

THE WORD GIVES PEACE

DEVOTIONAL READING: [John 14:15–29](#)

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: [John 14:15–31](#)

JOHN 14:15–29

¹⁵ “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. 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. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ 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.”

²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

²³ 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. ²⁴ 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 sent me.

²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

²⁸ “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.



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KEY VERSE

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.—John 14:16

PARTNERS IN A NEW CREATION

Unit 2: The Word: The Agent of Creation

LESSONS 5–9

LESSON AIMS

After participating in this lesson, each learner will be able to:

1. Summarize Jesus' promise regarding the Holy Spirit.
2. Explain the link between the presence of the Holy Spirit and living in obedience to

Christ.

3. Write a prayer of thanks to God for the presence of the Holy Spirit in his or her life.

LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction

- A. Abandoned!
- B. Lesson Context
- I. Promise of the Spirit (John 14:15-17)
 - A. Initial Requirement (v. 15)
 - B. Firm Promise (vv. 16-17)
In Our Corner
- II. Assurance by the Son (John 14:18-24)
 - A. Presence (v. 18)
 - B. Life (v. 19)
 - C. Knowledge (v. 20)
 - D. Obedience (v. 21)
“If You Really Loved Me, You’d ...”
 - E. Clarification (vv. 22-24)
- III. Purpose of the Spirit (John 14:25-26)
 - A. Son’s Present Message (v. 25)
 - B. Spirit’s Future Ministry (v. 26)
- IV. Insight of Jesus (John 14:27-29)
 - A. Peace Bestowed (v. 27)
 - B. Failure Rebuked (vv. 28-29)

Conclusion

- A. Abandoned? Never!
- B. Prayer
- C. Thought to Remember

HOW TO SAY IT

Judas Iscariot	<i>Joo-dus Iss-care-ee-ut.</i>
Pentecost	<i>Pent-ih-kost.</i>
Thaddaeus	<i>Tha-dee-us.</i>

Introduction

A. Abandoned!

“Sorry, I have to leave now.” Words like these have broken many hearts. Someone goes off to war, a dear friend moves far away, an elderly loved one passes on. There is likely a sad embrace, a final farewell, and thoughts of being abandoned.

By one estimate, there are over 100 million people in the world who face the harsh reality of being orphans. War, famine, and disease have no respect for the plight of children stripped of their parents. Such children have little hope unless someone steps in to help. They feel—and often literally are—abandoned ([Lamentations 5:3](#)).

For most of three years, Jesus had been the constant companion of his chosen 12. They had left everything to follow him. But he was about to leave. What would the sheep do if they were abandoned by their shepherd?

B. Lesson Context

Jesus revealed God to humanity. Jesus was the Word who “was God”; he was the Word who “became flesh” ([John 1:1, 14; lesson 5](#)). He was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world ([1:29](#)). As the Gospel of John progresses, we see an increasing emphasis on Jesus’ divine nature. He was accused of “making himself equal with God” ([5:18](#)). He exhibited power to raise the dead and authority to pronounce judgment ([5:21–22](#)). He said, “I and the Father are one” ([10:30](#)). His miracles proved the truth of his claims ([10:36–38](#)).

The climax of Jesus’ claims came in an upper room in the week before his death. There Jesus told his disciples that no one could come to the Father except through him ([John 14:6](#)). More stunningly, he declared, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” ([14:9](#)). Truly God was present with his people! But Jesus also had an unpleasant shock for his disciples that night: he was leaving. Just when they were realizing that they had God’s presence in their midst, it seemed that they were about to lose it!

It was in this setting that Jesus promised to send another: the Holy Spirit. From the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry, the Spirit had had an active role (see [John 1:32; 3:5; 4:24; etc.](#)), and Jesus promised that one day the Spirit would be granted to all believers ([7:39](#)). On that Thursday night in the upper room, Jesus made final preparations for that to be possible.

I. Promise of the Spirit

([JOHN 14:15–17](#))

A. Initial Requirement (v. 15)

15. “If you love me, keep my commands.

Interwoven with promises of the coming Spirit was this insistence of Jesus. Love for him must be more than a fickle emotion. The Bible meaning of love includes loyalty and commitment. That is the kind of love Jesus meant when he declared that the greatest commandment is to love God with all one’s heart, soul, and mind ([Matthew 22:37](#)). We owe this kind of love to Jesus; nothing less will do. Genuine Christians don’t just *believe*; they *obey*.

