

The Promise of the Holy Spirit, Part 2

Scripture: John 14:15–24

Code: 43-75

John 14 is before us. We are in the Upper Room Discourse. That's what it's called, John 13 to 16. All the words of Jesus essentially, with a few other questions posed by the disciples; this is the long description of the promises that our Lord gives His children, every believer. All the way from chapter 13 to the end of chapter 16, just one promise after another, after another, after another. It starts with love, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the max.

Chapter 13, verse 1, that's how it starts; and it just goes from there with promise, after promise, after promise. There is no other passage like this in the Bible. That doesn't appear in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. This is inimitable to John. It is stretched out, elongated. It is down deep and up high. It is the richest section of Scripture summarizing what the Lord promises to those who belong to Him. Powerful, powerful passage. We are in chapter 14 and we're looking at verses 15 and following – and I'll read that in just a moment. But before we kind of look into that passage, just a few comments.

It was a number of years ago now – it's probably been 20 years or so ago – when I was surprised to see a wave coming into the church under the title *Experiencing God, Experiencing God*. If you go to any Christian bookstore over the last 20 years or more, you're going to find books on experiencing God. There were a couple of Southern Baptist pastors who developed, not only the books, the perspective, but then began to develop curriculum, and more curriculum, and more books; and this literally became an all-encompassing, all-engulfing movement in the evangelical church experiencing God.

It always bothered me because it seems to be too close to what is a familiar notion among pagan religions. In fact, there are some who actually think that you can experience God by having a drug-induced state. That is why Native Indians smoke peyote because they believe that somehow in the delusions of drug addiction or drug control, they were literally ascending to commune with deities. That was going on all over the globe in virtually any tribal area where they could find some mind-altering plant that they would use that as some kind of induction into a higher consciousness and ascend to deities.

That goes back, of course, all the way back to the mystery religions that came out of Babylon. That goes back to the religions that existed in the pagan world in which the apostle Paul ministered. They thought that drunkenness, orgies, sexual kinds of experiences all were sort of creating a euphoria that elevated people into the consciousness of God. Of course, all of that was ridiculous.

Christian mysticism, through the Middle Ages, and even until now, has always sought to find God in some experience, some feeling, some emotion; some means by which the senses imminence is present. This has become a popular notion in evangelical churches that there are ways in which you can feel God, in which you can sense God's presence.

Perhaps the most popular one is music. If you get the right music, if the music is sort of musically seductive enough and emotionally energized enough, people will say, "I just feel the presence of God. Don't you feel the presence of God?"

Well, of course, that is absolute nonsense. You can't feel the presence of God. You don't have any mechanism to feel the presence of God. I've never felt the presence of God; I don't even know what that means. But I do know this: He's here. And more than that, He not only inhabits the praise of His people; is joined to His people in union all the time so that the church itself literally is in constant communion with God collectively; it's not only true that where two or three are gathered together, He is in the midst. But, this is true.

And, listen; the Trinity lives in every Christian – the Trinity, three-in-one, in every Christian. There isn't some experience that you can have that takes you into some communion with God that you otherwise don't have. There isn't some musical formula that can induce some kind of fellowship with God that, without the music, can't happen. There certainly isn't a drug that's going to do anything other than alter your mind and make you think something's happening that's not.

Every believer is in constant, unending, eternal communion with the Trinity. And I'm not talking about when you come here, I'm talking about when you leave here. I'm talking about when you're all by yourself and you're driving along in your car alone, you are in the presence of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – full and complete communion.

I think this is somehow lost on many evangelicals. There are so many foolish ideas to correct in the church, but this is a big one. The idea that somehow this notion of feeling God, or sensing God, or communing with God has to be induced by some mechanical mean – foolish. Now why am I saying that? Because that's really what our text is talking about.

