

The Holy Spirit: the Revealer & Giver of Life  
*Pneumatology: A Study of the Life & Work of the Holy Spirit*

A. Jesus elaborated on this still future change in the Holy Spirit's role in *John 14-16*.

1. In this passage Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit by the following names/titles:
  - a. "Helper" (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; cf. 1 John 2:1 for only other occurrence in NT) See below for extended treatment of this term.
  - b. "The Spirit of truth" (14:17; 15:26; 16:13)
  - c. "The Holy Spirit" (14:26)

The Holy Spirit as "Helper"; παρακλητοσ occurs in 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7.

*In three passages (14:16-26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-15) John speaks of a coming gift of the Holy Spirit (14:26), or 'Spirit of Truth' (14:17; 15:26; 16:13: . . . ), to act as a 'Parclate' (parakletos: 14:16, 26; 15:26, 16:7). Of the three, it is the term 'Paralcete' that dominates here, and it is this term that is introduced first each time the Spirit is subsequently referred to . . . , so we must investigate its significance.*

*In Greek the word is formally a passive verbal adjective, 'one called alongside', especially to offer counsel, support or assistance in a court, or in some other potentially adversarial setting. Typically parakletoi intercede on someone's behalf, e.g. to a higher authority, or support their case in juridical or other proceedings, acting as intercessors, mediators, or supporting witnesses. 'Advocate' may thus regularly provide the best translation, providing it is taken in a sufficiently general sense rather than merely to denote a professional legal representative . . .*

*. . . John's picture of the Spirit-Advocate . . . is clearly modeled on Jesus. This point is made in two ways. First, it is suggested by Jesus' promise of 'another (allos) Paracete (of the same kind)'. The Greek allos regularly (not always) means 'another (of the same kind)', in contrast to heteros 'another (different)'. Second, it is to be inferred from the deliberate parallelism . . . between what John says about Jesus and what is promised of the Spirit. For example:*

*(a) both 'come forth'/are'given'/ are 'sent' from the Father into the world (3:16, 17; 5:43; 16:27,28; 18:37 / / 14:26; 15:26; 16:7, 8, 13).*

*(b) both are called 'Holy' (6:69//14:26) and are characterized by 'the Truth' (14:6// 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).*

*(c) if Jesus is the great teacher (cf. 13:13, 14), the Paraclete will 'teach you . . . all things' (14:26; and just as the Messiah bears witness to God and reveals all things (4:25, 25; cf. 1:18; 3:34-36, etc.) – supremely himself and the Father – so too the Spirit-Advocate will witness to and reveal especially the glorified Son (15:26, 27; 16:13, 14).*

*(d) And as Jesus set out to convince and convict the world, which nevertheless did not 'receive' him (1:12, etc), so too the Spirit-Advocate's task is to convince and convict the world (John 16:8-12), but the world does not receive him either (14:17; 15:18-26).*

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*Such observations indicate that (for John) Jesus and the Spirit-Paraclete are parallel figures, or, at least, have parallel functions. . . . Jesus has acted as the Paraclete so far; the Spirit is to take over that role. So John portrays the Spirit as replacing Jesus and taking over his 'Paraclete' functions.*

*But the Paraclete does not come to them merely as a replacement or substitute when Jesus departs. Such a concept is qualified in three ways:*

*(1) As 14:17e possibly indicates, the disciples already know the Paraclete as 'the Spirit of Truth' they have experienced through Jesus' revelatory wisdom. It is this same Spirit that will indwell them.*

*(2) More important, the coming Spirit does not merely replace Jesus' presence but also mediates the presence of the Father and of the glorified Son to the disciples (14:16-26).*

*(3) The Spirit is not merely Jesus' substitute, but is also Jesus' own emissary and executive power. That is, he is sent 'in Jesus' name' from the Father (14:26), or, Jesus himself 'sends' him (15:26; 16:7) from the Father.*

*With these qualifications we may agree at least in part with Raymond Brown that the Paraclete/Advocate is the Holy Spirit in a special role, namely as the personal presence of Jesus in and with the Christian while Jesus is with the Father. For John, as for Luke-Acts and Paul, the Spirit is very much the Spirit of Christ (The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts, by Max Turner, pp. 77-81).*

2. Jesus explains that the Spirit's relationship to the disciples will soon change.
  - a. The Father will send the Spirit in Jesus' name, i.e., based upon Jesus' authority (14:26); and Jesus will send the Spirit to them from the Father since the Spirit, in fact, "proceeds from the Father" (15:26).

**John 14:26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

**John 15:26** "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

*If in this passage the Counsellor is given by the Father at the Son's request, elsewhere he is sent by the Father in Christ's name (v. 26), sent by Christ from the Father (15:26), proceeds ('goes out') from the Father (15:26), or is sent by Christ (16:7). It is not that the Evangelist cannot distinguish these expressions one from the other, still less that the two ways of referring to the sending of the Spirit are 'in direct tension' (Burge, p. 203). Rather, the same sending can be described in various complementary ways, granted the tight cohesion of the Father and the Son (cf. 5:19-30) (The Gospel according to John, by D. A. Carson, p. 499).*

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- b. The Father will give the Spirit to the disciples with the intent of Him remaining with them (meq uJmw n) forever (14:16).

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

- c. The Spirit's relationship to them would go from the current "he dwells with you" (par uJmi n me ÷ nei) to He "will be in you" (e n uJmi n e¶stai) (14:17).

