

The following is a rough transcript, not in its final form and may be updated.

Another Helper John 14:16-18

Intro: we are considering the last discourse that Jesus gives to His disciples just a few hours before His arrest and execution. He has told them that He would be going away from them, somewhere that they could not follow Him just yet. In their shock and despair, Jesus begins to speak great encouragement to them by telling them a little about where He is going, what He will be doing and that He would be coming back to get them one day. He also began to share with them what they would be doing in His absence. He promised that not only would they carry on His work in the world but they would actually do greater works than He did. But, Jesus didn't merely promise His disciples that they would accomplish these things while He was away, He also told them how they would be accomplished.

The promise of seeing greater works is conditional. Not only is it exclusive to believers (he who believes in Me) but it only applies to believers who pursue this promise through the channel of proper and persistent prayer. Last time, we looked at the 3rd condition: a loving obedience for Jesus and His commandments. We learned that love is the only proper motivation for obedience and that our obedience of Christ is the proof of our love for Him. Now, when Jesus says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" we may naturally ask, "Well, what are His commandments?" We looked back at [13:34](#), which is the only commandment Jesus expressly gives in the NT. Of course, there are other things He instructs us to do: obey (here), abide in Him ([15:4](#)) and believe in Him ([I John 3:23](#)). We cannot forget that in [Matt 28:20](#), [Mark 16:15](#) and [Acts 1:8](#), Jesus commands us to go out into the world and make disciples.

But, the reason it's difficult to nail down a specific list of the commandments of Jesus is because when Jesus says "keep My commandments," He's referring to everything He taught, at least everything that's recorded that He taught. He's telling the disciples here that if they would see these greater works, they must be faithful to observe and obey His doctrine as the only rule for their life. The commands of Jesus are embodied in the person Jesus. He's just saying to them, "Copy Me!" As wonderfully simple as that sounds, right away we recognize that it is impossible! How can we as fallen

human beings ever hope to live up to that standard? Not to worry, Jesus answers that dilemma too.

16-18- It's precisely the impossibility of being like Jesus that prompts Him to deliver the 4th condition for the greater works, that being the gift of the presence of the Holy Spirit – Another Helper (16). The name Jesus uses to refer to the Holy Spirit is telling. It teaches us that the Holy Spirit is divine; He's to be another Helper to the disciples just like Jesus was – of the same essence and focus. It's important that we always recognize the Holy Spirit as being a divine member of the God-head because if we do, we will also be faithful to recognize and rely on His work and not on our own efforts. How we understand and see the Holy Spirit will determine how we react to Him and are used by Him.

Since the Holy Spirit is a divine being, equal to the Father and Son in all respects, the next obvious question would be: "What does the Holy Spirit do?" What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the God-head and in the life of the believer?

One could answer that the Holy Spirit is most active in the sanctification of believers, in the inspiration of Scripture and in giving gifts to the Body of Christ. While each of these is true, they're still not the best answer. The best answer is found in **16:13-14**. The role of the Holy Spirit is primarily to glorify Jesus Christ. When we understand this then all the other things mentioned are naturally included in this one great, overriding purpose. The Holy Spirit will *not* speak of Himself but of Jesus. Thus, any emphasis on the Person and work of the Spirit that detracts from the Person and work of Jesus Christ isn't the Spirit's doing. Important as He is, the Holy Spirit will never supercede the place of Jesus in our thinking. But, wherever Jesus is exalted, we know the Third Person of the Trinity is at work.

How does the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus? 1st, He does it by teaching about Jesus in Scripture. The authors of both the OT and NT were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Scriptures and what they wrote was all about Jesus. Now, this same Spirit is promised to be given to the disciples, to come upon them – to be in them – so that nothing about Jesus' work or teachings that's necessary for salvation and the growth of the church would be lost. He worked in the 1st disciples to preserve the life and teachings of Jesus and He works in us to understand it and apply it to our lives.

2nd, the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus by drawing the lost to Him. As we've already seen, apart from this activity of the Holy Spirit, no one would ever come to Jesus. Without the work of the Spirit, no one could ever see, know or even receive spiritual things. They can't see because they're spiritually blind. Jesus said, "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" ([John 3:3](#)). They can't know because the things of the Spirit "are spiritually discerned" ([1 Cor 2:14](#)). They can't even receive the Holy Spirit, or Jesus Christ for that matter, because, as Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him" ([John 6:44](#)). The Holy Spirit opens blind eyes so the lost can see the truth. He clears their minds so they can understand what they see and gently woos their wills until they come to faith in Jesus as their Savior. Without this work there wouldn't be a single Christian in the world today but by this work the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus.

