



Believe

JOHN

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: John 14:15-20, 25-27

- “If you love me, you will keep my commands. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. 17 He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn’t see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. 19 In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live too. 20 On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you.” (14:15-20 CSB)
- “I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you. 27 “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful.” (14:25-27 CSB) o

1. The Disciples’ Concern About Jesus Leaving Them (Jn. 13:33, 36-37a; 14:3, 18)

- o “The governing theological & pastoral concern of John 14 is to prepare the community of Jesus’ followers for life in his absence. This theme is captured most poignantly in the promise of Jesus to his disciples in Jn. 14:18, ‘I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.’” (Gail O’Day, *New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary: John*, p. 642)
- o “The...focus of this opening section of the discourse is on the theological resources available to [the disciples] so...they will triumph as Jesus triumphed. Jesus calls them to recognize the indomitable power of the love of God that Jesus made known to them. (Gail O’Day, *Op cit.*, 643)
- o “Jesus’ promise that he will not leave the disciples orphaned recalls his use of the address ‘little children’ in 13:33 & is an assurance that the intimacy of that familial relationship is not undercut by Jesus’ departure. His promise to return thus immediately counters any possible perception of Jesus’ death as his abandonment of his own.” (Gail O’Day, *Op cit.*, p. 637)

2. The Love of God is Yours (Jn. 14:15, 21, 23; 1 Jn. 4:16)

a. Loving Jesus brings us into relationship with the Father (vv. 21 & 23)

- "To love Jesus is to keep his commandment, & those who do so experience the love of the Father (14:21)." (Craig R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel*, p. 52)
- "The idea...is that the ongoing relationship between Jesus & his disciples is characterized by obedience on their part... They love & obey Jesus, & he loves them, in exactly the same way that he loves & obeys his Father, & the Father loves him." (D. A. Carson, *Pillar Commentary: John*, p. 393)
- "The Father relates to his children in love. God extended his love to the world through Jesus his son. As people come to love Jesus, they love the father who sent him. This is what it means to be a child of God...love from the father is essential for the children because they are called to give their love to others. This is remarkably unsentimental. The Father's love for the Son was not his private possession but was brought into the world through the incarnation & extended through Jesus' ministry & crucifixion. The love the Christian community receives from the Father & Son is not its private possession but is to be given as a witness to the world." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 52)
- "The Spirit given by the risen Christ enables people to know God as their Father." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, 129)

b. Loving Jesus means we obey/follow his commands (vv. 15, 21, 23; 1 Jn. 4:20-21)

- "'If you love me' does not introduce a conditional sentence, but introduces two parallel clauses that together define what it means to love Jesus. 'To love Jesus is to keep his commandments (v. 15); to keep Jesus' commandments is to love him.' (v. 21)." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 636)
- "A comparison of vv. 15, 21, 23, 24 shows that 'commandments', 'word', & 'words' are all synonyms... John 13:34-35 makes clear that the sign of faithfulness to Jesus' commandments is to live a life of love grounded in Jesus' own love." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 636)
- "Over & over again in John 14, Jesus sounds the note that the disciples will not face the future alone, that the gift God has given to them in Jesus will not terminate with the end of Jesus' life, but will take on new shape when, under the guidance of the Paraclete, they live out God's commandment to love." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 643)
- "If anyone really loves Jesus, then that love will be shown in keeping his commandments. There is a certain emphasis on 'my commandments'. It is a thought to which Jesus returns (v. 21). The present tense is probably significant. He is talking about a continuing attitude of love." (Leon Morris, *NICNT: John*, p. 577)
- "To love Jesus is to keep his commandment, & those who do so experience the love of the Father." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 52)
- "Jesus speaks not only of 'having' the commandments but also of 'keeping' them. This means that it is more important to obey them in daily life than to have a firm intellectual grasp of their content." (Leon Morris, *Op cit.*, 579)

