

Jesus and the Spirit

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Preacher: Brian King

[0 : 00] So imagine this scenario. Malaysia's just made it back into the Thomas Cup final, and they're going to face off against China. And imagine that we've got Lee Chong Wei in his prime, and of course China's first singles is Lin Dan in his prime, so two of the greatest badminton players of their generation.

But then hours just before the match is due to start, the news starts filtering in. Lee Chong Wei isn't going to be able to play. There's been a huge family emergency, so he has to go, even though Malaysia has been counting on him.

So that means we're going to need a replacement. And so Malaysia has to turn to their next best player, who happens to be Leo Darren.

Now no disrespect to Leo Darren, but whereas Lee Chong Wei is in the discussion when it comes to the greatest badminton player of all time, Leo Darren's highest ever ranking is the world number 10.

Chong Wei has won the prestigious All England tournament multiple times. Leo Darren's biggest achievement is winning a second-tier French tournament once. Everyone in Malaysia knows Lee Chong Wei, even the non-badminton fans.

[1 : 16] But even badminton fans might struggle to name Leo Darren. He's not exactly the most inspiring replacement. He's not Lee Chong Wei.

Now come with me to a dark night in Jerusalem, where it's Passover time. There's a small group of men walking silently and following the lead of their leader, Jesus.

Everyone knows Jesus. He's been teaching and performing miracles like no one before him. But on this night, alone with his disciples, he's been telling them that it's time for him to go.

That, of course, doesn't sound like good news to his disciples at all. Why go? Whatever for? But Jesus then makes this absolutely stunning, yet head-scratching statement.

We just heard it. John 16, verse 7. But very truly, I tell you, it is for your good I am going away.

[2 : 27] Another Bible translation says it is to your advantage. Really? Jesus? For real? In case you haven't noticed, we're not the most impressive men around.

We're actually pretty clueless. You know, we can't teach like you do. We can't do miracles like you. Malaysia can't beat China without Lee Chong Wei.

We're not going to overcome the world without you. How can it be better if you are gone rather than if you stick around? But Jesus holds firm.

Verse 7 again. Unless I go away, the advocate will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you. He insists, I need to go in order that you guys might get the Holy Spirit.

Now, Jesus, of course, isn't saying that he and the Holy Spirit cannot be in the same room. It's not like the British royal family where there's an unwritten rule that says Prince Charles and Prince William shouldn't be on the same plane in case the plane crashes.

[3 : 43] But he is saying, I need to complete my mission. For my kingdom to be established, for my saving reign to begin, I need to go to the cross.

Only then can a new era begin. Only then can the Holy Spirit arrive in a way that he's never done so before. Somewhat paradoxically, the disciples will be better off if Jesus goes.

But the disciples will need to take some convincing. After all, Jesus, they can see. But who is this Holy Spirit? What does he do?

What can he do? Is he an adequate replacement? After all, he's not Jesus. Is this going to be a case of getting a Leo Darren when you've had Lee Chong Wei?

Well, that's why in John 14 to 16, we find Jesus' most sustained teaching about the Holy Spirit. He wants to reassure his disciples. Yes, the Holy Spirit is much, much, much more than adequate.

[4 : 53] For his ministry is fundamentally a Christ-infused ministry, as we're about to see. Jesus and the Holy Spirit, you see, are not like two different colleagues in two different departments who have no contact with each other.

No, this morning, we're going to see how he and Jesus actually relate to one another in the closest possible way. And we're going to see that as they relate to one another, it's all actually for our good. And you'll be relieved to know that this morning, apart from maybe the first point, we're going to mostly spend our time in John 14 to 16, and especially chapter 16. I'm certainly glad to be more anchored to one passage today.

But let's quickly recap what we've learned about the Holy Spirit so far over the last two weeks. We know that the Holy Spirit is a person. He's not energy.

He's not a life force. He's someone to be known. In fact, he's God himself. And he's certainly not someone to be pigeonholed, reduced to just one thing, as if he was just the sum total of his gifts.

[6 : 12] Instead, hopefully, over the last two weeks, we've expanded our horizons a little bit and seen him in more personal terms. He's the life giver, the power supplier, the active presence of God, the agent of change.

And he communicates. He speaks to us through the divine human words of the Bible. His sword is his word, and his word is how he works.

And this morning, we're going to see four more things today that he does, all of them connected to Jesus. And we'll probably spend a little bit more time on the first one compared to the rest.

So let's get to it. Firstly, the Holy Spirit brings Jesus down to us. The Holy Spirit brings Jesus down to us.

Let me try to show this step by step. Now, I'm pretty sure that everyone in this hall has heard of Barack Obama, but probably none of us know who David Plouffe is.

[7 : 20] That's because, as one journalist puts it, he was the invisible supporting the visible. He was Obama's campaign manager.

Many people agree that he did a magnificent job, and Obama himself credited Plouffe in his acceptance speech after he won the U.S. presidency, calling him the unsung hero of the campaign. Well, that's what the Holy Spirit is like in relation to Jesus. He's the invisible supporting the visible. The unsung hero of Jesus' campaign here on earth. We don't see him if we don't look, but he's absolutely essential.

Let me demonstrate by getting us to just look through Jesus' life. At the very beginning of Luke's gospel, the angel Gabriel appears and announces to Mary, the Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

[8 : 32] and so Matthew tells us Mary was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. He's right there at Jesus' conception.

Then as Jesus begins his public ministry, he goes to be baptized by John the Baptist, and coming out of the water, the Spirit descends on him, and the Father cries out, this is my beloved Son with whom I'm well pleased.

He announces Jesus as the Messiah who was prophesied in the Old Testament. In Luke 4, Jesus steps into a synagogue and announces himself as the fulfillment of Isaiah 61.

