

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Week of May 16: John 15:26-16:15

The Pentecost sermon this week by Gordon Smith will be on Acts 1:1-11. In preparation for this sermon, the Connection Group study will focus on John 15:26-16:15 which will give us some background about the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Observation

1. Read John 15:26-16:15. What do you notice as you read?

2. Notice how the Holy Spirit is described in this passage. What terms or phrases are used?

Observation: What does it say?

1. What do you notice about the text?
Things to look for:
 - repeating words and phrases
 - Answers to the questions: who, what, when, where and how?
 - contrasts and comparisons
 - similes and metaphors (images used in the text)
 - cause and effect relationships
 - details regarding: time, geography, place, people, action in the text
 - grammar
 - larger themes in the passage
 - key words and themes
2. What questions do you have?

Interpretation

1. Verses 26 and 27 note that both the Holy Spirit and Jesus' disciples are to testify about Jesus. What does it look like for the Holy Spirit to testify? What does it look like for Jesus' disciples to testify?

2. Craig Keener in the *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, points out that the word *advocate* used to describe the Holy Spirit in this passage is likely drawn from courtroom language. It may have brought to mind the image of a heavenly court for those listening at the time. How might courtroom imagery help us to understand the role of the Holy Spirit as described in this passage? What is the Holy Spirit testifying to?

Interpretation

The goal here is to answer questions raised by the text and to get at the central message of the passage itself.

What did the text mean for the original audience?

How might you summarize the central point of the passage?

3. How would you summarize the work of the Holy Spirit according to this text?

Application

1. In Acts chapter 1:8 we read: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." How might this passage from John's gospel help us to understand what this looks like? Why is the Holy Spirit important to our witness today?
2. In what ways do you or have you experienced the Holy Spirit's work in your own life?