**THE TRINITY IN US**

JOHN 14:15-26

Have you ever had the experience where something really great happened in your life and you thought to yourself, “It can’t get any better than this”… but then it did? Well as I read and studied our passage this morning – really meditated on what it was saying – that was the feeling that I came away with. You see, for centuries God had promised thru His prophets that He was going to send One who would redeem His fallen creation. As you go thru the O.T. and you read the various Messianic prophecies two things begin to emerge especially in the writings of Daniel and Isaiah – that this Messiah would be God WITH us and that this Messiah would be GOD Himself. And so it happened. In the Christmas narrative, Matthew & Luke, we recognize that Jesus Christ is this long awaited Messiah – The Son of God, God in human flesh, God dwelling with us. And those earliest disciples who recognized this, those who believed Jesus’ claims that He was God, which He proved over and over again by His many signs and wonders – those who saw Jesus for who He is, they must have been excited. Wow! God is here! He is really here! It just doesn’t get any better than this.

Question – put yourself in the place of Jesus’ true followers, the 11 disciples and others who believed what Jesus said. What is your expectation of Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah? DISCUSS in small groups for a few minutes.

SHARE your expectations of Jesus

So how then do you feel, disciples, when Jesus speaks about His dying and going away, about His returning back to the Father, and leaving you?

Disappointed? Confused?

That’s where the 11 true disciples are as Jesus speaks the words of John Chapters 13-16 to them in the upper room on the Thursday night of Passion Week. The next day, Friday, Jesus is going to the cross. And so it is that Jesus imparts to His disciples some final words – words of promise, of hope and encouragement. What Jesus tells them in these chapters will profoundly influence their theology and strengthen their faith in the years to come. They may not fully understood what Jesus is saying right now, at this time, but later, after His resurrection and even after Pentecost, they will understand. They will get it.

Listen to our Lord as He continues His final words to His disciples:

15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. [the Apostle John in this gospel and in his first epistle drives home a central truth, that the mark of true Christians – love and obedience which He got from Jesus Himself] 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but YOU WILL see me. Because I live, YOU ALSO will live. 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. [underscores what He said back in v 15] And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him [the other gospel writers refer to this disciple as Thaddaeus], “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” 23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, [again, Jesus emphasizes love and obedience] and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. [the inverse is true, if you don’t love Me, you don’t obey Me]. And the WORD that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

25 These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. [audible voice, from His own lips] 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

So in this passage Jesus makes another promise – that the Father will send the Holy Spirit. When will this happen? AFTER Jesus leaves. At Pentecost. After Jesus’ death, resurrection and ascension back to heaven. So for His disciples there in the upper room listening to Jesus, this is a future promise. But for us here in this room, this is a promise we enjoy now. God, the Holy Spirit is with us, v 16, is with us forever. Not only that, v 17, He dwells with us and is IN us. So when Jesus was walking around on the earth He was God with us. Now God is not just with us but actually comes to live IN us. So just when they thought it couldn’t get any better, having Jesus there in the flesh with them, Jesus is promising that it does get better!

So what does the Holy Spirit do? He’s described in v 16 as another Helper. So He’s like Jesus. The Greek word which the ESV translates as Helper and other versions translate as Comforter *(parakltos)* literally means “to call somebody alongside.” The Holy Spirit comes alongside us and helps us. Helps us to do what? To do what Jesus commanded us to do, to carry out the Great Commission, to do the Kingdom’s work, to reach, teach and multiply. Specifically the Holy Spirit does a number of things for us – He encourages us, He exhorts us, He guides us, He comforts us, He teaches us – that is mentioned in v 26. When we get saved, the Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence IN us and helps us to live the Christian life.

In v 17 the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of truth. God is truth. Truth is what Jesus is. Remember Jesus said, “I am the way, and the TRUTH, and the life…” Jesus will repeat this reference to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth in Ch 15 and 16. One last thing from v 17 – “the world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him.” The Holy Spirit only indwells believers. For unbelievers the Holy Spirit can come to them and convict them of truth and righteousness and judgment. But sadly most people are not receptive to the truth. Many resist. This explains why people refuse to believe the truth of the gospel (this came up in our discussion last week). “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Cor 1:18) The world neither sees the Holy Spirit nor do they know Him.