3. New Perspective on the Spirit (Jn. 14:16-20, 22-26)

- "The Pauline churches of the first generation had affirmed the equality of men & women in Christ ...But [by the] 2nd- & 3rd-generation [they were] more restrictive on women's roles in the church." [M. Eugene Boring, *Intr. to the NT*, p. 627]
- "As the commentary on the five Paraclete passages has shown, the paraclete is intimately tied to Jesus' preparation of his disciples for their life after his return to God. In none of the other Gospels does the Spirit play such a central role in the teaching of Jesus. Furthermore, by speaking of the Spirit as the *Paraclete*, the 4th evangelist seems to be attempting to free his portrait from early Christian preconceptions of the nature of the Spirit in order to get a fresh hearing for the role the Spirit plays in the life of the believing community. For example, John does not identify the presence of the Spirit ...with specific spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-11, [etc.]) ... [nor] as actively directing the activities of the believing community (Ac. 8:29, 39; [etc.]), nor does it point to the role of the Spirit in baptism (Acts 2:38; [etc.])." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 660)

a. My Father will give you Another Comforter (*Paraclete*) (v. 16b)

a. The *Paraclete*

- “This is the first occurrence of...*Parakletos* in the 4th Gospel...[It] can mean ‘the one who exhorts,’ ‘the one who comforts,’ ‘the one who helps,’ & ‘the one who makes appeals on one’s behalf.’ The 4th Evangelist seems to draw on the whole range of meanings...in the 5 Paraclete passages (14:26; 15:26; 16:8-11, 12-15).” (G. O’Day, Op cit., p. 636)
- “Jesus’ bodily presence was about to be withdrawn from them. Never again would they know the warm intimate companionship of the days of his earthly ministry. But this does not mean that they will be bereft. ‘Another Counselor’ will be with them. Traditionally the noun has been translated “...The thought is...of the advocacy of one’s cause [rather] than of comforting in our sense of the term; modern translations favor ‘Advocate’ or ‘Counselor’. The word means a friend, especially a legal friend.” (Leon Morris, Op cit., p. 577)
- “Throughout John 14-16 the Spirit is identified by the suggestive term *parakletos*. The Greek word refers to someone who is called to one’s side as a source of help. The verb [form] can mean to encourage, to exhort, to make a strong appeal for something, & to comfort. A *parakletos* may be someone who speaks on behalf of a person in need, intercedes in a conflicted situation, encourages the dispirited, or consoles the grieving.” (Craig R. Koester, Op cit., p. 147)

b. Another Paraclete

- “‘another Paraclete’ in the context of Jesus’ departure implies that the disciples already have one, the one who is departing. Although Jesus is never in the 4th Gospel explicitly referred to as a *parakletos*, the title is applied to him ? in 1 John 2:1...John 14 implies that during his ministry his role as Paraclete, strengthening & helping his disciples, was discharged on earth. ‘Another Paraclete’ is given to perform this latter task.” (D. A. Carson, Op cit., p. 391)
- “‘another Helper’ Two different Greek words can be translated ‘another’—*allos* & *heteros*. *Allos*, used here, means another of the same kind, while *heteros* means another of a different kind... The word Jesus used to describe the coming Helper was *allos*, which means another helper just like him! Jesus was comforting his disciples by assuring them they did not need to be troubled at his leaving because the ‘Helper’ or ‘Counselor’ he would send was just like him.” (R. Kent Hughes, Preaching the Word: John, p. 314)
- “The use of the adjective ‘another’ (Gk. ‘allos’) to modify *Paraclete* in v. 16a suggests that Jesus was also a *Paraclete* (1 John 2:1). *Paraclete* thus is not simply another name for the Spirit, but is a particular way of describing the functions of the Spirit, functions held in common with Jesus. What the *Paraclete* does is not new, but is a continuation of the work of Jesus.” (Gail O’Day, Op cit., p. 637)
- “Jesus calls the Spirit ‘another Advocate’, which assumes that Jesus himself is already an Advocate. Giving Jesus & the Spirit the same distinctive title means they share some of the same functions. The Spirit will keep doing the work that Jesus began on earth after Jesus’ return to the Father...Both of them teach, bear witness to the truth, & expose the sin of the world.” (Craig R. Koester, Op cit., p. 148)
- “Calling the Spirit ‘another Advocate’ does not mean he is ‘another Jesus.’ The Spirit continues Jesus’ work without taking Jesus’ place. As the Word made flesh, Jesus reveals God through the life he lives & the death he dies. But the Spirit does not become incarnate & is not crucified for the sin of the world. The Spirit will disclose the truth about Jesus’ life, death, & resurrection, but will not replicate those events.” (Craig R. Koester, Op cit., p. 148)

c. He will be with you forever (16b)