That's what John 14:15-24 is talking about. Of all the promises that our Lord gives in this section – and then remember in chapter 17, He prays the prayer and asks the Father to deliver the promises, to do what He has prayed. And, of course, He will because He always prays according to the Father's will. But of all the promises that our Lord has given, here in these verses is the heart of it all, because what we read here is that says to His disciples and extends to us, "When I go away, you're going to receive the Trinity. You're going to receive the Trinity."

This is a staggering thing. Every Christian, at all times, and forever and forever, is in vital life union with the Trinity. Let me say it another way: Your spiritual life is the life of God. The fact that you are alive spiritually, that you have died with Christ – as you read in Colossians – and you are now alive is because the life of God is in your soul. You cannot separate eternal life from the source of eternal life. You cannot have eternal life as something God gives without having God because it is His life.

Now I'm hoping to guide you through this profound, glorious section, understanding that it's very difficult to grasp the Trinity. And I want to let you know before we get started that you're not going to be able to handle it; no one can. Infinity is beyond us, and divine nature is beyond us. But we can understand what John is saying enough to be responsible for it and see the implications of it. Challenging it is to grasp the profound truth of the Trinity. It goes beyond our ability, and that is why it falls into the Deuteronomy 29:29 category: "The secret things belong to the Lord."

There are some things that only He understands and knows. “Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, these things are unsearchable. These things are unfathomable.” This is that kind of reality, the Trinity. And, yet, we have this careful revelation on the Trinity because it has such vital impact to us. Initially, it is for the sake of comfort, it is for the sake of comfort. How comforting is it to know that you are in constant union with the triune God. the God of the universe, in all three persons. How comforting is that?

It's a sin of massive proportions to deny the Trinity. It is blasphemy to deny the Trinity because you're denying God, you're denying the nature of God. But it is not enough to say, “I believe God is triune. I believe in the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; I believe in a Trinitarian deity; and I believe that He exists in heaven.” That's not enough. You need to understand that He exists in you if you are a believer. And that's what our Lord presents to us in this incredible passage.

To understand our own identify as a believer, to understand my life, to understand your life as a Christian, you have to grasp the Trinitarian of God in us. So let me remind you of what John writes as he records the words of Jesus. Everything here is stated by Jesus, except the question in verse 22 asked by one of the disciples. Let me start reading in verse 15.

“If you love Me, you will keep my commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 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.

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while, the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day, you will know that I am in the Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and disclose Myself to him.

“Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that you're going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?” Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me, does not keep My words; and the word which you heard is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.”

There is no passage in all the Bible that more clearly presents the Trinity than this. You have our Lord speaking about Himself, about His Father, and about the Spirit. They're all here. He speaks of the unity of the Trinity, and He speaks of the diversity of the Trinity – one in essence, one in nature, three in person. Yes, I understand that these are profound realities, but they have so great importance to our lives. Let me remind you why.

First of all, the occasion is Thursday night when this teaching is given by our Lord, this revelation that John recorded. Thursday night of Passion Week and Friday, He will die. He has been telling them over and over again, “I'm going to be arrested; I'm going to be killed; I'm going to rise from the dead.” They have a hard time handling it.

You remember Peter, “Lord; no, no, no, no no. That's not going to happen; that's not going to

happen.” And Jesus said, “Get behind Me, Satan, because it has to happen.” God has a plan for His death and resurrection. So He’s been talking about being arrested, being beaten, being mistreated, and being killed, and rising again. This is in the wind. I think on a routine basis, He was telling them about it. But they didn’t want to hear it. They didn’t like the notion of it.

Back in chapter 7, verse 33, our Lord says, “I’m not going to be around very long; I’m going. I’m going to the Father. I’m leaving, I’ll be gone, and you won’t see Me anymore.” Chapter 8, He’s talking to some Pharisees and Jewish leaders, “You’re going to seek Me and you’re not going to find Me. I’m leaving; I’m going away.”

We saw the same thing in chapter 13. Just back up a little bit to verse 33 of chapter 13: “Little children, I’m with you a little while longer. You’ll seek Me; and as I said to the Jews back in chapter 8, now I also say to you, ‘Where I’m going, you cannot come.’”

