

# Knowing, Loving and Experiencing Jesus

## John 14:15-31 Part 2

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#### Don't Be Afraid

The disciples were filled with fear at the thought of losing Jesus. Jesus meant everything to them. Their lives had been radically changed by the love, truth, and presence of Christ with them—every day. Now, faced with the prospect of Jesus “departing” from them, they are stunned. What will they do? How can they go on? How can they live out the words and mission of Christ if they are on their own?

Jesus gives the answer in John 14-16 as He speaks to them of the promise of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is “another comforter/counselor/advocate”. He is just like Jesus. All that they have experienced of Jesus in their walk with Him, they can now continue to experience through the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is the most important thing they needed to calm their hearts and give them hope and excitement for the future.

#### The Spirit of Truth

Earlier in the chapter, Jesus taught us that He is “the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).” Jesus IS the truth. This is a major theme in the Gospel of John. Now He teaches them that the Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of Truth.” This is important because it shows us that the primary role of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to make Jesus real to us. Jesus said: “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me (John 15:26).” Then again in John 16:14 He said: “He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and revealing it to you.” He also said that the Holy Spirit would remind them of the Words that Jesus had spoken (John 14:26).

All of this teaches us what to look for in the ministry of the Holy Spirit – a greater understanding of, awareness of, and experience of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself, but to Jesus. Whenever the Holy Spirit speaks, it is not a new revelation that goes beyond the words of Christ. The words of the Holy Spirit always line up with and illuminate the Words of Christ in the Gospel. And this is our hope – to see, experience and understand more of Jesus through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is why Paul prays for the Ephesians that they would have the “Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him” – Christ (Ephesians 1:17). This is our quest as Christians: to know, love, and experience more of Jesus; and that is exactly what the promise of the Holy Spirit is all about in our lives.

#### If You Love Me, You Will Keep My Commandments

But there seems to be a condition for all this to take place! Four times Jesus speaks of love and obedience and a deeper experience of God (John 14:15; 21; 23; 24). These verses are often misunderstood. It is important to understand that these verses DO NOT mean that we love Jesus first and then He loves us. This cannot be. Clearly Jesus loves us first. In John 15:9-10 Jesus says, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept the Father’s commandments and abide in his love.” This sheds some light for us. Jesus first loved the disciples. Now He tells them to “abide” in His love by keeping His commandment to love one another.

The obedience that Christ is calling us to in John 14 and 15 is not intended to “earn” the love of God or the blessing of God. But our obedience to Christ IS an expression of our hearts’ response to Christ’s love and grace. As we respond to His love with our love, our relationship with Christ grows deeper and we begin to experience even more of Christ’s presence and reality in our lives. But if we do not respond to His love, presence, truth, prompting (as the Holy Spirit works to make Jesus real to us), then we quench the work of the Holy Spirit and we limit our experience of Christ in our life.

Now we see how vital it is for us to respond from our hearts to the love and truth of Jesus. It is crucial that we pay attention to the Words of Jesus and the promptings of the Holy Spirit and live out our faith in active obedience to Christ. This is the way of a living relationship with Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit! This is the life that God is calling us to and gifting us with! This is the way of peace, joy, and a life of impact for Christ in this world!

### For Further Reflection

This week, spend time each day in John 14:15-31. Pray, meditate, reflect and journal. The following questions may help to guide your time with the LORD.

What truth about Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit been guiding you towards this week?

How can misunderstanding about the person and role of the Holy Spirit create havoc in the church? Have you experienced this? How does John 14 address this issue?

How has the Lord increased your understanding of the significance of obedience in the Christian life?