

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate [Paraclete], who will never leave you.”

- JOHN 14:16 NLT

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION:

PARACLETE (GREEK) = ADVOCATE:

- ***The Holy Spirit is our COMFORTER.***
- ***The Holy Spirit is our ENCOURAGER.***
- ***The Holy Spirit is our COUNSELOR.***

WEEK 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Comforter. Encourager. Counselor.

The Trinity, in short, is how we — as followers of Jesus — strive to understand and comprehend God through our limited knowledge. We believe and confess that God exists in three, co-equal, co-eternal, yet distinct persons. We refer to God as **One God: Three persons**, or **The God Head: Three In One**. The three persons of the Trinity are as follows:

- **God — the Father**
- **God — the Son (Jesus)**
- **God — the Holy Spirit**

All are one God, yet distinct in their roles. All are one God, yet have relationship with one another. It would be a terrible misnomer to say that we worship three different gods. We worship one God who is best understood in three persons. Our God is a wonderful mystery whom we will never fully comprehend this side of eternity, but that does not mean we cease in trying to get to know Him better every day.

If you are wondering why we are talking about this in a lesson entitled “The Holy Spirit,” it is because the Holy Spirit may be the most misunderstood person of the Trinity.

What comes to your mind when you think of the Holy Spirit?

It is our hope that by the end of this session, you will better understand and grasp the role and power of the Holy Spirit.

Here is the definition of the Holy Spirit given to us by Jesus in John's gospel. This is probably the best place to start since He is essentially talking about Himself. Here Jesus has poured His heart out in one of the very last moments He spoke to His followers. He said this:

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate [the Holy Spirit], who will never leave you."

[John 14:16 NLT]

What does Jesus mean by "another" Advocate?

While on earth, Jesus did advocate to the Father for us, and now still continues to do so through His Spirit — the Holy Spirit.

What do you think of when you think of an advocate?

This is the best way to describe the role of the Holy Spirit — Advocate. There are three phrases that will help us better understand this role and person of the Trinity.

1. AN ADVOCATE IS A COMFORTER.

We all like comfort. We even seek it out. From when we were children and needing a “blankie” to looking forward to a cheat-meal during a diet, we all crave comfort.

What in your daily life comforts you the most?

Look at how the Holy Spirit acts in this role of Comforter:

“He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

5 For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ.”

[2 Corinthians 1:4-5 NLT]

How have you experienced this comfort in your life?

Have you been able to pass on the comfort you have received to another person? How so?

It truly is a comfort to know that the Holy Spirit is working to comfort us through our hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Leaning on Him through these times not only gives hope, but also brings joy.

“...When troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.” [James 1:2 NLT]

2. AN ADVOCATE IS AN ENCOURAGER.

We all would welcome a friend who is a constant source of encouragement. Someone who walks alongside of us, tells us we matter, and that we can take the next step. This is exactly what the Holy Spirit does in the life of a follower of Jesus. Maybe you have heard the phrase, *“The Lord works in mysterious ways.”* He surely does, and this is often the workings of the Holy Spirit to bring us encouragement through difficulties.

How has the Holy Spirit encouraged you?

Learning to discern His voice is key. There are so many voices vying for our attention: movies, magazines, news outlets, social media, music, that one relative at Thanksgiving that always wants to dive deep into theology or politics. So many voices want us to listen. It requires intentionality to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit above these other voices. There is also another voice that stands in a category alone: the voice of the enemy. The devil often use the things mentioned above, but more often, speaks in a language of his own — lies.

Have you experienced hearing lies from the enemy?

Here is the trick to outwitting the enemy: Because he can *only* speak in lies (ex. *“You are worthless.” “You do not matter.” “You are alone.”*), you can know that the opposite is actually true of you (ex. *“You are highly valued by the King of Kings.” “You matter so much to God, the Father, that He sent*

His Son, Jesus, to die for you.” “God is always with you through His Spirit wherever you go.”). Do not allow the enemy to have a voice in your life. Learn to hone in on the voice of the Holy Spirit. He will always bring clarity, encouragement, and truth.

The Holy Spirit may prompt you to be an encouragement to others. Or, He may prompt other to be an encouragement to you.

Share a time when either of these was the case.

“He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump.” [Psalm 113:7 NLT]

This is the One we want to journey with us. Our hope is that you begin to see and experience His encouragement more and more.

3. AN ADVOCATE IS A COUNSELOR.

What do you think of when you think of a counselor? A camp counselor, an attorney, a therapist? Does this word make you cringe or bring you peace?

Are you quick to listen to the wisdom of others? Give an example.

King Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, and yet, even he knew he could not always trust his own instincts when he wrote:

“Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others.” [Proverbs 12:15 NLT]

James, the half brother of Jesus, also give us a clear picture of the Holy Spirit as a Counselor:

“If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.” [James 1:5 NLT]

How have you seen the Holy Spirit work in this capacity?

All of us could use a little more wisdom at times. Let’s be quick to run to God for help.

Whether we need comfort, encouragement, or counsel, the Holy Spirit is actively moving in His role to fulfill these tasks. Even when do not know exactly how, all we need to do is simply ask, trust, and then rely on Him. Paul addresses this very mystery to the early Church:

“And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don’t know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.” [Romans 8:26 NLT]

Have you experienced this?

Our hope is that you begin to tap into the abundant life that only comes from the Holy Spirit of God actively living in and through you.

In our last week, we will talk about next steps: “Now what?!”. God is calling you to follow in obedience. Will you?