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**Another Helper**

**John 14.16**

**Series: Signs of Life**

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I. Introduction

- A. Every episode ended in the same way
  - 1. After coming to the aid of the dispossessed and the disenfranchised and defeating the criminals, the masked man in the white hat would leap onto his mount, a magnificent white stallion, cry out, “Hi-Yo Silver, away!”
    - a. And off he would ride into the sunset
    - b. Accompanied, somehow in the windswept wilderness of the American west, by a symphony orchestra playing the William Tell Overture
  - 2. Whereupon one of the townspeople would invariably ask, “Who was that masked man?”
    - a. Someone would reply, “Oh, he’s the Lone Ranger”
    - b. Known only by his distinctive mask and his simple calling card of a silver bullet
- B. The Lone Ranger became a classic American icon
  - 1. Beginning as a radio program in 1933 on WXYZ in Detroit
    - a. Then later as a television show which ran from 1949-1957
    - b. It even spawned movies, and remakes of movies as recently as 2013
  - 2. But the Lone Ranger was always cloaked in mystery, even as he went about doing good, righting wrong, fighting for justice, and helping the oppressed
  - 3. His origin was never very clear, with conflicting accounts of his identity and even his name
  - 4. The mysteries persisted
    - a. Which of course made the episodes all the more compelling
- C. A similar mystery persists among Christians regarding the Holy Spirit
  - 1. In which much misunderstanding and even ignorance persists
    - a. Even after all these centuries following the coming of the Holy Spirit on the church on Pentecost
  - 2. J.I. Packer: Christian people are not in doubt as to the work that Christ did; they know that He redeemed men by His atoning death, even if they differ among themselves as to what exactly this involved. But the average Christian is in a complete fog as to what work the Holy Spirit does. Some talk of the Spirit of Christ in the way that one would talk of the Spirit of Christmas – as a vague cultural pressure making for bonhomie and religiosity. Some think of the Spirit as inspiring the moral convictions of

unbelievers like Gandhi... But most, perhaps, do not think of the Holy Spirit at all, and have no positive ideas of any sort about what He does. They are for practical purposes in the same position as the disciples whom Jesus met at Ephesus – ‘We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.’ (Acts 9.2)

D. It is fitting, then, on this Pentecost Sunday that we find ourselves – all by the sovereign providence of God – in the precise portion of the Gospel of John where Jesus begins to unpack the identity and work of the Holy Spirit

1. In which Jesus begins to answer the question, “Who is that masked man?”

E. Text

1. **John 14:16–17** (NASB95) — 16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.”

## II. **Yet another extravagant promise**

A. But first, let’s put that verse in context

B. This is that portion of John 14 where Jesus lays out a series of extravagant promises

1. **John 14:12** (NASB95) — 12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.”

a. Jesus promises that the apostles – and the church to follow – would do even greater works than Jesus!

b. Amazing!

2. **John 14:13–14** (NASB95) — 13 “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 “If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.”

a. Extravagant promise in answering prayer

b. “Whatever you ask... If you ask Me anything... I will do it”

3. Of course, we recognized the conditions that Jesus invested in that promise

a. Answered prayer pertains to Christians

b. That “in the name of Jesus” means more than a formulaic appendage to a request – that it means a wholehearted commitment to the will of Christ

c. That an overriding concern that the Father would be glorified in the Son would be the motivating condition that would make such prayer compelling at the throne of grace

d. And finally, that a love for Christ that results in keeping the commandments of Christ makes such prayers relevant and meaningful

4. And we recognized the connection between such prayer and the fulfilling of the promise of doing greater works than these

a. That no such works would be done without this kind of kingdom praying

- C. But this text that we have before us, once again, gives us yet another key to the means by which the Church fulfills Jesus' promise of doing greater works than these
  - 1. We need help to do these greater works
    - a. Lots of help!
    - b. In fact, only a certain kind of help will do
  - 2. So Jesus says, "You all need a lot of help. So I'm going to ask the Father to send you another Helper"
    - a. "He is the Spirit of truth"
    - b. "He will be with you forever"
  - 3. "He won't be wearing a white hat or a mask"
    - a. "But He will be in a disguise of sorts"
    - b. "He'll be hiding in you!"
    - c. "You will be His mask!"
- D. And in the process, He will use you
  - 1. He will motivate you
  - 2. He will influence you
  - 3. He will activate you
  - 4. He will animate you
  - 5. He will enable you
    - a. To do greater works than even Jesus Himself was able to do
- E. So let's unpack this mysterious Being called the Holy Spirit