John 14:17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

*In the twentieth century . . . consciousness of the presence of the Spirit has to a very great extent disappeared, even in the believing community. It is possible to say that the only person who will understand the words about the Spirit is the one who has already experienced the presence of the Spirit (The Gospel according to St John, by R. Schnackenburg, p. 153)*

- d. The Spirit can only come in this new fashion if the Son first departs (16:7).

John 16:7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

*The thought is not that Jesus and the Holy Spirit cannot, for unarticulated metaphysical reasons, simultaneously minister to God's people, or any other such strange notion. Rather, the thought is eschatological [i.e. prophecies]. The many biblical promises that the Spirit will characterize the age of the kingdom of God (e.g. Is. 11:1-10; 32:14-18; 42:1-4; 44:1-5; Ezk. 11:17-20; 36:24-27; 37:1-14; Joel 2:28-32; . . . ) breed anticipation. But this saving reign of God cannot be fully inaugurated until Jesus has died, risen from the dead, and been exalted to his Father's right hand, returned to the glory he enjoyed with the Father before the world began.*

*. . . That same Jesus [who lived on earth with His disciples] insists it is better to be alive now, after the coming of the Spirit. Before the triumphant in-breaking of God's saving reign, before the inauguration of the new covenant, millions ignored the claims of the true God. Pentecost transformed that limitation, and millions have been brought to happy submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and to growing obedience by the power of the Spirit whom he bequeathed (Gospel of John, Carson, p. 534).*

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3. This new work of the Spirit serves the best interest of the disciples.

- a. John 14:16-18 is the first mention of Jesus' replacement, the Helper; this sets the context for His explanation of the Spirit's new work within them.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

- b. John 14:18-20 expresses some particular personal benefits that accrue to the believer because of the Helper's arrival.

John 14:18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

- i. The contrasting parallel truths of verse 18 seem best understood as fulfilled in the permanent indwelling of the Spirit.

- ii. 19a can be taken as post-resurrection experiences with Jesus, or, better it seems, as the Spirit's work of revealing Jesus to the heart of the believer. See also 16:14-15.

John 16:14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

- iii. Jesus' promise in 19b that "you also will live" (seemingly based on His coming resurrection – "Because I live") points to the Spirit's work of regeneration. See also Titus 3:5 & John 3:5.

Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

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- iv. “In that day” (20a) points to the time this transition of replacing Jesus with the Spirit begins. The arrival of the Spirit began in Acts 2. However, some understand “that day” as referring to either the Savior’s post-resurrection appearances or His second coming. Which is best?
- v. A new realization of intimacy will mark this new ministry of the Spirit (20b): the Father’s union with the Son, the believer’s immersion into Jesus and Jesus’ indwelling of us.

*Christianity, it is true, is a religion based squarely in time-space history. It has a propositional revelation, creedal confessions, moral standards, missionary expeditions, corporate worship. But as essential as these are, one further feature must not be overlooked. Christianity claims that it is the means whereby a man may know God, and whereby God may come and make his home in a man. The thought of it is overwhelming; yet this is the heritage of every true believer.*

*Many religions promise some kind of mystical experience with deity. Often these religions claim that man is himself deified in some way in the process. The teaching of the fourth Gospel must be distinguished from such beliefs. John cannot envision knowing God, nor picture a man functioning as the dwelling of God, apart from the historical revelation of Jesus Christ, and the removal of sin by Jesus’ return to the Father through the passion. Nevertheless, in our insistence on truth and on the central historical realities of our faith, we must not minimize the momentous promise of experiential fellowship with God. This intimacy, as we shall see, turns on our obedience (14:15, 21, 23); but it is no less real for that. We modern Christians badly need a deepening consciousness of God’s sacred presence in us as much as we need moral renewal, historical awareness, and biblical and theological acuity (The Farewell Discourse and Final Prayer of Jesus—An Exposition of John 14-17, by D. A. Carson, p. 48).*

- c. His work for the benefit of the disciples focuses on Jesus.
  - i. Jesus shows similarity between Himself & this Helper.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

- ii. The Helper’s tasks fulfilled (flowing from this similarity) will always lead to Jesus’ glory.

John 16:14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

*[This] function of the Spirit is to glorify Christ. His chief purpose is not to make himself prominent but to magnify the person of Jesus. The Spirit interprets and*

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*applies the character and teaching of Jesus to the disciples and by so doing makes him central to their thinking (EBC, electronic).*

d. Much of the Helper's work deals with the truth of God.

i. He will teach them "all things".

John 14:25 "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

To whom are these promises made? Carson is helpful.

*Granted the prominence of this theme, the promise of v. 26 has in view the Spirit's role to the first generation of disciples, not to all subsequent Christians. John's purpose in including this theme and this verse is not to explain how readers at the end of the first century may be taught by the Spirit, but to explain to readers at the end of the first century how the first witnesses, the first disciples, came to an accurate and full understanding of the truth of Jesus Christ. The Spirit's ministry in this respect was not to bring qualitatively new revelation, but to complete, to fill out, the revelation brought by Jesus himself (Gospel of John Carson, p. 505).*

Note some examples of how it worked:

John 2:22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

John 20:8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

ii. He causes the disciples to remember Jesus' words.

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

iii. He will lead them "into all the truth".

John 16:13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

iv. He will announce to them "the things that are to come".

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John 16:13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.