- “Jesus’ words intimate that this work of the Spirit is both personal & communal. He says that the Spirit will...be in you &/or among you. On the one hand, this means that the Spirit will be ‘in you,’ since the Spirit evokes faith in each member of the community. This fits the promises made earlier, where Jesus said that each person who is thirsty can receive the Spirit’s living water (4:14; 7:37-39). On the other hand, the Greek word ‘you’ is plural & can mean that the Spirit is present ‘among you,’ that is, among the members of the community together. The Spirit connects believers to each other as well as to Jesus.” (Craig R. Koester, Op cit., p. 151)

d. He will be in you (17b)

- “Jesus’ promise of the Spirit is given in the face of worldly conflict. Jesus encounters sharp opposition from others, who judge him to be a sinner, a blasphemer, & a threat to society. At the Last Supper he tells his followers that they too will experience hostility...(15:18-25).” (Craig R. Koester, Op cit., p. 151)

b. The Spirit of truth (v. 17a)

- “‘the Spirit of truth’...probably means ‘the Spirit who communicates truth’” (Leon Morris, Op cit., p. 577)
- “To call the *Paraclete* the ‘Spirit of truth’ is to identify the *Paraclete* as more than a true – i.e., truthful – Spirit. As the Spirit of truth, the *Paraclete* shares in the work of Jesus because Jesus is

the truth (14:6). The work of the *Paraclete* is thus to keep the truth of Jesus present to the world after Jesus' departure." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, 637)

- "To say that the Spirit is 'of truth' means that the Spirit conveys God's truth as revealed in Christ. It is how the Spirit engages with the world. In John's Gospel, truth is...a power that counters the enslaving dominion of falsehood. Truth is communicated in order to free people from bondage to sin (8:32), to awaken authentic worship of God (4:23-24), & to shape actions that are truly life-giving (3:21)." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, 148)
- "The identity of the other Paraclete is now made clear: he is the Spirit of truth...primarily because he communicates the truth. Coming so soon after 14:6, where Jesus claims to be the truth, 'the Spirit of truth' may in part define the *Paraclete* as the Spirit who bears witness to the truth, i.e. to the truth that Jesus is." (D. A. Carson, *John*, p. 391)

c. The Holy Spirit—A Fresh Perspective (v. 26)

- "What is holy is 'set apart' from what is common & is dedicated to God's purposes. According to John, being holy or set apart is not an end in itself but a prerequisite for engaging the world." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 148)
- "By speaking of the Spirit as the *Paraclete*, the 4th evangelist seems to be attempting to free his portrait from early Christian preconceptions of the nature of the Spirit in order to get a fresh hearing for the role the Spirit plays in the life of the believing community. For example, John does not identify the presence of the Spirit...with specific spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-11, [etc.]) ... [nor] as actively directing the activities of the believing community (Ac. 8:29, 39; [etc.]), nor does it point to the role of the Spirit in baptism (Ac. 2:38; [etc.])." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 660)

a. He will teach you all things (1 Jn. 2:20, 27; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16, 18)

- "The two words 'teach' & 'remind' describe the way the Spirit gives believers new insight into the story of Jesus. First, 'reminding' maintains the connection with the past, with what Jesus said & did during his ministry...Second, teaching opens up new insights into the legacy of Jesus...to bring fresh insight to 'all things' that I have said to you. If reminding anchors the life of the community in what it has already received from Jesus, teaching ensures that the message continues to speak to the changing contexts in which Jesus' disciples live (2:17, 19, 21-22; 12:13b-16)." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 152)

