

Hello everyone! And welcome to our Wednesday Word devotion for today, March 3, 2021. Can you believe it's March already?! My goodness.

Thank you so much for tuning in and for taking this time out of your day to focus on God and focus on your faith.

As I mentioned last week, our devotions will be a little shorter during this Lenten season, with the hope that the Word, prayer, and questions in each video will help support your spiritual practices during this season. If you are a journaler or want to write down the question for later prayer or meditation, I'd invite you to make sure you have something to write with at this time, or type it into your phone, whatever works best for you.

In last week's reading of the dry bones prophecy in Ezekiel, where the mortal Ezekiel prophesies to the breath, God's breath, the Holy Spirit, we learn of the power of the Holy Spirit, but not a ton about who the Spirit is and how she works in the world. So today I invite you to consider the Holy Spirit as we read what I think of as the Spirit's "backstory" in John 14:15-31:

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them." Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us be on our way.

And our questions for reflection, prayer, and meditation:

How do you know the Holy Spirit is present within or around you? What draws you closest to the Holy Spirit?

And now please join me in a word of prayer:

Lord God, in whom we find the Spirit of truth and peace, guide us today and always. Guide us in your love, that even though we may not see you, we may be sure you are within and around us, as life-saving and giving as the very breath within us. Help us to live within your Holy Spirit, and celebrate life for the gift it is. When we are in seasons of sorrow, your Spirit intercedes for us in prayer and connects us to you, O God, and for this assurance, we give you thanks. Help us to be moved by your Spirit to love and serve you and our neighbors in all we do. May your Holy Spirit give us new life, the truth of life as it really is, comfort and peace which surpass all understanding, and your powerful grace and mercy every single day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Go in peace, dear friends, have a blessed day. Amen.