3rd, He glorifies Jesus by reproducing Him in believers. He does this by leading us to greater victory over sin; by praying for us and teaching us to pray; by showing us God's will for our lives and enabling us to walk in it. In our own strength and by our own efforts, it is impossible to obey all of the Lord's commandments, impossible to live up to His doctrine and example – that's why he sent the Holy Spirit – to help us do what He's called and commanded us to do.

A Helper is one who is with you to strengthen you. He gives us strength to stand for truth, to take the right side, to stand against evil. This is what He did for Peter and the rest of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. The night Jesus was arrested, Peter had denied Him because he was afraid of the little girl who was the doorkeeper. But at Pentecost, he stood up to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the very men who had crucified Him. The Holy Spirit gave Peter a backbone, making him like Jesus Christ and through him, brought glory to Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit, like Jesus, is also our Advocate (paracletos) – one who is called along side of (legally). Both are working together for us. More than that, both are constantly praying for us ([Heb 7:25](#) – Jesus "always lives to make intercession for" us); ([Rom 8:26](#) – the "Spirit Himself make intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.") If that is the case, and it is, then what could ever trouble us? We can't ever be troubled about our salvation because Jesus has purchased it for us and the Holy

Spirit has sealed it in our heart. Plus, they're both free to plead our case before the Father! Likewise, we also shouldn't be troubled about our increasing growth / transformation into the image of Jesus Christ because that's actually the whole goal of the Spirit's work in our lives.

4th, the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus by calling His followers into Christian service and by sustaining them in it. The Holy Spirit would direct the disciples in the future the exact same way Jesus had directed them in the past. The same is true for all who Follow Jesus. The Holy Spirit doesn't give spiritual gifts to make ministry exciting but to make ministry possible. He must call us into service and He must empower us to do it. The encouraging thing is: if He's called you, He will provide the spiritual strength and stamina to accomplish the task. Where God guides, God surely provides.

The Holy Spirit is a divine member of the Trinity whose primary role is to glorify Jesus. He's the One who is called alongside the believer to strengthen and help them in the Christian walk. But, this does not always happen. What's wrong when Christians fail to live as Christ in the world? The Bible says it's because they have not allowed the Holy Spirit to have His way in their lives; they have "quenched" the Spirit or "grieved" Him ([1 Thess 5:19](#); [Eph 4:30](#)). In contrast, believers are urged to "walk" in the Spirit or "be filled" with the Spirit ([Gal 5:16](#); [Eph 5:18](#)). This means that while the Spirit works in complete sovereignty in the matter of our salvation, as far as Christian growth or spiritual maturity is concerned, there is a large percentage of human responsibility involved. True, we can't sanctify ourselves any more than we can save ourselves; God must do both. But, once we've been redeemed and regenerated by God, we can either cooperate or resist the Holy Spirit in His work of transforming us into the image of Christ.

To understand this principle and benefit from it, we must 1st understand what the Bible means when it talks about the filling of the Holy Spirit and why it is a necessary and continuous experience for every growing Christian. To start with, we must understand that the filling of the Holy Spirit is not synonymous with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Much of the false teaching we have about the Holy Spirit today comes from failing to see or recognize the distinction. Many groups use these terms interchangeably and incorrectly. They do this because of denominational leanings and traditions of men. But, what does the Bible say? What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit according to

God's Word?

There are 7 passages in the NT where the baptism of the Holy Spirit is mentioned or referred to. 5 are prophetic – 4 are John the Baptist declaring that the coming Messiah will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire ([Mt 3:11](#); [Mk 1:7-8](#); [Lk 3:16](#), [Jn 1:33](#)). 1 is Jesus Himself telling the disciples they will be baptized by the Spirit just shortly after His departure ([ascension \[Acts 1:5\]](#)). The 6th passage is historic. It's when the Holy Spirit was given to the household of Cornelius after they believed in Jesus as a result of Peter's preaching ([Acts 11:16](#)). This verse is significant because it shows that the Holy Spirit was to be given to the Gentiles just as He had been given to Jews. There wouldn't be 2 levels of Christians within the Body of Christ.

The 7th reference is the most important because it's instructive; a teaching passage that gives us the doctrine by which all the other passages are to be interpreted ([1 Cor 12:13](#)). 2 important points stand out in this verse. The 1st is the emphasis on Christian unity. The Corinthian church had allowed an emphasis on spiritual gifts to divide them; Paul writes to stress that they're actually one. His key argument is that they've been baptized by one Spirit into the one body of Christ. This is an obvious rebuke to anyone who would allow an emphasis on a so-called "baptism of the Holy Spirit," which they define as a second work of grace, to divide Christians and destroy fellowship.

