

The Word Made Flesh

Introduction to the Holy Spirit, pt. 1 | John 14:15-31

Series Context

We are continuing our study through the Gospel of John. This has been a foundational series for our church, and now we are four weeks into the Upper Room Discourse, a section spanning John 13–17 that all takes place in a single evening, the night before Jesus is crucified.

Jesus has just told His disciples that He is leaving. Their teacher, friend, and Lord is going away, and they cannot follow yet. This was devastating. Everything they thought would happen, overthrowing Rome, establishing the Kingdom, is not unfolding the way they expected.

In love, Jesus begins to comfort them. He promises that He is preparing a place for them and will return. When Thomas asks how they can know the way, Jesus responds:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

This is where we pick up.

A Necessary Reset

Before we move forward, we need to set something aside.

Many of us come from church backgrounds where the Holy Spirit was either heavily emphasized or largely ignored. Because of that, we have all formed assumptions about who He is.

Jesus is about to give His first clear teaching on the Holy Spirit.

Up until this point, the Spirit has been referenced... but in John 14, He is revealed. The Spirit has not been absent... but He has not been explained.

So for a moment, we approach this like children again, letting Jesus define the Holy Spirit for us.

A Needed Correction

Many of us come from charismatic or Pentecostal environments that emphasize loving the Holy Spirit. Often, that love is expressed through freedom and openness.

We say things like:

“We don’t put the Holy Spirit in a box.”

But in trying to take Him out of a box, we may have unknowingly put Him in a cage.

We may not shut Him down, but we put Him on display.

He becomes something to see, something to experience.

He becomes an attraction... rather than an authority to submit to.

We often think making room for the Spirit means making room for tongues, healing, or prophecy. But in doing that, we can reduce Him to only those things.

Jesus is about to lay the foundation for how we should understand the Holy Spirit, and in these two chapters, there is not a single emphasis on signs and wonders.

This is intentional.

Jesus is giving us our first impression of the Spirit, and we must pay close attention.

The Jewish Understanding of the Spirit

The disciples already had a framework for the Spirit.

In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God was understood as:

- God’s power and presence
- Given temporarily
- Given selectively
- Task-oriented

The Spirit would come upon individuals like Samson or Saul and could depart.

Prophets spoke of being filled with the Spirit, and there were promises that one day God would pour out His Spirit on all people and place His Spirit within them.

But these promises were seen as future, tied to the coming of the Messiah.

They did not have a category for what Jesus is about to reveal.

The Holy Spirit Helps You Love



“If you love me, you will keep my commandments... and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper...”

The word “another” means another of the same kind.

Jesus is saying:

The Spirit will be to you what I have been to you.

He calls Him the Helper.

This is not a general term. It is deeply personal.

The context matters.

Jesus connects the Helper directly to obedience, specifically loving one another.

Throughout John 14–15, Jesus repeats this idea:

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And His commandment is clear:

Love one another as I have loved you.

The Helper is not limited to this, but in this context, He is helping you live out the new commandment.

He helps you love the people of God.

The Holy Spirit Will Be With You Forever

“To be with you forever...”

This is a major shift from the Old Testament.

The Spirit is no longer:

- Temporary
- Task-based

He is permanent.

He does not come and go.

He abides.

The Spirit of Truth

Jesus gives Him another title:



The Spirit of Truth

This reveals His priority.

He is not introduced as the Spirit of power.

He is introduced as the Spirit of truth.

Truth in John is not just information.

Truth is a Person.

Jesus is the truth.

So the Spirit of truth:

- Anchors you in reality
- Guards you from deception
- Leads you into what is true
- Keeps you from drifting

If you start with power and not truth, you will:

- Abuse power
- Mismanage power
- Mislead people

Truth must govern everything.

If someone claims to operate in the Spirit but is not anchored in truth, something is off.

Why This Matters

The disciples are about to face:

- Confusion
- Persecution
- Doubt
- Competing voices

Jesus' answer to all of it is not spectacle.

It is the Spirit of truth.

The Spirit Dwells in You

“He dwells with you and will be in you.”

This is one of the most radical promises in Scripture.



The Spirit will not dwell in a building.

He will dwell in people.

The disciples would have understood the Spirit as residing in the temple, in the Holy of Holies.

Now Jesus is saying:

You are the temple.

Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Not just one group. Not just one denomination.

The Spirit is just as present in the Baptist, the Presbyterian, and the Pentecostal.

No group has a monopoly on Him.

Key Takeaways

- The Holy Spirit is not an attraction to experience, but an authority to submit to
 - He is not primarily revealed as power, but as truth
 - He is a Person, not a force
 - He dwells permanently within every believer
 - He helps us love, obey, and follow Jesus
 - He anchors us in truth and guards us from deception
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Closing Thought

Jesus does not introduce the Holy Spirit as something to chase.

He introduces Him as Someone who comes to dwell.

Not to entertain you...

But to transform you.