What Do You Think?

Name some of Jesus’ commandments right now. (After all, if we can’t name them, how can we keep them?)

Digging Deeper

What would be a passing score on naming them?

A tragic footnote must be added to the words of the verse before us. When Jesus said *if you love me*, he was keenly aware that not all his disciples did, in fact, love him. Only minutes before, Jesus had dismissed Judas Iscariot out into the night to do what that traitor was determined to do—betray his Lord to the temple authorities (see [John 13:21–30](#)). We will always show by our actions our response to Jesus’ fateful words “if you love me.”

B. Firm Promise (vv. 16–17)

16. “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—

Jesus had already told his disciples that he would be with them only a little while longer ([John 13:33](#)). As they puzzled over the significance of those alarming words, Jesus made the promise we see in the verse before us. The Father always heard the Son (see [11:41–42](#)), and this prayer would be honored. By Jesus’ personal request, *another advocate* would soon be given.

But who was this Advocate and what would he do? The main difficulty with the word *advocate* is its potentially wide range of meanings. Older translations of the Bible render this word as “Comforter” (*King James Version*) and “Helper” (*New American Standard Bible*). The Greek word being translated is often found in legal settings to refer to someone who goes to court with another to help plead a case. (The same Greek word is translated “advocate” in [1 John 2:1](#), where it refers to Jesus himself.) In a more general sense, such an individual might promise, “If you’re ever in trouble, I’ll be there for you.”

So as Jesus announced his pending departure, he also promised that someone would take his place. That replacement was going to *be with* the disciples *forever*. In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God came upon individuals somewhat sporadically and temporarily (examples:

Judges 14:6, 19; 15:14). But for Christians, the indwelling Spirit abides continually (see Acts 2:38; Ephesians 1:13–14).

IN OUR CORNER

My best friend was frantic. She had been summoned to court by her ex-husband, who was seeking sole custody of their children. The reasons he declared for wanting sole custody weren't exactly true. My friend was scared and intimidated due to the manipulation she was used to receiving at his hands.

I wrote a character letter for her, outlining how hard she worked with each of her children. But it turned out she needed something else more. She needed a friend. She needed a comforter and advocate to stand with her during that stressful time.

I immediately booked a flight. And for an entire week, we battled the weight of oppression that threatened to bury her. When the court date came, I stood by her. I was waiting to be called to the stand to bear witness of my friend's character. Thankfully, the truth was discerned, and the judge ruled in my friend's favor.

Life's biggest storms don't seem so bad when we have someone in our corner to walk through the storm with us. How tragic it would be if we ignored the Comforter and Advocate we have. Look for him in your storms!

—P. M.

17a. “the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

The Holy Spirit is *the Spirit of truth* (also John 15:26; 16:13) because God himself is always true (17:17; Hebrews 6:18). This same Spirit moved those who wrote the prophecies of the Old Testament to write infallible truth (2 Peter 1:21). It was time for the Spirit to come to the disciples and to the church (compare John 15:26; 16:13).

But the Spirit would not indwell those of *the world*—they *cannot accept* him (compare 1 Corinthians 2:14). God sends the Spirit only into the hearts of those who are redeemed (Galatians 4:6). Only the children of God have the Spirit of God, and only those who are led by the Spirit are his children (see Romans 8:14).

17b. “But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Although the Spirit wouldn't be poured out until the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), the disciples already *know him* in the sense that they were already aware of various ways he had worked so far (Luke 1:41, 67; 2:25; 3:22; etc.). The Spirit both *lives with* (present tense) and *will be in* (future tense) the disciples.

II. Assurance by the Son

(JOHN 14:18–24)

A. Presence (v. 18)

18a. “I will not leave you as orphans;

Jesus fully understands that his disciples may feel like *orphans*, forlorn and alone, after he departs, so he is preparing for this. Just as God the Father had promised that he would never leave or forsake the children of Israel (see [Deuteronomy 31:6](#)), now God the Son makes a similar promise to his disciples. The children (see [John 13:33](#)) are not being abandoned.

18b. “I will come to you.

This promise has drawn three interpretations: it refers to (1) Jesus’ second coming ([John 14:3](#)), (2) the gift of the Holy Spirit ([14:16–17, 26](#)), or (3) Jesus’ resurrection ([20:19, 26](#)). Based on what Jesus said in [John 14:20](#) (below), the third proposal is probably the best.

