



SERVE 2

John 14 v 15 to 31

The promised Spirit

We are continuing a series on the work of the Holy Spirit and how he empowers us to **SERVE** the Body of Christ – the local church.

In the previous section Jesus had made two promises. Great works will accompany those who believe (14:12) and prayers will be answered (14:13). The 'great works' does not just mean what we might call miracles but rather that God's people will perform humble acts of love and service as well as miraculous signs. It cannot mean that God's people will do greater works than Jesus did himself. What is 'greater' is that these works will be done by regular people in whom the power of Christ has taken up residence.

That is why the departure of Christ is crucial, because only through that can the Holy Spirit become a reality to all who follow him. (Look at John 7:37 to 39)

1. Talk about the work of the Holy Spirit in your lives.

How did you first understand and experience that the Holy Spirit lives in you if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus?

Do you still doubt that you have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit?

We are approaching the time when Jesus will leave his earthly life to return to his Father. Jesus understands that completely but his followers are people who have lived in close relationship with Jesus for three years and don't get it. So, the promise of the Holy Spirit is a key factor in their ability to carry on Jesus' ministry after he has gone. He describes him as 'another counsellor' implying that he, Jesus, was their first. He is also described as a 'spirit of truth'.

The Greek word for 'counsellor' is 'parakletos' which comes from a root word that means one who is 'called alongside'. Counsellor is not helpful if we think of the modern use of the word. It's best to think of it as a legal counsellor which leads us to the better word 'advocate' – one who speaks on our behalf.

2. Can you recall times where the Holy Spirit has given you wisdom as your 'counsellor'?

Can you recall times where the Holy Spirit has spoken 'truth' into your life – maybe in a sermon, maybe in a helpful word from a friend or maybe as you have read the Bible?

Jesus then explains that the person of the Holy Spirit is hard for the world to grasp because he is unseen. We can recognise him because he lives in us.

3. How do you know the Holy Spirit lives in you?

How do you experience him?

Can you remember some experience(s) where you have been conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit working in you?

Jesus has already reassured his followers that he will return in the drama of the second coming (14:1 to 4). In the meantime, they will be empowered by the Spirit once Jesus has returned to glory. That would have been re-assuring to the potentially bereft disciples but Jesus adds that he 'will come to you' (v18b). Jesus does preface this comment with 'before long' so it probably refers to him appearing after his resurrection.

4. Contained within this passage are promises and re-assurance for the disciples that they have not seen the last of Jesus. Does it help us to know that Jesus will return one day or does it feel too distant?

Are you convinced of the reality of Jesus return?

How does it change the way you live?

Should it?

There is a second promise of the Spirit in verses 25 to 31. Jesus wants to bring total clarity about this coming event. It contains more comfort in the form of peace ('Shalom'). This is designed to restore equilibrium and richness to their lives in relationship to God. There's also an element of 'don't panic'. 'Shalom' is more than peace and quiet – it is 'wholeness' and resting in God and in his promises.

5. Have you experienced the 'peace in God' that Jesus describes?

Do world events upset your peace?

Do family or work crises destroy your equilibrium?

How can we counter such disturbance?

Is it simply 'trust in God'?

Jesus has tried to give his followers as many facts as he can to both assure them that all will be well and to encourage them to keep following him and expanding his kingdom. So, he brings the conversation to a conclusion. 'I have told you now' (v29) and 'Come now, let us leave' (v31). You now have all the information you need.

6. What Jesus has said in chapter 14 is all we need to know about how to live until he returns. Do we think that's enough?

Are we sometimes longing for more?

Clearly, we are not meant to sit in a darkened room until the second coming. What should we be doing?

How do we keep the balance of longing for his return and serving God as best we can?

For the coming week let's think about what it truly means to anticipate his return. Maybe we could think about

- ***How we prepare for his return***
- ***How we can serve him until he returns***
- ***How we can talk to a friend who doesn't know Jesus***
- ***How we can cut out a bad habit that makes us more ready for glory***

***But remember - there's still work to do
We are HERE TO SERVE***