The second point is the emphasis on the commonality of this experience for all believers. Here the word "all" is decisive, for Paul says that "we were all baptized" and "were all given the one Spirit to drink." This means that the baptism of the Holy Spirit, rather than being a secondary and special experience for some Christians, is actually the initial experience of every Christian. In fact, it's how they became Christians in the first place.

"The 'baptism' of the Spirit is a universal blessing for members of the new covenant; it's part and parcel of belonging to the kingdom of God. Jesus gives both the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit to all who enter into His covenant. Water baptism is the sign and seal of the baptism of the Spirit, as much as it is of the forgiveness of sins. "Water-baptism is the initiatory Christian rite, because Spirit-baptism is the initiatory Christian experience." John Stott

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all Christians. So, if a person hasn't received it, they're not a Christian; for the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the same thing as being identified with Christ through saving faith. If you still find this hard to believe; notice that there is not 1 single instance in the NT in which any believer is urged or commanded to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Why? You can't be urged to seek something that's already taken place in your life.

So, while there is no command in the NT for believers to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, there is definitely a clear command for us to be filled with the Spirit ([Eph 5:18](#)). What does this term actually mean? Again, we must go to Scripture for an honest and accurate answer. There are 14 passages in the NT where "fullness" or "filled with the Holy Spirit" occur. 4 describe events that occur prior to Pentecost so they are more along the lines of OT experiences of the Holy Spirit and they're all in Luke ([1:15, 41, 67; 4:1](#)). 9 of the remaining 10 occur after Pentecost and are descriptive ([Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:3; 7:55; 9:17; 13:6; 11:24; 13:52](#)). The last reference, the instructive one, is the actual command to be filled with the Spirit in [Eph 5:18](#).

What is the defining characteristic of being filled with the Spirit? If you look up the nine occurrences in Acts, you may be surprised to discover that there's not one instance of any external or supernatural manifestation linked with being filled with the Spirit (speaking in tongues) but in every case, the person or group of persons who received the filling immediately began to testify of the Gospel. They began to bear witness of Jesus Christ. So, the primary and most distinguishing mark of being filled with the Spirit is that the person filled will speak about Jesus. They won't speak about their experience; they won't speak of the need for others to have their experience; they will speak of Jesus! Is this not the primary role of the Holy Spirit ([John 16:13-14](#))? The filling of the Holy Spirit is the secret of a successful witness of Jesus Christ by the church in any age. It's the secret to seeing the promised greater works accomplished!

This is not to say that the filling of the Spirit only has to do with words. Obviously, words are effective unless there's a godly life to back them up, to validate them. The command to be filled with the Spirit, when read in its full context, has to do with Christian living, it's ethical. Being filled with the Spirit is contrasted with being drunk with wine. That kind of filling, and the debauchery associated with it, was characteristic of the culture that the

Ephesian Christians lived in. Plus, the command is immediately followed by a lot of practical teaching, like how husbands and wives are to act within a Christian marriage, the need for children to obey their parents, duties of servants, Christian warfare with Satan, and the ministry of intercessory prayer. It's the spiritual qualities and actions of the believer that reflect the fruit of the Spirit that serves as evidence of the filling of the Spirit in the believer's life.

So, how can a believer be filled with the Spirit? What is our responsibility? What are the steps? Well, the Bible gives us 3 steps for being filled: 1) we must not quench the Spirit (put out the Spirit's fire in our hearts – [1 Thess 5:19](#)). 2) We must not, by willful sin or simple neglect, grieve the Spirit ([Eph 4:30](#)). 3) We must walk (live) in the Spirit ([Gal 5:16](#)). Each is important but the 3rd is clearly the most important. If you do this, there's no danger in doing the others.

What does it mean to walk or live in the Spirit? No one can say how this works out in every case because all God's people are different and function differently. But, if you make an attempt to constantly recognize the Spirit's presence in your life – thanking Him for what He's done, praying for what He's currently doing and seeking Him for what will be done in the future – if this becomes the daily, even hourly habit of your life; you will discover what it means to walk in the Spirit.

If you walk with God the Holy Spirit like He is a physical person hanging out all day with you; if you will draw on His strength and counsel; if you will yield to Him, confess your sins to Him and obey Him minute by minute then He will fill your life with His manifest presence and will make you a faithful and effective witness for Jesus Christ.

Has the Holy Spirit lead you into some Christian service? If so, persevere in it! Is He currently leading you into some service? If so, it wouldn't hurt to prepare yourself for that service and pursue it with all your desire and with all the Spirit's might. If He hasn't called you, begin to desire His leading, seek it, pray for it and expect Him to guide you into His will, for it is a will that inevitably leads to bringing glory to Jesus Christ. 😊