He is the servant, he says, whom the Holy Spirit anoints to go proclaim good news to the poor and freedom for the captives.

And furthermore, he's led by the Spirit, both Matthew and Luke tell us, to be tempted as he showcases his humanity in the desert. And the Gospels don't often make this explicit, but Matthew and Luke as well does once imply that he drives out demons by God's Spirit, the references on your outline.

[9 : 52] And Jesus is performing his miracles in the power of the Spirit. And all this makes sense when we realize that the Holy Spirit is the invisible supporting the visible.

Jesus isn't just the Messiah, he's the Spirit anointed Messiah. But it's not just the ministry of signs and wonders that is conducted in the Spirit's power.

There is this significant statement in Hebrews 9, verse 14, that it is through the eternal Spirit that Christ was able to offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God.

He was able to endure the cross because of the Holy Spirit. And then Romans 1, verse 4 tells us that according to the Spirit, Jesus was then declared to be the Son of God via his resurrection.

And then 1 Timothy 3, verse 16 says that Jesus is vindicated by the Holy Spirit as he is exalted to the right hand of the Father. And so from the birth of Jesus all the way throughout his life, his teaching and his miracles and in his death, resurrection and ascension, the Holy Spirit is there all along.

[11:27] And so that's the first thing, the first step to get. The Holy Spirit is working in concert with Jesus. He is at work upon Christ from beginning to end.

And if so, then maybe the Holy Spirit isn't a little Darren. He isn't a poor substitute for Jesus. No, on the contrary.

If he isn't there, Jesus wouldn't complete his rescue mission. So that's step one. But here's the second thing to get.

The Spirit was at work upon Christ, but now Christ sends his Spirit to work in us. Christ sends the Holy Spirit to work in us.

Well, that's the second step. In John 14, verse 16, and we saw this verse last week as well, Jesus says, I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth.

[12:37] Now, that word advocate there in Greek is the word parakletos, which simply means someone who is called to come alongside you, someone who is called to come alongside you, especially, though not exclusively in a court setting.

So some translations say something like helper or counselor, by which they mean legal counsel, and advocate, as the new NIV puts it, is as good a translation as any.

indeed, Jesus himself is called the parakletos, the advocate, in 1 John 2 verse 1. And now Jesus says, Jesus is the advocate, remember, and he says, I'm now going to send another advocate. There are two Greek words for the word another, and the one used here, allos, means another of the same kind.

So if I broke an iPad, I give you another iPad, that's another of the same kind. Jesus is saying, I'm sending someone else just like me.

[13:52] Okay, let me try to further illustrate. I have a brother, and we look very similar. We basically have the same voice and similar mannerisms.

And just like me, he has some theological and preaching training, and we share similar ministry convictions. So imagine if I'm stepping down as the pastor of this church, but I say to you, I'm going, but it's okay, because I'll send Alfred to you.

I'm sending someone just like me. Now, that might terrify you, but that's a story for another day. Anyway, that's what Jesus is doing here.

sending another like himself. You see, just like Jesus, the spirit is all about truth.

Jesus, you might remember, says he's the truth in John 14, verse 6. And here in John 14, verse 17, and in 15, verse 26, the spirit is now described as the spirit of truth.

[15:01] And just like Jesus, he has a fundamental ministry of teaching. All throughout John, one of the characteristic things we see about Jesus is how much he teaches.

In John 6, for example, we get this extremely long section where he teaches about the bread of life. In John chapter 13, verse 13, Jesus is described as the teacher.

And in John 14, verse 23, Jesus says to his disciples, anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. But just a few verses later, in John 14, verse 26, Jesus now describes the spirit's ministry.

And it is also one of teaching. The advocate, he says, will teach you, the apostles, all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you, everything I have taught you.

And remember last week when we said that one of the spirit's jobs is to illuminate the mind of the reader? He helps us understand. Well, that's what teachers do.

[16:15] And just like Jesus, he is not universally accepted. In John 1, verse 11, we are told that Jesus came into the world and yet his own did not receive him.

And here in John 14, verse 17, we're told that the world also cannot accept him, that's the Holy Spirit, because it neither sees him nor knows him. No, it's not. Okay.

So clearly the Holy Spirit is in one sense just like another Jesus. He's distinct but similar. The disciples are not being shortchanged and neither are we.

the Holy Spirit is not an inferior substitute to Christ. Instead, he's just like Jesus. That's why in Romans chapter 8 verse 9, the Holy Spirit is also described as the Spirit of Christ.

And in fact, it actually gets better. So, so far we've seen that the Holy Spirit works in concert with Jesus in his ministry and now Christ is at work through the Holy Spirit who is just like him.

[17 : 29] But here's the third step. This Holy Spirit doesn't just come alongside us, but actually dwells within us. And we're going to see why that's significant in a moment.

In John 14 verse 20, Jesus makes this staggering statement. on that day, he's referring to Pentecost when the Holy Spirit comes, on that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you.

Basically, Jesus is saying, just as I shared in your bulletin, there should also be an outline and that would be very helpful for you to follow along, especially since there are so many verses to get through.

So it will be good if you can have the outline open to you. And again, just like previous weeks, I won't necessarily quote every single verse that I cite. Let me pray.

Heavenly Father, I just ask that this morning you will be at work in us. Help us again to know your Holy Spirit better and better. Help us to see how he works.

[18 : 59] Help us to get to know him the way we get to know a person. And help us to love him more and as a result, love the Lord Jesus and love you, our Heavenly Father, more.

So all this we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen. So imagine this scenario. Malaysia's just made it back into the Thomas Cup final and they're going to face off against China.

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