b. He will remind you of everything I have told you

- "The task of the *Paraclete* in this passage extends beyond what is said of him in vv. 16–17. In John's Gospel the disciples are shown to fail, throughout Jesus' ministry, in their understanding of Jesus. One of the Spirit's principal tasks, after Jesus is glorified, is to remind the disciples of Jesus' teaching & thus, in the new situation after the resurrection, to help them grasp its significance & thus to teach them what it meant." (D.A. Carson, *Op cit.*, p. 395)
- "God continues to communicate through the Holy Spirit after the ministry of Jesus has ended. The Gospel says that the Spirit comes from the Father & is given to the disciples by the risen Jesus (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). The Spirit is not an independent witness to God, but continues to disclose the meaning of Jesus' words & deeds after the conclusion of his incarnation. God communicated through the Word made flesh, & the Spirit continues to teach & remind people about the significance of what Jesus said (14:26). The Spirit...conveys the meaning of what God revealed through the life, death & resurrection of Jesus...For the 4th Evangelist, God is known through...the Word made flesh...& the ongoing witness of God's Spirit." (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 30)
- "Verse 26 is quite specific about the precise nature of the *Paraclete*'s teaching: the *Paraclete* will 'remind' the disciples of Jesus' teachings. To remind occurs only here in the 4th Gospel, but a related passive form to 'remember' occurs at 2:22 & 12:16. [There], the 4th Evangelist notes that after Jesus' resurrection, the disciples 'remembered' what Jesus had said & done, & they were brought to deeper understanding & faith. The *Paraclete* does not teach new things, but keeps Jesus' own teachings alive in the post-resurrection community." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 640)

4. New Possibilities for the Church

- "Jesus' words in the Farewell Discourse offer his first followers & contemporary believers the possibility of a world in which hope overcomes despair, God's presence overcomes anxiety about God's absence, & in which the present holds in it the seeds of a fresh future shaped by love, not fear." (Gail O'Day, *Op cit.*, p. 643)
- "Jesus will not leave the disciples to battle their way through the world alone. He assures them that he will come to them, the present tense giving greater certainty. It is true...that he comes in the coming of the Holy Spirit." (Morris, *Op cit.*, 578)

- “Jesus’ words in the Farewell Discourse offer his first followers & contemporary believers the possibility of a world in which hope overcomes despair, God’s presence overcomes anxiety about God’s absence, & in which the present holds in it the seeds of a fresh future shaped by love, not fear.” (Gail O’Day, *Op cit.*, p. 643)
- “The Gospel of John was composed among Christians who understood the Spirit to be active among them. Other early Christian writings give an important place to the Spirit, but in John this takes a distinctive form.” (Craig R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John’s Gospel*, p. 7)
- “John has often been called the ‘spiritual’ gospel because of its soaring introduction & discourses on things above. But it might better be called ‘spiritual’ because of its intriguing perspective on the work of God’s Spirit. In the opening chapter the Spirit descends & reveals the identity of Jesus (1:33.) [To] Nicodemus, Jesus says one must enter God’s kingdom through water & the Spirit (3:5.) He tells a Samaritan woman that true worship takes place in Spirit & truth (4:23). Worshipers in the temple hear of the Spirit’s living water, which meets the human thirst for God (7:37-39). At the last supper Jesus discloses to the disciples that the Spirit will be their advocate, abiding among them & leading them to the truth (14:16-17;16:13). And in a climactic scene Jesus breathes the Spirit into his disciples as he sends them into the world (20:22).” (Craig Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 133)
- “John’s Gospel does not explore the usual questions of spiritual gifts, such as speaking in tongues...John’s Gospel relates the Spirit to several fundamental issues. One is that human beings are created for life with God, but are separated from God, & their need for relationship must be met from God’s side. This occurs when the Spirit evokes faith. Second, the Spirit discloses the presence of the risen Christ & his Father in the ongoing life of the community. Third, the Spirit empowers the community to discern the significance of Jesus & to Bear witness to him as they continue living in a contentious world” (Craig R. Koester, *Op cit.*, p. 134)

a. The Spirit should shape what church looks like

a. Not being institutionally bound/formed (1 Jn. 1:1, 3; 2:1, 7, 12, 13, 14)