### III. Who is the Holy Spirit?

- A. A person, not a power
  - 1. I'll never forget it
    - a. Jean and I were newly married, living in Columbus, OH
    - b. And we had joined a church in our community
    - c. And because we were young (I was a 23 year old graduate student at the time
    - d. And churches always assume that if you're young you would be good at working with youth
  - 2. So I was asked to assist with a confirmation class
    - a. A class of young people who were preparing to join the church
    - b. The purpose of the class was essentially an introduction to the doctrines of historic, orthodox Christianity
    - c. The class was taught by a very bright guy – a lawyer in fact – who was probably in his 30's
    - d. The year was 1977 or 1978
    - e. You'll recall that the movie franchise Star Wars had just recently been released
    - f. And had become, almost immediately, a pop culture phenomenon
    - g. All the young people had seen it
  - 3. My friend, the teacher of the class, in a desire to be relevant and engaged with the youth culture
    - a. Began to teach about the Holy Spirit

- b. He took the position that Star Wars was actually a Christian allegory (it isn't)
  - c. But the way he portrayed the Holy Spirit – I'm sure you can guess
  - d. "May the force be with you"
4. The Holy Spirit is a "force"
- a. An "it"
  - b. Something akin to gravity
5. I was sitting in the back row when he said it
- a. I just buried my face in my hands
6. No! The Holy Spirit is not an "it"; not a force
- a. The Holy Spirit is a person!
  - b. That is, the Holy Spirit has all the characteristics of personality
  - c. He has a mind, a will, emotions
  - d. He acts purposefully
  - e. He leads, He influences, He directs, He guides, He chooses
7. There are many ways to see the biblical view of the Holy Spirit as a person
- a. The first is right here in our text – just look at the personal pronouns!
  - b. **John 14:16–17** (NASB95) — 16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He** may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see **Him** or know **Him**, but you know **Him** because **He** abides with you and will be in you."
  - c. There is no "it" in this description
  - d. The Holy Spirit is always designated as a person
8. The personality of the Holy Spirit can also be seen in His designation of equality with the other members of the Trinity – the Father and the Son
- a. And we take for granted that the Father is a person and the Son is a person
  - b. **John 15:26** (NASB95) — 26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me."
  - c. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all distinguishable as persons
  - d. We find the same thing in all the Trinitarian benedictions
  - e. **Matthew 28:19** (NASB95) — 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit..."
  - f. **2 Corinthians 13:14** (NASB95) — 14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
  - g. Fellowship of the Holy Spirit! You can't have fellowship with a force, with an "it"
9. Other ways in which the personhood of the Holy Spirit is proved
- a. His visible appearance at the baptism of Jesus Christ proves it (**Luke 3.22**)

- b. And His visible appearance on the day of Pentecost proves it (**Acts 2**)
  - c. The sin against the Holy Spirit in **Matthew 12.31-32** proves it – you can't sin against an "it"
  - d. The Holy Spirit giving spiritual gifts proves it – forces can't give anything (**1 Corinthians 12**)
  - e. That the Holy Spirit can be grieved proves it – forces can't have emotions (**Ephesians 4.30**)
10. But what is the practical significance of the Holy Spirit being a person and not a thing, an "it"
- a. Boice: If we think of the Holy Spirit as a mysterious power, our thought will continually be, "How can I get more of the Holy Spirit?" If we think of the Holy Spirit as a person, our thought will be, "How can the Holy Spirit have more of me?" The first thought is entirely pagan. The second is New Testament Christianity
  - b. R.A. Torrey: The conception of the Holy Spirit as a Divine influence or power that we are somehow to get hold of and use, leads to self-exaltation and self-sufficiency. One who so thinks of the Holy Spirit and who at the same time imagines that he has received the Holy Spirit will almost inevitably be full of spiritual pride and strut about as if he belonged to some superior order of Christians.... But if we once grasp the thought that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person of infinite majesty, glory and holiness and power, who in marvelous condescension has come into our hearts to make His abode there and take possession of our lives and make use of them, it will put us in the dust and keep us in the dust. I can think of no thought more humbling or more overwhelming than the thought that a person of Divine majesty and glory dwells in my heart and is ready to use even me.
11. No better example of this than the episode with Simon the Magician
- a. Philip had been evangelizing in Samaria – many had come to faith in Jesus
  - b. So they sent for Peter and John who prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit – which they did
  - c. **Acts 8:18–19** (NASB95) — 18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, 19 saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."
  - d. "Give this authority – this power – this "it" – to me so I can do this too!
  - e. **Acts 8:20–21** (NASB95) — 20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! 21 "You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God."

