

5/17 TAKE-HOME SUNDAY SCHOOL

Read: St. John 14: 15-21

¹⁵Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you a guide to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷the Holy Spirit. The world cannot accept the Spirit, because the world neither sees the Spirit nor knows this Spirit of Truth. But you will know the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit lives with you and will be *within* you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; my love will come to you in this way. ¹⁹Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will realize that I am “one” with my Father, and you are “one” with me, and I am “one” with you. ²¹Whoever 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.”

Some helpful background info

- The book of John is the fourth of the Gospels (the stories written in the first century A.D. about Jesus that make up the beginning of the New Testament). It has many of the same details as the other three Gospels, though there are some differences – likely because each Gospel writer was trying to speak to his own audience and emphasize something a little different about Jesus. For instance, in John, there is no famous “Sermon on the Mount,” there is a much greater emphasis on Jesus being “divine,” symbolism is used much more, and the content is more philosophical “reflection” than description.
- This verse is part of the “Farewell Discourse,” Jesus’ last few words of wisdom about his deeper meaning before he is arrested and killed. Most of the disciples don’t understand what is about to happen to him, but Jesus knows he will soon leave the world and wants them to feel prepared for when he goes.

Reflect:

- 1) It can be very hard to feel God's Love, trust God, or know Truth when we cannot tangibly see it. However, Jesus, in his infinite wisdom, promised that God would not leave us "alone" to feel dry and unsure of ourselves. He explains that God was about to send the Holy Spirit to all of humanity, so we could always feel God's love in our hearts, and know right from wrong. Where do you see the "Holy Spirit? Where do you feel Love most in your life? That is a gift from the Spirit so we can know God! Do you ever feel a little voice in your head and in your heart telling you what you should and shouldn't do? (Many think THAT is the Holy Spirit pointing you towards God's Truth!)
- 2) Why do you think God says, "If you love me, keep my commandments"? Can you think of anyone in the Bible, or in real life, that SAID they loved God, but didn't really show it? Do you think God prefers people who say they love Him or ACT like it? Why?

Suggested answers to reflection questions:

- 1) Any way that you feel love and comfort in your lives is a gift from the Holy Spirit to get a small taste of how great God is. Without it, we probably couldn't understand how amazing or trustworthy God is. And God uses the Holy Spirit as well in the form of our consciences to help us to make loving decisions, because He knows this will make us most fulfilled.
- 2) Ever since the Old Testament, God has been telling people that He cares far less about people talking about their faith and far more about people proving it by praying in private and showing kindness to others especially when it's hard. It's clear that we really *don't* trust God and love Him unless we respect him enough to follow the teachings He asks of us. Peter, one of Jesus' main disciples, constantly talked about how much he loved God and Jesus, and yet, he ultimately denied it three times when his life was at risk.

Closing Prayer:

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord,
by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit
help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your comfort.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.