He says it again in verse 36. Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you can’t follow Me now, but you will follow later.” He has been very clear, “I am leaving. I am leaving.”

This sets panic into their hearts. Remember, they have forsaken all to follow Him. They’ve dropped their nets, if you will. They’ve left their enterprises. They’ve followed Jesus around for a three-year period, from town-to-town and village-to-village. He has been the source of everything for them. He has been everything, and now He is leaving.

“Where is the messianic kingdom? Where are the fulfillments of all the promises given to the prophets? It hasn’t happened; none of it has happened. And now You’re leaving? What’s going on? Not only are You leaving, but You haven’t accomplished what we all assumed You would accomplish, establishing the kingdom with all the promises to Abraham and David, and through the prophets fulfilled. Where is the kingdom? How can You be the Messiah?”

This is so overwhelming that they are distraught. In fact, chapter 14, verse 1, literally says, “Stop letting your heart be troubled.” This is trouble like they hadn’t known before. This is a kind of panic that has set in that Jesus is leaving.

If you go down to verse 27 of chapter 14, He says, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Stop letting your heart be troubled. Stop letting it be afraid.” This is simply the dominating emotion that is going on on this night.

Chapter 16, verse 5, He says to the same group on the same occasion, “Now I’m going to Him who sent Me. I’m going to heaven. I’m going to the Father. None of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.” They stopped asking and they were just bathed in sadness that He was leaving.

The plot was being hatched at this very time. There are only 11 disciples left in the upper room now on that Thursday night Passover meal. Judas had gone to work out the arrest of Jesus in the middle of the night in the garden where he knew He would be. And then by the morning before dawn, there’s a false trial. And then by Friday, He is put on the cross. These are dark, profoundly dark, sad moments for the disciples; and they really can’t get over it.

In verse 16 of chapter 16, again, He says, “A little while, and you will no longer see Me; again a little while, and you will see Me.” And some of His disciples said to one another, “What is this thing He’s telling us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; again a little while and you will see Me,’ and, ‘because I go to the Father,’? What is He talking about? What is going on?”

This is the literal collapse of all Messianic expectation. “He’s leaving. He’s leaving without the kingdom being established. He’s leaving us and we know how the world feels about Him, and they feel the same about us. Now we’re hanging out there to dry,” as it were.

“What’s going to happen to us, because we’ve been identified with Him? Who’s going to protect us? Who’s going to teach us? Who’s going to explain things to us? Who’s going to provide for us? Who’s going to secure us? Who’s going to show us the future, give us a hope?”

This is a dire time in their lives when all their dreams have literally crumbled in front of them. And so our Lord comforts them with the promises that are in this whole section, promise, after promise, after promise. But the main promise comes right before us, and then it’s elucidated further as we stretch out into chapters 15 and 16. But the main promise is this: “I am guaranteeing you that you will have the full presence of the triune God, every moment of every day, forever. That’s the guarantee.” Everything else, everything else that He promises comes out of that promise.

Now you say, “Is this promise only for the disciples?” No. It is for the 11, but it is also for everybody else who will ever believe in Christ. This is a promise that stretches beyond them, and we see that in the prayer in John 17.

After He’s given all the promises in 13 to 16, He prays the prayer and He says, “Father, fulfill all these promises, fulfill all these promises. But not just for these men.” Down to verse 20: “I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word. They’re going to write the Scripture, and for everybody who ever reads and believes the Scripture, I’m praying the same thing to be fulfilled.”

This is a promise that extends to us. And so it is that every believer is given the promise of the ever-present triune God. You don’t have to do anything. Nothing has to be induced. You are never separated from God – the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, never. If you possess eternal life, that eternal life is God, is God, fully God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The world doesn’t really see us for who we actually are. They think we’re just people like everybody else. We’re not. We are alien beings in a very real sense. But because that nature is spiritual and not physical, it is invisible to them. But we get it.