- The Pastorals [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus] evince a development...towards the greater institutionalization of Ignatius & the great Church of the 2nd century onwards... [Yet, there’s] a counter-tendency within the first century [that] runs in the opposite direction. The clearest witness to this resistance to institutionalization is the 4th Gospel & John’s epistles.” (James D. G. Dunn, *Unity & Diversity in the NT*, p. 118)
- “Analysis indicates that the Johannine community developed along its own independent trajectory rather than having been split off from the other Christian churches. In any case the particular understanding of Simon Peter & the Twelve which is found in the Fourth Gospel indicate that it was not an apostolic foundation in the commonly understood sense of that term... To speak of the Johannine community is also to speak of a charismatic community.” (Raymond F. Collins, “*Glimpses into Some Local Churches of NT Times*,” *Laval Théologique et Philosophique*, Vol. 42(3), pp. 113-4)
- Some scholars “envison Johannine Christianity as anti-institutional... in which the individual members of local [congregations] share equally in leadership & decision-making. Corroboration for this view is found in the evangelist’s emphasis on the Paraclete’s sufficiency for guiding the community (lessening the need for human governance), the alleged minimization of ‘the Twelve,’ & the ‘anti-[Peter sentiment] in which Peter’s ecclesiastical authority is subordinated beneath the less official leadership of the Beloved Disciple.” (Andrew J. Byers, *Ecclesiology & Theosis in... John*, p. 6)
- “No Gospel places as much emphasis on the Spirit as John’s Gospel. In fact the indwelling of Christ & the transformation of the believer are both framed in terms of Spirit-experience in this [Gospel] (14:23-24; 3:1-8)... John’s community has strong pneumatic-tendencies. His followers were confident of their anointing (1 Jn. 2:20)... It is interesting to note what John does not say [in 1 Jn.]. He does not employ his apostolic authority as, say, Paul does in Galatians... He does not leverage pastoral authority as power anchored in position. Instead he urges the church to test the spirits...” [Gary M. Burge, *Op cit.*, p.]

b. Not being hierarchical (no church offices mentioned: elders/deacons)

- In John’s Gospel “the small group left round Jesus after the tremendous sifting (*krisis*) [of the cross] ...do not form some hierarchy or particular office which sets them apart from the other disciples: they are never called ‘the apostles’ & presumably include some of the women who feature so prominently in this Gospel; there’s no thought of them having special ministries within the community of the disciples; they are simply ‘the disciples’ &... represent all (including future) disciples.” (James D. G. Dunn, *Op cit.*, p. 119)
- “The Pauline churches of the first generation had affirmed the equality of men & women in Christ...But [by the] second & third generation [they had become] more restrictive on women’s roles in the church. The Johannine

community, continuing to insist that it was led by the Spirit, seems to have been more egalitarian & affirmative of women leaders." [M. Eugene Boring, Introduction to the NT, p. 627]

- "The 4th Gospel is best interpreted as voicing a warning against the danger inherent in [institutional] developments [such as] (apostolic succession, church offices, sacramental practices) by stressing what (for John) is truly essential, namely, the living presence of Jesus in the Christian through the Paraclete. No institution or structure can substitute for that." (Raymond Brown, *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, p. 88)
- "Listen to the bishop, if you want God to listen to you." (St. Ignatius)

c. No intense focus on the sacraments

- "...[S]cholars...commonly accept that [John] was far more interested in the significance of the sacramental rites than he was in the ritual itself." (Raymond F. Collins, *Op cit*, pp. 113-4)

d. Gender roles

- "The church for which...the 4th Evangelist writes is one in which the equality of the place & role of women & men is taken for granted, It is an egalitarian [Christian] community in which both genders occupy prominent places &...the gifts of both are valued." (Robert Kysar, *Maverick Gospel*, 154)
- "The Pauline churches of the first generation had affirmed the equality of men & women in Christ...But [by the] second- & third-generation Paulinism in Asia was more restrictive on women's roles in the church. The Johannine community, continuing to insist that it was led by the Spirit, seems to have been more egalitarian & affirmative of women leaders." [M. Eugene Boring, *Introduction to the NT*, p. 627]
- "The Johannine literature offers no hint that women are to play a subordinate role in the life of the church. Women in the 4th Gospel...interact with Jesus & embody authentic faith. Martha utters the same breakthrough revelatory confession about Jesus that Matthew attributes to Peter ('You are the Messiah, the Son of God' 11:27) ...Women fully share & embody the mission of the community to confess & proclaim Jesus to the world." (Richard B. Hays, *Moral Vision of NT*, p. 155)

b. The Spirit indwells & teaches all believers (1 Jn. 2:20, 27)

- "There is scant indication in the Johannine literature of hierarchical structure in the [Christian] community. While figures such as the Beloved Disciple & the elder who wrote 2 & 3 John were revered leaders, the Johannine vision is notably egalitarian. All members of the group are said to be anointed by the Spirit & to know the truth (1 Jn. 2:18-27)." [Richard Hays, *Op cit*, p. 154]

c. What does this look like at CIT? Our aim is to be more & more like a Johannine church