

John Chapter 14 v 15 - 31

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[0 : 00] God has raised this Jesus to life. We are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart, said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do?

Peter replied, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The promise is for you and your children, and to all who far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call. Promise of the Holy Spirit, given by the Lord Jesus, at his ascension to the Father's right hand.

[1 : 17] It's the Holy Spirit himself who comes amongst us and helps us. That just as those men and women who heard the word preached then were cut to the heart, they were stirred, they were moved.

So when we come to God's word, when we come into his presence, we might know the Holy Spirit's work in us too, in our hearts, and ultimately outworking and outflowing into our lives.

And so our prayer is really summed up, I hope, in the first hymn that we sing this evening. 3-3-1, Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire, thine own influence prove.

We're calling upon God to send his Spirit afresh upon us, and to speak to us once more. So 3-3-1, let's stand and sing. 3-3-1, let's stand and sing. 3-3-1, let's stand and sing.

3-3-1, let's stand and sing.

[2 : 47] 4-3-1, let's stand and sing.

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

One of the things we saw from God's Word this morning was that, and it's a precursor to Pentecost, was that God's people came together in prayer, in united prayer.

And so in our times of prayer this evening, they're going to be open times, times for each of us to have opportunity to pray and to lead in prayer. So again, I'll lead briefly in one or two others.

please echo the prayers that we've been singing of and echo perhaps something of what we heard from God's Word too as we call upon the Lord to meet with us. Let us pray. We know, O Lord, our God, that you are sovereign, that you do all things according to your will and purpose, and yet we thank you that you call us to pray, to ask, to knock, to seek. We ask again, O Lord, that we might be such people even this evening who are here asking, seeking, and knocking. For, Lord, you have promised that to those who do these things you will open the door, that you will give to us, O Lord, what we ask for, that you will help us find what we seek. So, Lord, we ask, come amongst us and upon us now. By your Spirit we pray. Amen.

[5 : 43] The Gospel of John, the Gospel of John in chapter 14. We're going to read part of this chapter, second half, and then we're going to also read part of chapter 16 as well. And John chapter 14, beginning at verse 15 and reading through to the end of the chapter. As I said, continuing our thoughts this Pentecost Sunday on the work of the Holy Spirit and his ministry to the church. Here is Jesus beginning to introduce and speak about God the Holy Spirit and what he will do and why he will come. So, John 14, verse 15. If you love me, keep my commands.

And I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot see him, sorry, 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. Before long the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father and I too will love them and show myself to them. Then Judas, not Judas Iscariot, said, but Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world? Jesus replied, anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own. They belong to the Father who has sent me. All this I have spoken to you while still with you. But the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Do not be afraid.

You heard me say I'm going away and I'm coming back to you. If you loved me, you would be glad that I'm going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I've told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not say much more to you, for the Prince of this world is coming.

He has no hold over me. But he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now, let us leave. Then over to chapter 16 and verses 12 to 15. Verses 12 to 15. I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own. He will speak only what he hears and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.

[9 : 45] And we are thankful again for God's faithful word as well. Yesterday, Angela and I went to Scarborough and in the main sort of thoroughfare, the shopping area, there was a man playing. They weren't exactly bagpipes, I don't think, because they were like this special type of, sorry? Northumberland pipes.

So, well, thank you for that. Northumberland pipes. And it was okay if you like that sort of thing. I'm sure Gene would have been skipping along to it, likely. But anyway, he was of course a busker.

And he had an open music case, as it were, looking for people to put in a few coppers or a few pounds, hopefully, I imagine, to perhaps supplement his income or whatever it may be.

Buskers are part of life, really, in many towns and markets for many reasons. And of course, Whitby as well. We have folk, particularly over the summer, busking in that way. One type of busker we don't see very often, of course, is the one-man band. So the man who would have a pair of cymbals strapped to his knees and a drum on his back and a mouth organ and a guitar. And somebody who was able to play all these instruments, varying skill levels, all at the same time. He was a master, as it were, of multitasking, a gift which we are told is very rare, especially amongst men. However, there is a person who is able to perform a great number of tasks simultaneously. There's someone who is able to work and to be active in a way which is much more beneficial to us than simply playing music on multi-levels and multi-dimensions. And that person, of course, is God the Holy Spirit.