Do you remember what the apostle Paul said? Great statement. Second Corinthians 5, he said this: “We know no man after the flesh. We know no man after the flesh.” What does that mean? It means that we don’t evaluate people on the physical.

When I meet a person who’s not a believer, what concerns me about that non-believer is not anything physical. What concerns me about that non-believer is that that non-believer is a child of Satan, a child of the Devil. His father is the Devil. He’s a part of the kingdom of darkness.

Desperately needs forgiveness and deliverance, right?

We don't see people just at the human level. We don't see people based upon their social status. We don't see people based upon their education. We don't see people based upon their wardrobe or their sense of fashion. We don't see people based upon their family connections, based upon their history. We don't really see people simply because of what profession they accomplish in life. We see past that.

We see saints the same way. We don't see each other simply physically. We don't see each other that way. We know no man after the flesh; that's what He means. We see spiritually, with spiritual eyes, because we understand the true condition of those who belong to Christ and those who belong to Satan.

The world doesn't know that; and we're not manifest yet. There will be a day when full glory will be revealed. Romans 8, Paul says, "It's the glorious manifestation of the sons of God." First John, "Beloved, now you are the children of God; but it doesn't appear what you will be, and it won't appear until you see Christ and you're like Him."

So we're veiled in a way like Christ was veiled. In His incarnation, His glory was veiled. There was a glimpse given at the transfiguration. So here we live in this world, and we are literally the very temple of the Trinity, but it is veiled in our human flesh. But we need to understand the reality of that presence, and that's what John has recorded for us from the lips of our precious Lord.

Now back to chapter 14. I'm looking at sort of the foundation of all this. To whom are these promises given? Well, it's pretty clear. They're given only to believers. They're given to the disciples and all who will come after them believing their word, which will be their writing of Scripture, the gospel, to all believers in the gospel. But that has to be defined even further because there are a lot of people who believe in Jesus.

There are a lot of people who believe in the cross and the resurrection maybe, and there are people who have an emotional attachment to those things. So how do we know who the true recipients of these promises are? Well, it's in verse 15 "If you love Me, you'll keep My commandments."

The true lovers of Christ are known by their obedience. So we said this: "What is a true believer?" Not someone who believes the facts about the gospel, not someone who believes the facts about Jesus, but someone who loves the Lord and whose love is manifest in a life of obedience, love and obedience, love and obedience – love for the Lord, obedience to the Lord.

And just so we don't miss that, down in verse 21 He says it again: "He who has my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves Me." And then in verse 23, He says it again: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word." That's how you distinguish a true Christian.

And we have an example of that kind of love and obedience in chapter 15, verse 10, and it's none other than Christ. "I," He says, "have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. I love the Father and it's manifest in My obedience to the Father." That is the model of what a Christian is, someone who loves God and obeys His Word.

To all those who love the Lord and obey, the promises are made. It's not enough to know the facts, and even believe the facts. "If any man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ – " 1 Corinthians 16:22 " – let him be damned." And it's about obedience. "Whoever hears My word and does it is My real disciple," John 8:31-32. True Christians are given these immense promises; and at the heart of these promises, the Trinity is promised to every believer.

Now let me look at this from one other angle. What are we looking for in heaven? And I told you this, but I want to expand it a little bit. When we go to heaven, what is it that we receive? What do we receive? Turn to Revelation 2:3.

I told you last week that it's about God, it's about God. It's about meeting God, fellowshiping with God, knowing God, loving God perfectly, obeying God perfectly. No sin will interrupt that obedience. No sin will interrupt that love or diminish it. But heaven is God; it's God; it's God the triune God.

In the book of Revelation, you have seven letters to churches in chapters 2 and 3. These are written by the Lord Himself. He is the author of these, the Lord Jesus Christ, and He promises heaven. In chapter 2, verse 7, heaven is called the paradise of God, the paradise of God. God's paradise, the place where God dwells.

