

Sermon: The Spirit of Life

Text: John 15:18-16:33

Discussion Questions:

When you look back over your life, what are some of your most joyful moments?

Was the joy the result of something that was difficult or painful to experience—or did you have to GO THROUGH the pain or struggle to get to the place of joy?

How does your relationship with Jesus help you endure times of sorrow and pain?

It can be difficult at times to specifically identify or explain ways in which the Holy Spirit has been active or at work in our lives. Having said that, as you think about the times of struggle or suffering that you've experienced, how has the Holy Spirit been working in your life—and what effect did it have on you?

What would you say to someone who is experiencing pain or sorrow in order to encourage them and remind them of God's love for them?

Examination:

- Read **John 15:18-25**
 - Are there things you hate? Why do you hate those things? Is it wrong to hate things that someone else likes?
 - What is Jesus preparing the disciples (and us) for (vv. 18-19)? Why did the world hate Jesus—and why might they hate you?
 - Have you ever been hated by someone? Who hated you and why did they hate you? Was there anything you could have done to deter their hatred or change their attitude towards you?
 - Should you live your life so that everyone will like you? What is the danger in living your life so that others will always like you?
 - When Jesus said that He was hated without reason, what do you think He meant by this?
- Read **John 15:26-16:4a**
 - Who is going to come and help the disciples do what they have been called to do in the midst of persecution and hatred (vv. 26-27)?
 - How does the Helper help you endure the world's persecution and hatred because of your faith in Jesus?
 - Are you thankful for the Helper's strength and presence in the face of opposition? How do you express this?
 - Why does Jesus tell His disciples that they will be hated and persecuted for their faith in Christ (vv. 1-4a)?
 - How does knowing that persecution is coming help prepare you for persecution? Have you ever used this tactic to prepare others?

- Read **John 16:4b-15**

- Have you ever had to do something unpopular or even unpleasant because it was actually helping others? If so, what did you do and how was that an advantage for them?
- Is it easy for people in our culture and society to take their focus off of themselves and seek to do what is advantageous for others? Why or why not?
- Jesus tells His disciples that He did not tell them certain things from the beginning (v. 4b). What things is Jesus referring to, and why did He not tell them these things until now?
- When Jesus talks about going away, where is He going, and what will His going accomplish?
- In verse 7, Jesus tells the disciples that it is an advantage to them that He goes away. How is it advantage to them?
- Is having the Holy Spirit better than walking and talking with Jesus in His physical bodily form? If so, how is having the Holy Spirit better?
- How has the Holy Spirit helped you in your Christian life? How has He guided you and helped you glorify Jesus?
- What does Jesus tell His disciples about the job that the Spirit will do in the world (vv. 8-11)?
- What does Jesus tell His disciples about the work that the Spirit will do in their lives (vv. 13-15)?

- Read **John 16:16-33**

- What is Jesus referring to when He says, *"A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me"* (v. 16)?
- Does the disciples lack of understanding surprise you? What work will the Holy Spirit do when He comes?
- What does Jesus say about the sorrow of the disciples? How will their sorrow change? How will this be possible?
- Does the illustration of childbirth help the disciples understand how sorrow can turn to joy? How does this illustration help you understand real joy?
- In vv. 23-24, Jesus says: *"In that day you will ask nothing of me."* Why will they not ask anything? When will this take place?
- When Jesus admits to using figures of speech (v. 25), what is He referring to? What has He been talking about in figures of speech?
- Jesus admits that His message has been hard to understand. Are there things about the Christian life that are difficult for you to fully comprehend? What aspect of the Christian life would you like better understanding about?

Application:

Many of us forget about, or greatly diminish the role of the Holy Spirit in the world and in the life of a believer. May the words of Jesus to His disciples be words that help you remember that the Spirit will show up in a mighty way to work in both the world and in your life this week. Take a moment and say a prayer of thanks to God for giving the Spirit—and ask Him to guide you in the truth to live for Him.