Here in John 14 and John 16, we see that he is spoken of by the Lord Jesus Christ. And he is given a job description by the Lord Jesus, a title by the Lord Jesus, which is translated differently depending on the version of the English Bible that you have.

[12 : 02] If you have the AV, then he is called another comforter. If you have the English Standard Version or the New King James, then he is another helper. In the older NIV, the one we used to have, which we don't have now, he is the counselor. And here in the 2011 NIV, he is the advocate. In the J.B. Phillips paraphrase, and it's a lovely little paraphrase that J.B. Phillips did many years ago of the New Testament, he gets closest to an accurate description of the ministry and of the title. For he calls him the one who stands by you. The one who stands by you. But each one of those titles in English is a translation of one Greek word, Greek word para, which means alongside, kletos, parakletos. We have no English, direct English equivalent. That's the reason why different translators attempt to do that word justice by their differing translations. But in the ancient world, in ancient Greek, in the time when the

Gospels were written, the word parakletos was used to describe somebody who would come alongside another to support them. Support them with help, support them with defense. And possibly the 2011 NIV translation is one of the best. Advocate. Someone who is a defense lawyer. Someone who stands alongside you to give testimony on your behalf, in that sense, standing with you in times of difficulty. But before we come to to unwrap something of those differing titles and what they really mean together, those descriptions of God, the Holy Spirit, his work and ministry to us, it's important that we just pick up that the Lord Jesus speaks to him as another advocate. There in verse 16, I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate another advocate. That's to say, Jesus is pointing out that this person who is coming alongside to help is one like himself, that his ministry and his work is similar to the Lord Jesus.

So, he will give you another advocate. Not a advocate, but another. Someone similar to myself. And this was very important, wasn't it, for the disciples at this time. If we think of the context of where Jesus is speaking, speaking in the upper room, speaking on the night before his crucifixion, his trial and crucifixion, the night before he would leave his disciples. And they were very sad, they were concerned, they were deeply troubled. Chapter 14, verse 1 tells us in heart, Jesus was seeking throughout these chapters to encourage them, to assure them, to strengthen them in their faith in him, pointing out and revealing just who he really is as one with God the Father.

But now he gives them another reason, another reason for them not to be overly troubled at his departure, not to be overly worried or anxious, because he was going to send them somebody else to support them, somebody else to be with them. We're told there in verse 16, who will be with you forever.

But Jesus in that sense physically was leaving them, somebody who would be with them forever. And therefore it's important that we notice two things, two very important things concerning the Holy Spirit and what Jesus is saying when he says, I'm sending you another advocate.

[15 : 53] It's important that we recognize that the Holy Spirit is as much a person as Jesus is. It's easy for us to think of Jesus as a person because either we can read of him speaking and read about him picking up bread and doing things in the scriptures, or we may have seen a film or something else where he is a person. There's something very personable, if we can put it about the Lord Jesus.

But the Holy Spirit is less personal in our understanding because we see no arms, we see no legs, we read nothing about him physically appearing in that sense, he is invisible. But it's very important for us to understand that the Holy Spirit is a person. And therefore we need to understand that it has a wide ramifications about everything really, because a person is not, as we think, simply a body with a head, two arms and two legs. It impacts upon how we view a fetus in the womb as a person. It impacts about how we view somebody who has dementia, who is very elderly and very much confused as a person, or somebody who has grave disabilities as a person. A person is not physical, a person is more than that.

A person is a person. A person is a person. A person is a person. A person is a person. So the Holy Spirit is not some force. All of the cults, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, others like them as well, limit and reduce God the Holy Spirit. Not only do they have false views of Christ, they have false views of the Holy Spirit. Reduce him to nothing more than an innate, a power, a force that sort of emanates from God. But we need to understand, by the very words of Jesus himself, that the Holy Spirit is not an it, but he is a person. He is the third person of the Trinity. He is co-equal with the Father and the Son. He is not less God. He is of the same authority and nature.