12. It matters
  - a. The Holy Spirit is a person
  - b. A force, an “it” would be used by us
  - c. But the Holy Spirit seeks to use us for His purposes and for the glory of God

B. **God the Holy Spirit**

1. Again, the first indication of that is right here in our text
  - a. **John 14:16** (NASB95) — 16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever...”  
“Another helper”
  - b. “Another helper”
  - c. There are two words for “another” in the Greek New Testament
  - d. **Heteros = another, but totally different**
  - e. **Allos = another just like the first one**
  - f. Allos is the word used here
  - g. And who is the first one? Jesus, of course
  - h. We have seen over and over again that Jesus is the divine, Son of God incarnate
  - i. So the Holy Spirit comes as the Spirit of Christ, a divine person
  - j. Just like the Helper He replaces
2. Of course the designation “Holy Spirit” indicates His deity
  - a. Holiness is a divine attribute
  - b. As is omniscience
  - c. **1 Corinthians 2:10–11** (NASB95) — 10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.
  - d. Or omnipotence
  - e. **Luke 1:35** (NASB95) — 35 The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.”
  - f. Or omnipresence
  - g. **Psalms 139:7–10** (NASB95) — 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.
  - h. Or His work in creation
  - i. **Genesis 1:2** (NASB95) — 2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.
3. And perhaps the most explicit declaration of the Holy Spirit as God
  - a. **Acts 5:3–4** (NASB95) — 3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has

Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? 4 ... Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”

- b. To lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God
- 4. The Holy Spirit is a person
  - a. And the Holy Spirit is God
- 5. In this passage we are not just promised a tail wind, a force, an “it”, helping us to get to our destination more easily
  - a. Playing golf – I like it when the wind is moving from tee to green
  - b. We call that a helping wind
  - c. But no! God is giving us a person
  - d. A Divine person

#### IV. What does the Holy Spirit do?

##### A. The Paraclete

- 1. Not “parakeet”; paraclete
- 2. That’s the word in the Greek for “Helper”
- 3. In the ancient Greek culture a paraclete was like a family lawyer
  - a. If you had a family crisis – a death in the family, a serious illness, a breakdown in family relationship like divorce – you might call your pastor
  - b. In Greek culture you would call your family lawyer, your paraclete
  - c. Some Bible translations have Advocate – which implies the same kind of service
- 4. Para – beside
  - a. Kletos – to call
- 5. Parakletos = to call along beside
  - a. Someone who has the wisdom and authority to be of assistance
- 6. That’s the primary work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer
  - a. The Holy Spirit is One you call along beside you to help when you’re in over your head
  - b. And by the way, just in case you haven’t figured it out yet, you’re always in over your head!
- 7. Other translations use the word “Comforter”
  - a. That’s a Latin derivative of paraclete
  - b. Com = with
  - c. Forte = strength
  - d. Comforter = with strength
- 8. When we are weak, the Holy Spirit gives us the strength to survive the crisis
  - a. And even to thrive and prosper in the midst of the crisis
  - b. Barnhouse: ... a ramrod down your backbone to make you stand for the truth; to make you take the right side, even though it’s the minority side. The Comforter gives you strength to stand up in face of something that is vile and evil.