B. Life (v. 19)

19. “Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

On the very next day, which we now call Good Friday, Jesus would be crucified and buried. After his resurrection, Jesus appeared repeatedly to his disciples, in both small and large groups (see also [John 16:16](#)). But never again would the unbelieving world see him alive. (Individual exceptions to this statement included appearances to his half brother James, who previously did not believe in him, and to Saul. Compare [Mark 3:21; 6:3; John 7:5; 1 Corinthians 15:5–8](#).)

Jesus’ resurrection would give new hope to disciples: *because I live, you also will live*. His forthcoming victory over death will mean victory for all who follow him.

C. Knowledge (v. 20)

20a. “On that day you will realize that I am in my Father,

Jesus had already discussed his relationship with his Father ([John 14:7–11](#)). However, the disciples’ understanding of that relationship was not yet what it should be. The greater understanding would come on a certain day when they *will realize that I am in my Father*.

But when exactly is *that day*? Bible students have proposed three possibilities: (1) the day Jesus rose from the dead ([John 2:22](#)), (2) the day when Jesus was glorified ([12:16](#)), or (3) the day when the Holy Spirit came ([16:12–15](#)). The strongest case probably can be made for the day of Jesus’ resurrection, given the last part of [John 14:19](#), just considered.

20b. “and you are in me, and I am in you.

The forthcoming transformation of the relationship between Jesus and his disciples seems to be the intent of this phrase. Jesus addressed the significance of this more fully in [John 14:23–24](#) (below) and in [John 17](#).

D. Obedience (v. 21)

21a. “Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me.

Jesus repeated the importance of keeping of his *commands* ([John 14:15](#), above; compare [15:10](#)). His teachings are not mere suggestions or general guidelines for an improved life; they are, rather, directives from the Lord to his servants. It is by keeping the Lord’s commands that his servants show that they love him (compare [1 John 5:3](#); [2 John 6](#)). True discipleship must be more than mere lip service (see [Luke 6:46](#)).

“*IF YOU REALLY LOVED ME, YOU’D ...*”

People have used the phrase above to manipulate others for as long as anyone can remember. Such manipulators fill in the blank with requests that are often illegal, immoral, and/or unethical. There was even a true-crime book written about a father who used that expression to get his daughter to commit a horrendous crime. Sadly, the manipulation worked, ruining a whole family in the process.

[John 14:21a](#) is not at all similar because Jesus’ motivation was different from that of a manipulator. In showing our love by keeping his commandments, we end up doing what is in our best interests too, not only his. When we get this straight, we may just find ourselves less susceptible to becoming one of the world’s manipulators—or being victimized by one.

—P. M.

21b. “The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

True love is to be modeled on the Father’s own love for us: always loyal and committed. The harmonious oneness between *Father* and *Son* is so profound that to *be loved* by one is to be loved by the other. The result for the disciples in being so loved was that Jesus planned to *show* himself to them. This certainly happened after Jesus’ resurrection ([John 20:19–29](#); [21:1–14](#)).

E. Clarification (vv. 22–24)

22. Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show your-

self to us and not to the world?”

Judas *Isca*riot had already departed to betray Jesus at this point ([John 13:26–30](#)). But there was another man named *Judas* among the 12 apostles ([Luke 6:16](#); [Acts 1:13](#)); this Judas was also known as Thaddaeus ([Matthew 10:3](#); [Mark 3:18](#)). He was struggling to understand what Jesus meant by his statement in [John 14:19](#), above. Judas wasn't asking *how* in terms of methods or procedures; rather, he was asking *why*.

What Do You Think?

When in a crisis situation, how do you know when it's better to voice your concerns and when it's better to remain quiet?

Digging Deeper

Don't just answer that with "it depends on the situation." Dig deeper!

23. 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.

For the third time (see [John 14:15, 21](#), above), *Jesus* emphasized that those who love him must *obey* his *teaching*. This time it is stated not as a command but as a simple fact.

When followers do obey their Lord, two things are promised to follow. First, the *Father will love* that person. Second, both the Father and the Son *will come* to that person and will *make their home with* him or her. The word translated “home” is the same that is translated “rooms” in [John 14:2](#). In both places the emphasis is on the intended permanence of the dwelling place. Therefore, when Jesus departed to prepare the place of [John 14:2](#), he was also making the believer to be a dwelling place for him. The role of the Holy Spirit in this is addressed in [14:25–26](#), below.