That's why when we read through the New Testament, we find things which point to the fact that the Holy Spirit is indeed a person. In Ephesians chapter 4 verse 30, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

You can't grieve a thing. You can grieve a person. Again in Romans 8, 26, the Spirit himself intercedes for us and with groans that words cannot express. Only a person can pray and ask and talk.

[18 : 29] And only, it's only with another person that you can have fellowship. And so we read in 2 Corinthians 13, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. So all of these things strongly, powerfully point to the person of the Holy Spirit. And that's very important for us, that we understand him in that light, that we view him in that light, that we give him his proper place, his proper place of worship, his proper place of adoration, his proper place of honor alongside the Father and the Son.

The other thing that we're meant to understand about the Holy Spirit himself is that he does the same work as the Lord Jesus does. He does the same work. His ministry is one and the same with Christ. Now, understand me, not talking about the work of the cross, we're not talking about the work of the, of Christ's resurrection, of his atonement. We're talking about his work as an advocate, a counselor, a comforter. Jesus says, another, another like myself. In fact, in John's first letter, 1 John and chapter 2, John speaks of and uses this title of an advocate. He says there in 1 John chapter 2, My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Who's he talking about? Well, he tells us, Jesus Christ, the righteous one. So here,

Jesus is given the very same title, advocate, and it is exactly the same Greek word, paracletos. Christ is the one who speaks on our defense to the Father when we sin. He intercedes for us and speaks and stands for us so that we might know forgiveness with God. So the ministry that Jesus performed during his earthly life was that of an advocate, a comforter. And we can see that in so many ways. Do you remember when Peter spoke up and said, Lord, I'll never leave you? And Jesus said to him, Peter, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. What did Jesus then say? But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail.

He's praised for his disciples. We see that, of course, wonderfully in John chapter 17, that we call it the high priestly prayer. But really, it's the prayer of an advocate. He's standing alongside and praying for his people, us included. Jesus acted as an advocate when he defended his disciples.

There was the occasion when they were picking wheat as they walked through the field on the Sabbath day. They said, look, your disciples are doing what's lawful, but Jesus stands up for their defense and advocates against their accusers. Remember when that man who was blind was excommunicated from the synagogue because he had said good things about Jesus. Jesus befriended him, came alongside him. He didn't reject him. He was a paracletos in that sense in John 9.

[21 : 53] And when the disciples were, or rather when Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane and the soldiers came to arrest him, again, Jesus speaks on behalf of his disciples. If you're looking for me, let these men go.

Defending, advocating, praying. Just as Jesus now is leaving his disciples after all his years of ministry, of being alongside them, being with them, defending them, comforting them, counseling them, helping them. As he returns to heaven, he promises them another advocate.

But who possibly can replace the Lord Jesus in that ministry as comforter and helper to his disciples? Who could he look to? Who could he give that incredible role?

Perhaps he could have given it to Peter. Peter, who was always the spokesman for the disciples. But not really Peter, no. He was always too impulsive, wasn't he? He always sort of spoke with his mouth and not his brain. He spoke and said things which were very silly.

Jesus had to say to him, get behind me. No, Peter couldn't be Jesus' replacement. Without John, of course, John the disciple who Jesus loved, the one who leant back on his chest at the...

[23 : 15] No, John was just a little bit too Old Testament, wasn't he? With James, he wanted to call down fire from heaven upon those Samaritans who didn't welcome Jesus. No, he probably wouldn't do.

It could be Thomas, and then he's always full of doubts, isn't he, Thomas? Philip, doesn't really have much spiritual vision for anything. You could go through all the lists, couldn't you, of all the apostles and say, None of these could fulfill the ministry that Jesus fulfilled.

None of these could be a paracletos, an advocate. They were all frail men, faulty men, even with the best will in the world. They were never going to be able to carry on the ministry Christ had begun.

