there were Jews residing in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together and they were bewildered, because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.*

*7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"*

## **II. THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL TESTIFY OF THE SON.**

What will the Holy Spirit do when He arrives?

### **John 15:26b (NASB)**

...He will testify about Me,

Then Jesus gives the disciples a more complete role of the Holy Spirit.

### **John 16:13-14 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take from Mine and will disclose *it* to you.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to take all that the Lord promised to us and deliver it to us. The Holy Spirit will make good on all of the Lord's promises and all of the blessings that He pledged to provide. He will testify concerning the Son. In other words, He will enlighten them as to the accomplishments of Christ's death on the cross.

Immediately after the Holy Spirit arrived in Jerusalem, Peter, who was now filled with the Holy Spirit, began to preach to the people who were assembling in bewilderment. The apostles did not have to depend upon their own strength. The Holy Spirit was allowing them to talk in such a way that everyone around could hear in their own language. Here is a part of the sermon and the response to it.

### **Acts 2:36-41 (NASB)**

<sup>36</sup> Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what are we to do?” <sup>38</sup> Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” <sup>40</sup> And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on urging them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!” <sup>41</sup> So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

Those who received his word, three thousand in total that day, were baptized, had their sins forgiven, and they each received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This was exactly as Jesus had promised in the upper room.

### **John 14:18-23 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> “I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> After a little while, the world no longer *is going to see Me*, but you *are going to see Me*; because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> The one who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him.” <sup>22</sup> Judas (not Iscariot) *said* to Him, “Lord, what has happened that You are going to reveal Yourself to us and not to the world?” <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make *Our* dwelling with him.

## **III. THE CHRISTIAN WILL TESTIFY TO THE WORLD.**

### **John 15:27 (NASB)**

<sup>27</sup> and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Starting with the apostles and going beyond the apostles, the message is Jesus Christ. You will testify about Me through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Listen to how Paul described it to the Corinthians.

### **1 Corinthians 2:2-5 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> I also was with you in weakness and fear, and in great trembling, <sup>4</sup> and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of mankind, but on the power of God.

The world's hatred is focused on Christ. They hate Him without a cause, because they love darkness rather than light. That is why they do not believe. But we cannot alter the message.

### **John 3:16-21 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the Light; for their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his deeds will not be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But the one who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds will be revealed as having been performed in God."

We cannot alter the message; we cannot water down the gospel; we cannot shift it off of Christ. It's not a social message about living a better life, or reforming, or helping poor people, or feeding hungry people, or stopping sex trafficking, or whatever other things are thrown around by all kinds of folks who think they are fulfilling the Great Commission. All of those things in themselves are good things, but that is not our calling. Our message is Jesus Christ and Him crucified and risen again.

The sinners of the world are in the dark. They are blind and dead: double-blinded by Satan, alienated from the life of God; hopeless, helpless, and unable and unwilling to believe. They do not seek after God; they cannot understand the truth; their minds are blinded; and on top of that, they hate us.

The world hates. The world kills. The world lies in the lap of the evil one. The world, essentially, is the kingdom of darkness. They are the children of Satan. All but one of the apostles were martyred by them. The power that breaks through that hatred is the work of the Holy Spirit. But our responsibility is to **"go into all the world and" do what? "preach the gospel."**

We, rather – as we have been saying – are the conscience of the world. We are the conviction of the world. We are separate from the world. We are alien to the world. We indict the world. We speak of sin to the world, and we speak of righteousness to the world, and we speak of judgment to the world. It would be hopeless for us to do if we not

empowered by the Spirit affirming that in the heart of the sinner. The world is our mission field, and the world is, as John said, passing away.

Will the world retaliate in anger? Yes. Will we suffer slings and arrows and abuse? Yes. But we cannot lick our wounds in self-pity and withdraw into the safety of just the community of believers.

### **Romans 10:13-15 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> for “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

<sup>14</sup> How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?

<sup>15</sup> But how are they to preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!”

God does the saving through the power of the Holy Spirit, but not apart from the message preached.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The reason you are not in heaven now is so that you can be a witness here. The Lord puts your perfection on hold and tolerates you and me, just so we can do what we need to do here. That is tell the gospel to the world. The gospel cannot be preached in heaven. By then it is too late. So our testimony is to the world. We know it is hostile, but we also know that they cannot be saved without the truth. We also know that the Spirit does a convicting work in the hearts of those whom God chooses. So while there is still time we are to be witnesses of Christ to the world.

It should be in the heart of all of us to tell everyone of the gospel. The key to understanding the gospel is to know why it is **good news**. To do that, we must start with the **bad news**. Despite our "goodness" or "badness" relative to each other, we are all in the same spiritual boat--we have sinned, and the punishment for sin is eternal separation from God when we die. In order for us to go to heaven, God's dwelling place, our sin must somehow be removed or paid for. Jesus died on the cross at Calvary as a perfect sacrifice to pay the price for all of our sins. He was buried and rose again from the dead three days later as a confirmation that He was the Messiah, the Son of God. That is the good news.

The message of the gospel is accompanied by proofs: Christ died for our sins (proved by His burial), and He rose again the third day (proved by the eyewitnesses). All this was done “according to the Scriptures”. The theme of the whole Bible is the salvation of mankind through Christ.

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven he left the disciples (and us) one final command:

### **Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**He is Lord.**