The Spirit has come!



Sheet 6—Summer 2022, Adult Resources, Standard Lesson Quarterly® Curriculum

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Lesson 9

Visual for [Lesson 9](#). Have learners pair up to discuss what reasons they have for confidence that the Spirit is at work in their lives and in the church.

24. “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 sent me.

After saying that those who love him will keep his commands, Jesus then stated the flip side of this same truth: whoever *does not love* him *does not obey* his *teaching*. After all, how can someone truly love Jesus but ignore what he says?

These commands/sayings were not just from Jesus; they were in fact those of the Father (compare [John 7:16](#); [14:10](#)). God *sent* his Son to deliver the Father’s message and to show the Father’s love. Therefore, to disregard Jesus is to disregard God.

What Do You Think?

When is it not wrongly “judgmental” to point out someone’s disobedience to Jesus?

Digging Deeper

Consider [Matthew 7:1, 20](#); [Romans 14:4, 10, 13](#); [1 Corinthians 4:4–5](#); [5:12–13](#); [James 5:20](#); etc.

III. Purpose of the Spirit

([JOHN 14:25-26](#))

A. Son's Present Message (v. 25)

25. “All this I have spoken while still with you.

Jesus said many things to his disciples that night. He had instituted the Lord's Supper, demonstrated a servant spirit by washing their feet, and taught them about the coming of the Advocate. While Jesus was *still with* them, he had yet more to teach. But their minds were able to absorb only so much (compare [John 20:9](#)). Even so, there was more to come, as the next verse shows.

B. Spirit's Future Ministry (v. 26)

26. “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.

Jesus now summarizes the forthcoming ministry of *the Advocate* (see on [John 14:16](#), above), who is also known as *the Holy Spirit*. This is God's own Spirit, who was soon to be sent to the apostles in the name of Jesus.

Jesus also added information about what the apostles were to expect the Holy Spirit to do. First, he *will teach you all things*. This would become the basis of the inspiration of the men who wrote the New Testament. Things that they did not know would be taught to them by the Holy Spirit. Like the prophets of old, they would be moved by the Spirit to write Scripture.

What Do You Think?

How do you know when a promise of Scripture applies to all Christians rather than just to those to whom it was originally given?

Digging Deeper

What Scripture passages support your answer?

The Spirit would also remind the disciples of things previously seen and heard. Since two of those present, namely Matthew and John, would later write Gospels of Jesus' life, it would be vital for them to be able to recall accurate details of what they had witnessed. Even as they wrote decades later, their thoughts on the life of Jesus would be clear and correct.

In an indirect way, the work of the Spirit to teach and to remind is a promise to all of us. First through Scripture and then through his indwelling presence, the Spirit leads us toward the truth and to recall it (example: [Mark 13:11](#)). The Spirit is our helper indeed!

What Do You Think?

How do you respond to someone who claims to have had a revelation from the Holy Spirit?

Digging Deeper

When would you cite Scripture passages in your response and when would you not?

IV. Insight of Jesus (JOHN 14:27–29)

A. Peace Bestowed (v. 27)

27. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Jews of the era customarily used *peace* as a word of greeting and farewell (examples: [2 Corinthians 1:2](#); [13:11](#)). Given the context, Jesus’ use of that word was a farewell bequest. But this farewell word was to become again a word of greeting, after the resurrection (see [John 20:19](#), [21](#), [26](#)).

B. Failure Rebuked (vv. 28–29)

28a. “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad

The disciples hadn’t fully comprehended Jesus’ repeated announcement of his pending departure ([John 14:2–4](#), [12](#), [18–19](#)). This failure drew a rebuke from Jesus: if they truly *loved* him, they *would be glad* for him. The reason they didn’t rejoice was because they were focused on their own grief at their forthcoming loss of Jesus’ companionship.

28b–29. “that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.”

Many verses make clear that Jesus was and is equally divine with God the Father ([John 1:1](#), [18](#); [5:16–18](#); [10:30](#); [20:28](#)). Therefore, Jesus’ declaration *the Father is greater than I* cannot mean that Jesus played second fiddle to the Father in the core nature of their being. Throughout Christian history, this belief has been roundly condemned as a heresy referred to as subordinationism.