Only the Holy Spirit, only one who is God, can carry on the ministry of the one who is the Son of God. It's so important, dear friends, that we recognize this truth, that Jesus speaks to his disciples, that in his leaving them physically, he was giving to them the Holy Spirit.

It's so important that we do not look to men and women to be our advocate, our helper. It's utterly foolish and definitely blasphemous for people to set up one man as being Christ's representative on earth.

[24 : 35] Or call a man a priest to act as a go-between between God and another person. These are the places that belong exclusively to the Holy Spirit.

These are the ministries that belong exclusively to God himself. And to give those titles or to speak of somebody acting in that way is blasphemous, at least.

There's no one who compares to Jesus in nature but God. There's no one who is as caring and loving of the church of Jesus Christ as God. There is only one who can meet the needs of the church.

He is the Holy Spirit. So let's think then about this title, Paracletus, this advocate, this counselor, comforter, helper. I want to take just three of those English translations and pick them apart a little bit to encourage us to see just what ministry of the Holy Spirit does for us.

To see how he works in our lives and what it means for us as believers who have received and been given and are filled with the Holy Spirit.

[25 : 45] First of all, we have that translation of helper. Of one who comes alongside to help us.

There in chapter 14 of John 16 and 17. I will ask the Father, he will give you another advocate to help you. So that's a good description, isn't it?

To be with you forever. To help you and be with you forever. Perhaps one of the most difficult areas that we need help in the life as a Christian is our prayer life.

Our prayer life. In Romans chapter 8 verse 26 and 7, Paul writes this. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

That's the new NIV translation. If we're honest, that's really the place we struggle. We talked about prayer this morning. And we recognize that really this is where we fall down again and again and again.

[26 : 52] Prayer life. Our individual prayer life. And our corporate prayer life as a church. We find it hard to pray because we find prayer a struggle.

We don't know how we should pray. We don't know what we should pray for. We find that we lack the desire even to pray, don't we?

We'll always find something else to do apart from pray. But the truth is that even Paul struggled with this. That's why he says, in the same way the Spirit helps us.

He's including himself in the need of the Holy Spirit's help when he prayed. And we know and see that he was truly a man of prayer. Whenever he finishes letters, he talks about praying for so-and-so and asks for prayer for himself.

But this helper, the Holy Spirit, is the one who is with us and in us. In other words, part of his ministry is that he will move us to pray.

[27 : 54] I'm sure you've all had that experience. I'm sure that, like me, you often have it daily, where there's something within you which says, spend some time in prayer. There's a burden to prayer.

There's a desire. Not necessarily a desire to pray, because we know that prayer is a wrestling, a struggling. But there's something which says, you should be praying. But also the Holy Spirit helps us to keep on praying, to persevere in prayer.

He's the one who intercedes for us, we're told, before God in prayer. So sometimes when we're praying, we don't really know what we're praying for, but we're praying that God would do something in this situation.

He's a helper. Now, you may say, well, when I'm praying, I find it such a struggle. I don't feel that sort of help to pray and to persevere.

Could it be that actually we're not asking for help when we pray? Could it be that when we go to prayer, we just go, well, it's, you know, it's this time of the day. I've set apart for my quiet time or prayer time at night.

[29 : 01] And we just get down and we start to pray. We don't ask or lean upon or look to the Holy Spirit to help us to pray. I think that's part of the problem. I think that's part of the difficulty.

We think that we should pray. We think it's my duty to pray, therefore I must pray, and therefore there's no reason for me not to pray. And we forget that we need the Holy Spirit's help.

We begin praying through our own agenda of prayers, listing all the people that we know, and then we run out and we're not sure what to pray. We're not asking for the Holy Spirit to lead us in prayer.

May it be that the best thing we can do before we pray is to pray, Lord, send your Spirit upon me and help me in this time of prayer. Help me to know what it is you want me to pray. Give me the strength to pray.

Give me the desire to pray. Give me the perseverance to pray. Of course, that's not the only area where we need help. We need help in every area of the Christian life.

