

Lessons from the Gospel of John (18): Life's Indwelling for the Building of God's Habitation (3) —The Spirit's Work

Bible reading

You may find it helpful to also read the entire case found in John 16:5-33.

John 16:7-8; 13-15

7 But I tell you the truth, It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

8 And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment.

13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.

14 He will glorify Me, for He will receive of Mine and will declare it to you.

15 All that the Father has is Mine; for this reason I have said that He receives of Mine and will declare it to you.

Introduction

As we come to John chapter 16 in this lesson, it is helpful to see that John chapters 14 through 16 are related and present one main matter—the central thought of the divine revelation in the Bible, which is to dispense the Triune God as the Father in the Son through the Spirit into humanity for His corporate expression, His habitation. John chapter 16 provides additional details to the previous two chapters by showing the work of the Spirit to convict the world and to glorify the Son by transmitting all the riches of the Father in the Son to the believers as reality. This work is the work of dispensing, which causes God to be mingled with man for His building.

Bible study reading

Please prayerfully read through the following portions of ministry related to this lesson.

If we are clear about John 14 and 15 [see Lessons 15, 16, and 17], it will be easy to understand John 16.

These three chapters of the Gospel of John simply reveal what God's economy really is to us: it is the Father in the Son as the Spirit coming into us and mingling Himself with us. This basic principle needs to be repeated again and again until we are deeply impressed. (*Life-study of John*, msg. 36, section 1)

Chapter fourteen is on the mutual abode, chapter fifteen is on the organism, and chapter sixteen is a supplement to chapters fourteen and fifteen. In this supplementary chapter we have the work of the Spirit unto the mingling of divinity with humanity. This means that the work of the Spirit results in the mingling of divinity with humanity. We saw this mingling already in chapter fourteen where the mingling eventually became the mutual abode. This mutual abode is an organism, the

Body of Christ, with Christ growing in the divine life to express the Father. This is the organism revealed in chapter fifteen. Chapter sixteen tells us how the mingling of divinity with humanity can take place. It happens through the work of the Holy Spirit. First, this work of the Spirit is to convict sinners that they may believe in Christ and be translated out of Adam into Christ. Second, it is to reveal Christ with the fullness of the Father to all of these translated believers that they might be edified, built up, with all the fullness of the Godhead in order to express the Triune God and to glorify the Son with the Father. (*Life-study of John*, msg. 37, section 5)

The Spirit is the reality of all that the Father and the Son are. Without the Spirit there is the essence of what the Father and Son are, but there is no realization. Take the example of electricity. Although we may have electricity, it still needs to be applied for a specific purpose. That application of electricity is the realization of the electricity. Likewise, the Spirit is the application of all that the Father and the Son are. Without the Spirit as the realization and application, everything may be real, but it is not available or applicable. If we would apply all that God and Christ are, we need the Spirit. We must praise the Lord that today He is not only the Father and the Son but also the Spirit. He is not only the source and the course but also the application. The Spirit reaches us, entering into us and applying all that we need of the Father and the Son. This is wonderful.

Let us take the example of humility. No one is born humble...What is humility? Humility is Christ. Christ is the reality of every human virtue and every divine attribute. All the human virtues and all the divine attributes are simply Christ Himself. In a good and positive sense, Christ is everything. He is humility, love, patience, and submission. Outside of Him nothing, including us, is good. Every virtue and every attribute is Christ. How does the Spirit glorify Christ? He glorifies Christ by revealing Him item by item. For instance, in all that Christ is, there is an item called humility. One day the Spirit reveals Christ to you as your humility. This is not a doctrine of humility; it is the living person of Christ revealed to you as humility. Spontaneously, a living humility will come out of you. That is the glorification of Christ. (*Life-study of John*, msg. 37, section 2)

Going deeper

Please read or listen to these materials for an in-depth study of this lesson.

Further reading:

[Life-study of John, msg. 36, section 1](#)

[Life-study of John, msg. 37](#)

Radio broadcast link:

Broadcast 40, [The Work of the Spirit unto the Mingling of Divinity with Humanity \(2\)](#)

Footnotes from Recovery Version of the New Testament:

John 16:8, footnote 2

John 16:13, footnote 1

Questions for personal or corporate study:

References in brackets indicate readings or broadcasts that may be helpful in answering the questions.

- What are the main principles found in John chapters 14 through 16, and how do they reveal God's economy? (*Life-study of John*, msg. 36, section 1)
- What is the work of the Holy Spirit in John chapter 16? (John 16:13, footnote 1, Recovery Version of the New Testament)

- What is the difference between imitating the virtues of Christ (such as patience or humility) and receiving the virtues of Christ? (Broadcast 40)

Next week

Life's Prayer—The Glorification of the Triune God

The main point of John chapters 14 through 16 is the Triune God coming into us through His dispensing and mingling with us. This is the work of the Spirit in which the Spirit reveals Christ in us, not as a doctrine but as reality. Next week we will come to John chapter 17, where the Lord Jesus concludes His final message to His disciples with a wonderful, divine, and mysterious prayer that is full of significance.

Works Cited

Lee, Witness. *Life-study of John*. Anaheim: Living Stream Ministry, 1985. www.ministrybooks.org

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