The solution is to understand the role that Jesus had accepted: in his then-current role as God incarnate, Jesus had subordinated himself to the Father’s desires ([John 4:34](#); [5:19–30](#); [8:29](#); [12:48–50](#)). It is in comparison with those two roles as sender-from-Heaven and sent-to-earth that the Son declared the Father to be the greater. But when Jesus returned to his eter-

nal home, his role of subordination was completed. Thus Jesus' statement here was part of his rebuke of the disciples. In their self-centered grief, they were unwilling to see what Jesus would regain by returning to Heaven.

Conclusion

A. Abandoned? Never!

The disciples in the upper room were startled, even frightened, to hear that their shepherd was going to leave them. Their lack of understanding was still evident at the empty tomb ([John 20:9](#)) and again at the ascension ([Acts 1:6](#)). But was their Lord going to abandon them? Never!

One of the most precious promises in the Bible, stated in both the Old and New Testaments, is God's promise not to abandon his people (see [Joshua 1:5](#); [Hebrews 13:5](#)). Even though we "walk through the darkest valley," our shepherd is with us ([Psalm 23:4](#)). We are not forsaken.

As we are reminded each Christmas season, one of the names of Jesus is Immanuel, which means "God with us" ([Isaiah 7:14](#); [8:8](#); [Matthew 1:23](#)). That truth becomes real for believers in every generation. Because we have the divine presence of the Holy Spirit, we are never abandoned.

B. Prayer

Father, help us sense the presence of your Spirit as he dwells within us. May we draw on his strength to show your Son's love daily through our obedience. Give us peace in him. In his name we pray. Amen.

C. Thought to Remember

We have the promised Spirit of God.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

Enhance your lesson with NIV Bible Student (from your curriculum supplier) and the reproducible activity page (at www.standardlesson.com or in the back of the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary Deluxe Edition).

Into the Lesson

Distribute handouts (you prepare) that feature these scrambled words:

nabker eidrfn crootd

Allow one minute for participants to unscramble as the three words and note what they have in common. (*Answers:* banker, friend, doctor; all are people to whom we might go for counsel or advice with a project.)

After a brief time of sharing and discussion, say, “Such advisors aren’t always available, and their counsel is subject to error.” (*Option.* At this point, encourage learners to share bad experiences in that regard.) Make a transition by saying “Let’s see what the Bible has to say about someone who is the opposite with regard to both availability and infallibility.”

Into the Word

Display the following sayings on the board to appear as bumper stickers:

Love Is Something You Do

Just Be Nice

Be Yourself

Assign sayings to groups of three or four. Challenge them to search today’s text to answer the following question, also written on the board:

*In what way(s) are these sentiments congenial with or opposed to the message of today’s text of
[John 14:15–29](#)?*

Use the size and nature of your class to guide you in determining how many “bumper stickers” to have each group to evaluate, whether to add more of your own, etc. Allow no more than eight minutes for groups to reach conclusions. As groups report during whole-class discussion, add commentary to affirm or correct as needed.

Alternative or Option. Distribute copies of the two exercises on the activity page, which you can download. There are many ways to connect these studies with the bumper-sticker exercise just considered. You could have some groups could do the two exercises on the activity page while other groups do the bumper-sticker activity. Or all groups could do all activities in sequence, etc. Evaluate which approach to take according to the nature of your class and the time that is available.

Option. Another possibility is to recruit volunteers to present two-minute mini-lectures. Give them access to the lesson commentary, and ask each of the two volunteers to answer one

of the following questions for the whole class:

- What's the best method to use to determine what the word *Advocate* means and signifies?
- How do we determine which promises of Jesus are for all believers in all eras or just specifically for the original apostles?
- Has Jesus' promise, "I will come to you" ([John 15:18](#)) been fulfilled? Why, or why not?
- When is "that day" when Jesus will be fully known ([15:20](#))? What is the evidence for your conclusion?

Into Life

Give to each participant a slip of paper on which you have printed these two questions (or just write them on the board—but don't write the second before the first in answered, etc.):

- 1–Which saying of Jesus in today's text encourages you the most?
- 2–Which saying presents the biggest challenge?
- 3–Which makes you want to study the Holy Spirit more?

Close by having participants write a prayer of thanks to God for the presence of the Holy Spirit in his or her life. *Option.* As they write, have playing a video of "There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit in This Place" being sung as part of a meditative close to your session.