

## The Abiding Spirit

In John 14.15-18, Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.” We have learned that the Spirit is God’s gift to us, that the Spirit makes Christ real in our lives, and that the Spirit indwells us as believers. Today we will learn one final lesson about the Spirit.

Today we learn that the Spirit abides with us forever. Jesus said, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth” (vs 16). While Jesus was on earth, he was limited to one place at a time; plus, his stay was short-lived. After thirty-three years he died, rose again, and returned to the Father. Yet, he then sent the Holy Spirit and that Spirit abides with us forever. The Holy Spirit hasn’t come to stay all night and then return home the next day or week; the Holy Spirit has moved into our homes (i.e. lives) to stay. He is now a permanent resident in our lives.

This means that you are never alone. The Spirit is always with you. Hebrews 13.5 says, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” We all feel lonely at times, but the fact is: as believers we are never alone. The Holy Spirit abides with us and he can encourage us and strengthen us. No matter where you are or what you’re going through, the Spirit is there to help you. He can help you overcome temptation. He can help you as you make decisions in life. He can help you fulfill your ministry. The Holy Spirit abides with us and in us to help us become all that God wants us to become.

Of course, there are times when we don’t feel the Spirit in our lives like we do at other times. Yet, we can’t go on our feelings. As Martin Luther wrote, “Feelings come and feelings go and feelings are deceiving; my warrant is the word of God, naught else is worth believing.” God’s word says that the Spirit will abide with us forever. We should depend more on God’s truth than on our fickle emotions. However, it is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit (see Eph 4.30). We do this when we allow carnal attitudes and actions to take place in our lives. When we grieve or sadden the Spirit in our lives, that close fellowship with him will not be experienced. If this is the case, then you need to repent and ask God for forgiveness. Such humility and confession can restore the closeness of God’s Spirit.

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