[29 : 58] We need help in reading our Bibles. We need help in loving other Christians in the church who are a pain in the neck. We need help in witnessing and sharing for Jesus in the workplace. We need help in every area of the Christian life.

That's why Paul writes to the Philippians in chapter 2, You're not on your own, dear Christian.

We're not expected just to muddle our way through day by day in the Christian life, to struggle and to strive and to overcome the flesh. God's given us His Spirit.

Christ has given us the Helper. Let's look to Him. Let's ask for Him to come and work in us and through us and help us.

I'll send you another advocate to help you. Are we too proud to ask for help? Do we think we don't deserve help? Whether those things are true or not, help is given for us to receive.

[31 : 13] The second title that I want us to think about is this title of advocate. Advocate. It's someone who defends another person or speaks up for another person in the court of law.

A defense lawyer. Someone similar to that. Speaks up for us when we're accused or condemned. Now ultimately, the Holy Spirit acts as an advocate for us when we are condemned by the devil.

When He speaks to us and causes us to doubt our salvation. And He does that, doesn't He? He tells us about our sins, our failings in the past. He condemns us when we get things wrong.

He doesn't convict us as the Holy Spirit does so that we might repent and be forgiven. But He just tells us how awful we are, terrible we are, useless we are, worthless we are, and so on.

And how on earth could God love us? The Holy Spirit acts as our advocate. He acts as an advocate in this way that it's His work to reassure us that we're God's children.

[32 : 23] To reassure us that in spite of our sins and our failings, God loves us and will never give up on us. Romans chapter 8, verse 16. The Spirit Himself, that's the Holy Spirit, testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

That's His work. When this devil is there saying, no, you're rubbish and you can't be a Christian and you keep failing and God's given up on you. The Holy Spirit is there within us again and again saying, no, you're His child.

He loves you. He's never going to forsake you. He forgives you. That's His gracious, gentle, tender work. And notice He does that always.

That's His work always. Why does Jesus say what He says? It's interesting, doesn't He? He says, I will not leave you as orphans. There's two aspects to that.

The one I'm thinking of is particularly, we feel at times bereft of God, don't we? We feel at times as if God is far from us. Where is my heavenly Father? Where are you, Lord?

[33 : 29] In the midst of this situation, I feel all alone. Surely the very feeling of an orphan. But He says, I will not leave you as orphans. Why? Because He gives to us His Spirit to assure us that we are not alone.

That He hasn't forsaken us. That He will never leave us. Satan is the accuser. That's what he's called in Revelation chapter 12.

He's the accuser. It's His work, in one sense, to accuse us night and day. To try to bring us down. To try to show us our failings, our sins.

As if in some way they will blot out God's love and grace. But the wonderful thing is this. We have an advocate who lives within us.

That's why John writes in his first letter, those wonderful phrases, the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. The Holy Spirit within us is greater than Satan.

[34 : 28] For all his lies and deceptions. The Holy Spirit is the one who assures us that we are God's children. And that He loves us. That's the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, then there's this other title. Counselor. Counselor. Another counselor.

Counseling is very big business at this time. Many people need or look to or rely upon counselors to help them to work through issues in their lives.

There are counselors to help us to come to terms with bereavement. Counselors to help us to come to terms with divorce. Counselors to help us to come through times of great stress or depression. Whatever it may be.

But a counselor is someone who advises us. They're meant to be somebody who has understanding about situations, circumstances. Advise us in regard to how we should think.

[35 : 30] Advise us how we should act and speak and believe. The sad truth, of course, is that all the counselors in all the world are human.

No matter how good they are. No matter how well educated they are. No matter how sympathetic and understanding. They aren't able, ultimately, to really get alongside us and speak to us those words of counsel and comfort that we need.

There's only one counselor we can really trust. One counselor who speaks the truth. And the reason he speaks the truth, of course, is because he is also called the Spirit of Truth.

There in John chapter 16, Jesus speaks about the One. When He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.

What does that mean? It means, firstly and foremostly, that the Holy Spirit, as our counselor, teaches us the things of Christ.

