

Lord and Giver of Life: The Ascension and the Spirit

John 16:5-15

Pentecost Sunday

May 11, 2008

I. *The Helper and the Promise: When I Go, He Will Come – John 16:5-7*

- A. The Holy Spirit and Jesus
- conception, baptism, wilderness, preaching, death, and resurrection
 - promise of the Spirit
- B. The Holy Spirit in Jesus' Teaching
1. John 3: born from above; John 7: water from the Rock; John 14:18-20: union with Christ (Trinitarian union – “I am in the Father, you are in me, and I am in you”; John 20: new creation)
 - “*The Spirit’s coming inaugurates communion with Christ ... the coming of the Spirit is the equivalent of the indwelling of Jesus.*” – Sinclair Ferguson
 2. In this text, as in so many others, Jesus prophesies of a coming day, tied to his ascension, in which he will send the Spirit to his disciples in a new way.
- C. The Holy Spirit is the “Helper”: *parakletos* – advocate in a legal case, encourager, comfort, strengthen, literally “one called alongside.” “*The Holy Spirit is God’s ‘friendly presence,’ the saving presence of God who comes to make a covenant of love with his children.*” – Pope John Paul II

II. *The Helper and the World – John 16:8-11*

Here the Holy Spirit acts as the “Advocate” in the lawsuit of God against the world. His work “reverses the verdict” the world has rendered on Jesus, returning their false charges upon them and holding them to account. The Holy Spirit comes to prove Jesus’ innocence and show forth his reign as true Lord and Messiah. Jesus says that following his ascension he will send the Spirit to accomplish the “conviction” of the world (v. 8).

- A. **Sin** – summarized as refusal to believe in Christ
- Sinners perish because of unbelief
- B. **Righteousness** – summarized as God keeping his promise/word
- God raises Jesus and exalts him to his right hand; God saves Israel; it is God’s righteousness that is fulfilled and in which now the believer shares.
 - Because God is righteous (“just”), he is also the righteouser (“Justifier”) of the one who has faith in Jesus (Romans 3:21 ff).
- C. **Judgment** – summarized as Satan’s overthrow and sentencing
- Golgotha – the place of the skull, where the word of the Gospel is fulfilled

III. *The Helper and the Church – John 16:12-15*

Here the Holy Spirit acts as Guide, or “aid” for the Church in her mission.

- A. The Holy Spirit brought to the Apostles the revelation of Christ they were not yet ready to receive. We call this the New Testament (note also John 14:26).
- “*The voice of the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures.*” – WCF 1.
- B. The Holy Spirit is the person who communicates the Revelation of Christ.

- C. The Holy Spirit is the person in the Trinity who makes God immanent in our experience and opens the hearts of sinners to Truth, uniting them to Christ. That is exactly what “baptism with the Spirit is all about” – union with Christ; we are “baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12).

IV. *The Helper and Pentecost*

When the Day had fully come, the breath of the risen Savior became a mighty rushing wind, filling the whole house as the Spirit filled to overflowing all the disciples who filled Jerusalem with their teaching. The Jerusalem world was pierced to the heart. The Gentile world was convinced of the resurrection and reign of Christ.

“Pentecost cannot be repeated, but neither has it been rescinded.” – John Murray

“The Holy Spirit would never suffer the imputation to his name that he was not able to convert the world.”
– Charles Spurgeon

“I Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of LIFE.”