DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE

TEXT SUMMARY

Jesus' final words to His disciples on the night of His betrayal are recorded in only John's Gospel, chapters 14-17. When Jesus talked to His disciples that evening, they were experiencing great fear and tension. He had been talking about His coming death and resurrection for weeks, and now they were in Jerusalem, where they knew His enemies wanted to destroy Him. They were anxious not only for His welfare but also for their own: what would they do when He was gone?

In those key moments, Jesus told His men that when He left them, another Comforter would come to them, the Holy Spirit. While the Spirit had played a role in the pages of Scripture from the beginning (Gen 1), He would assume a new, permanent position in the lives of Jesus' followers after Jesus left. Our text, John 14:25-26; 16:7-15, explores the role of the Spirit in the lives of God's people.

INTRODUCTION (observation):

Our two texts mention several things the Spirit would do when He comes. What are some of those things?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

Surely Jesus' disciples were skeptical when He said that it was better for them if He went away. Why would it be better for them for Him to be gone?

As a thought experiment, imagine a world in which Jesus never left the world after His resurrection, a scenario His disciples surely would have preferred, with their Master continuing to live and teach in human form among His people as He had for the three previous years. How could the Presence of the Spirit among God's people possibly be better than the physical Presence of Christ Himself?

<u>So what</u>? (Application):

1. **From where the disciples stood that fateful night** before His death, it seemed that the worst thing that could happen was that Jesus would be taken from them. And yet Jesus told them it was better for them if He did go away. Later, after His resurrection, His ascension, and the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they could finally see what He meant: the Presence of the Spirit in and among His people was even better than His physical Presence had been.
    - Have you ever experienced God's providence (His faithful provision for your needs) in the form of His *withholding* something you were sure you needed?
    - How did you process that experience in the moment? How did you manage your fears?
    - The faithfulness of God is always clearer in retrospect than it is in the moment. How long was it before you could look back and see that God's withholding of what you wanted was better than what you wanted?
2. **Jesus promised that the Spirit would have a** ministry of teaching and guiding His people.
    - How has the Spirit taught you God's truth? What are some of the means He employed (Scripture, the counsel of God's people, circumstances, etc.)?
    - How has the Spirit guided you? What are some of the means He employed?