Have you ever given much thought to the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ ministry? We focus on Jesus and rightfully so, He is our Lord and what He did is central to our faith. But the HS was the One who gave life in Mary’s womb which produced the incarnate Jesus. The HS was at Jesus’ baptism and rested on Him. The HS led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted. He guided and empowered Jesus throughout His ministry. So its not like the HS is just sitting on the bench waiting to come into the game after Jesus leave. No! He has been actively involved the whole time. He is God! And even so the Pharisees said that Jesus’ power came from the devil! This is further proof that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit, v 17, because it doesn’t see Him or know Him.

V 18, Jesus says to His disciples. “Yes, I’m going away, but, “I will not leave you as orphans… defenseless, weak, vulnerable.” Jesus promises, “I will come to you.”

When will Jesus come to them? He tells them in v 19. After His resurrection from the dead His disciples will see Him again. We’re told in the scriptures that Jesus only appear to believers after His resurrection. So from that standpoint the world won’t see Him again. “Because I live, you also will live.” This is a promise for us about eternal life. Because Jesus lives, because He conquered sin, death and the grave, so can will live also. Certainly our spirit goes on living forever, but like Jesus our bodies will be resurrected one day as well.

V 20 begins “In that day…” When is that? What day? V 19 speaks of His resurrection but I believe v 20 speaks of another day, the Day of Pentecost. That is the day that the Holy Spirit comes and God Himself comes to dwell IN us. “I am in my Father [unity between Father and Son], you in me [unity between Jesus and us, His church], and I in you [thru the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit].”

In v 21-24 Jesus again characterizes a true disciple by their love and obedience to Christ. We who are truly His, those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ, have this promise in v 23 – don’t miss this. Jesus said, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word [mark of a true disciple], and my Father will love him, and WE will come to him and make our home with him. [“our” references the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – it is plural] Now that’s exciting!

We know, from our Trinitarian theology developed by reading and understanding the NT teachings, that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit exist in perfect unity together. You cannot separate the Trinity. They are One. So here we see the unity promised to us, as true believers in Jesus that we will have with the entire Trinity IN us. That is an amazing thought. Consider the following passages…

In Romans 8:9 Paul says this: “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.” So, yes the Holy Spirit dwells in us, but what Jesus says in John 14 and Paul underscores in Romans 8 is that Christ also dwells in us. There is an obvious unity that exists between the God the Holy Spirit and God the Son, Jesus Christ. A couple of other verses for your consideration… Colossians 1:27 says, “Christ IN YOU, the hope of glory.” Galatians 2:20 says, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who LIVES IN ME. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Jesus closes in v 26 with a word to His disciples about how the Holy Spirit will bring to their remembrance all that Jesus had said to them. Remember, the NT has not been written yet when Jesus says this. The Holy Spirit is going to allow these men to recall the words that Jesus said during His 3 years with them. They will then write those words down for us. Matthew did it in his gospel, John did it in his. Mark borrowed mostly from Peter’s account. Luke borrowed from several sources which included many of these very same disciples. Peter in his second epistle says this: “Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:20-21) This applied to the O.T. and to the N.T. as well.

All Scripture is God-breathed through the Holy Spirit, not from any human mind. So if you attack the inerrancy of Scripture, you have made an assault on the Trinity. The God of truth revealed His truth perfectly in His Son, Jesus. His Son then sent the Holy Spirit to reveal His truth perfectly in the Scripture.

Powerful teaching here from our Lord.

In closing, here’s the application for us... (1) The characteristics of a true believer is love and obedience to Christ. (2) The triune God is our eternal life. He lives in us, in every believer, teaching and empowering us. (3) Our Bible is God’s truth revealed to us. It is inspired by God and without error. (4) We are to carry this truth to the world.