B. **The Presence**

1. **John 14:16-17** (NASB95) — 16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He may be with you forever**; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because **He abides with you and will be in you**.
2. Who you have going with you is critically important on the spiritual journey
  - a. Sometimes you can have someone going with you that is a drag on you; like dead weight, one that impedes the progress you might otherwise make
  - b. But if God the Holy Spirit goes with you – that makes all the difference in the world
3. Remember Moses in the wilderness
  - a. **Exodus 33:14-16** (NASB95) — 14 And He said, “My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.” 15 Then he said to Him, “If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here.”
  - b. In other words – “God, if You don’t go with us, I’m not going”
  - c. But then listen to why Moses made that declaration
  - d. 16 “For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?”
4. Do you want people to know that you belong to God?
  - a. Do you want people to know that Jesus is your Savior?
  - b. Do you want people to know that you are recipient of the grace of God?
  - c. It’s only because of the presence of God, God the Holy Spirit, abiding with you and in you that identifies you as one of His people
5. Are you aware of the presence of God by the Holy Spirit, abiding in you, strengthening you, encouraging you, supplying you?
6. Classic text by Brother Lawrence, the humble cook who learned to practice the presence of God
  - a. Brother Lawrence: He does not ask much of us, merely a thought of Him from time to time, a little act of adoration, sometimes to ask for His grace, sometimes to offer Him your sufferings, at other times to thank Him for the graces, past and present, He has bestowed on you, in the midst of your troubles to take solace in Him as often as you can. Lift up your heart to Him during your meals and in company; the least little remembrance will always be the most pleasing to Him. One need not cry out very loudly; He is nearer to us than we think.
7. To know that God Himself, by His Spirit, indwells us, abides in us, to help us, strengthen us, encourage us – and commune with us



- a. He is what makes our journey a journey of hope
  - b. A journey of spiritual prosperity – no matter what kind of adverse circumstances life throws at us
8. The Holy Spirit is with us
- a. Speak to Him
  - b. Express your love to Him
  - c. Share your concerns and trials with Him
  - d. And receive His strength and comfort in the process

C. **The Teacher**

1. **John 14:16–17** (NASB95) — 16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth...
  - a. The Spirit of truth
  - b. But not just any kind of truth
  - c. The truth of Jesus
2. **John 16:13–14** (NASB95) — 13 “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 “He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.
3. The Holy Spirit is the teacher
  - a. The teacher who teaches the truth
  - b. Quite different than so many teachers of today who teach false ideologies in our classrooms – sometimes even in elementary schools
  - c. No – the Holy Spirit teaches the truth – God’s truth
4. But the Holy Spirit is the teacher of Jesus
  - a. “He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you”
5. The Holy Spirit is often known as the shy member of the Trinity
  - a. He doesn’t teach about Himself
  - b. He exalts Jesus Christ
  - c. Any preoccupation with the Holy Spirit apart from His exaltation of Jesus Christ is misplaced
  - d. The Holy Spirit always points to Jesus
6. All the things that the Holy Spirit does – which the further we delve into the Gospel of John the more we will see
  - a. The inspiration of the scriptures
  - b. The giving of spiritual gifts
  - c. The sanctification of the believers
  - d. Even the work of creation
  - e. All have one great purpose – the exaltation of Jesus Christ
7. Boice: Important as he is, the Holy Spirit is never to preempt the place of Jesus in our thinking. On the other hand, wherever Jesus is exalted – in whatever way – there the Third Person of the Trinity is at work.

- D. The Holy Spirit is
  - 1. Paraclete – called along beside to provide comfort and strength
  - 2. Presence – the companion that will carry us through in our spiritual journey
  - 3. Teacher – leading us to Christ, teaching us to know Him and exalt Him

V. **Responding to the Spirit's Presence**

- A. **Ephesians 5:18** (NASB95) — 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit...
- B. Filled with the Spirit
  - 1. To be motivated
  - 2. To be controlled
  - 3. To activated
  - 4. To be animated
  - 5. To be captivated
  - 6. To be energized
  - 7. By the Spirit of God
- C. What does that look like?
  - 1. **Ephesians 5:19–21** (NASB95) —
    - a. 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;
    - b. 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;
    - c. 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.
  - 2. If you do those things, you are responding to the Spirit's presence
    - a. You are being filled with His Spirit