[36 : 37] He tells us about the things of Jesus. He brings to light in our understanding the things of Christ. That's what Jesus promised the disciples. He will speak, sorry, He will not speak on His own here in John 16.

He will speak only what He hears. He will tell you what is to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that He will receive what He will make known to you. In other words, the Holy Spirit's work is to bring to our minds and understanding the things of Christ.

To understand who He is, what He's done for us. To understand His Word and His truth. He is continuing the very teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus.

That's why we have there. I have much more to say to you, says Jesus, more than you can bear. But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes. Continuing that ministry.

Continuing that opening up and enlarging and revelation of the kingdom of God and the things of God. That's what we have in the New Testament. That's why we can't just concentrate on the Gospels.

[37 : 46] We can't just look at them. We need to look at the New Testament because the New Testament is God, the Holy Spirit, taking the things of Christ and making them known. And what we have written down are the very things of Jesus.

Going back in chapter 14, verse 26. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything.

People might say in question, how do we know that the Gospels, the New Testament, are reliable? How do we know that they may have forgotten things? They may have got things wrong in the way that they remembered them.

No, we know that they're right because the Spirit of God brought them to their remembrance. It's a supernatural book, isn't it? It's not reliant upon the good memory of Peter or Paul or others.

It's reliant upon the Spirit. So, 2 Timothy 3.16, all Spirit is God-inspired, God-breathed. That's what the Spirit of God was doing. He gives us those unique insights to the apostles about the truth of Christ.

[38 : 59] So, we can trust them. But also, he guides us into all truth. That's a lovely phrase, isn't it? Leads us into all truth. The NIV says, guide.

He will guide you into all truth. What does that mean? It means for the apostles, particularly, that they would be guided in the way that they revealed and spoke the truth of the New Testament to us.

Does it mean only that? No, I think it means something more. I think it means that he will guide us in the true way. He will lead us in the way we should go. That's certainly the case when you read through the book of Acts, times where the Holy Spirit said to so-and-so, go there.

Do you remember when Paul was wanting to go to a certain place? We're told the Holy Spirit stopped him. And he went another way. Being led and guided in the true way.

And surely that is our desire as Christians. One of the things we struggle with is, what's the right decision in this situation? What should I do? Should I accept this job promotion?

[40 : 06] Should I court and go out with this particular person? Are they going to be the one that I should be married and committed to in my life? We face all sorts of challenges, decisions, choices.

How do we know what is the right way? Well, we don't. And acknowledging that we don't know is the first step to looking to the guidance and leading and the counsel of the Holy Spirit.

That's why when we read through the, again, New Testament, we have come across these phrases. Those who are led by the Spirit. Those who walk in step with the Spirit.

That's what we're to do. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, which you're sealed for the day of redemption. In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul is speaking about the importance of the Holy Spirit and the necessity of the Spirit to lead us into the truth concerning God's wisdom.

But he says this, The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things. Makes judgments. How does that person make judgments? Because they're the person with the Spirit.

[41 : 16] Have you got a decision to face? A choice to make? A challenge? Are you looking, asking, expecting that God by His Spirit will lead you, guide you, direct you?

Or are you doing, which is quite sensible in one sense, putting the pros and cons list together? Well, that's not a bad thing to do. But ultimately, it's your dependence upon the counsel of God the Holy Spirit.

Here we are on Pentecost Sunday, reminding ourselves that God has given the Holy Spirit to us. He's there to help you. Christian life is a struggle.

It's difficult. Who can we lean upon? Who will help us? God by His Spirit. Do we thank God daily for Him? Do we praise God for this wonderful, gracious gift?

The person who opened your blind eyes. The person who raised you from the dead when you were in your sin. The person who opened your ears to hear. Will we humble ourselves and rely upon His resources rather than on our own failing resources?

[42 : 35] Will we be guided in His truth? Will we follow His counsel when He reveals to us the things of God in the Word? Or will we ignore and put it down?

Let's just spend a moment or two in prayer responding to God's Word this evening. Let's give thanks. Let's ask.

Let's trust. Let's do that. Just in the quietness of our hearts. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him.

So that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.