Now as believers, we're headed for the paradise of God. We're headed for heaven. All through these letters, believers are identified by a phrase: "He that overcomes. He that overcomes." And John, in his epistles, talks about the overcoming reality of faith, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. By faith we overcome. The overcomer is the one who has put his trust in Christ. So we are the overcomers.

What do we receive when we get to heaven? What is there for us? Look at chapter 2, verse 17: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes – " that is, to a believer " – to him, I will give the hidden manna."

What is the hidden manna? That's Christ Himself. He is the true bread. He even said that in John 6, didn't He? There was manna and the people of Israel were fed in the wilderness. "But I am the true bread. Whoever eats of this bread will never hunger," John, chapter 6.

So what do you receive when you go to heaven? "I will give you Christ. I will give you Christ." That's what heaven is. "I will give you Christ, and I will also give with Christ, to the believer, a white stone – " some indication of identity and reward " – and on that white stone is a new name which no one knows but the one who received it."

In other words, think of heaven this way – and maybe this is a new way to think of it. We're not all going to be flying into heaven, landing in heaven, and being some mass choir of unidentifiable people or indistinguishable people. We're going to have individual communion with the Trinity, so much that the promises, "I will give you Christ, and He will give you a name that no one else has, a name that no one else has, to identify you personally in a communion and a relationship with Him."

Heaven is not a group experience, it is a personal communion with the perfect Christ in perfect love, perfect obedience, and perfect worship; and no one will have the name that you have on your stone but you. You will receive Christ in intimate, personal communion.

At the end of chapter 2, verse 26, He talks about what's going to happen to the overcomer. Just drop down to verse 28 and we'll pick that part of it up because it relates to heaven. "To the one who overcomes, I will give him the morning star."

You say, "Wow, what does that mean? I get my own star? I can go sit on the edge of my own star and play my harp? I get the morning star? What is that?"

Chapter 22, verse 16, Jesus, "I, Jesus; I, Jesus, am the bright morning star." Oh, "I give you Jesus," again. "I give you the hidden manna," that's Him. "I give you the morning star, the bright star," that's Him. What happens to the believer in heaven? He receives Jesus. He received Jesus, personally.

Chapter 3, verse 12: "He who overcomes –" again "– I'll make him like a pillar in the temple of My God. You're going to be in the divine temple, in the Father's house. You're going to be like a pillar, an immovable part of the very edifice that contains God, and you will not go out from it anymore. You're going to be with God, in His dwelling place, never out of fellowship with God –" now we're talking about the Father "– and I will write on him the name of My God."

This is Jesus talking. So we're going to have a name that Christ gives us, we're going to have a name by which we're known to God, and then we're going to be identified with our city, "The name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from God and, by the way, My new name," that I talked about earlier.

You're going to have a name that Christ gives you that's between you and Him. You're going to have a name that God, the Father gives you that's between you and Him. You're not going to be lost in a mass of righteous perfection and adoring praise. What are you going to get in heaven? You're going to get God.

Go down to verse 21, it gets more amazing: "He who overcomes, I'll grant him –" you've already become a pillar in the temple of God. "But to him who overcomes –" to a true believer "– I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

Wow, that's a very large throne. That's a metaphoric throne. But what it means is where God is, where Christ is is where you'll be, in constant, intimate, personalized fellowship with the Father and the Son. And, of course, we can add the Spirit as well. That is heaven, that is heaven.

What do you get when you go to heaven? God. What did the disciples want? They wanted Jesus. The most horrible thing they could think of was Him leaving. But He says in chapter 16, verse 7, "It's better for you that I go away, because it's better for you for Me to go away, so that the Holy Spirit can come and be with you forever." All right.

So, that introduction takes so long – I'm sorry about that. But I think you get the picture of the passage. Last week, we looked at the presence of the Holy Spirit in verses 16 and 17 – I won't go over that. We looked at the presence of the Holy Spirit: "I'll ask the Father, He'll give you another Helper, *parakltos*, He'll be with you forever."

And the really important part of that is that at the end of verse 17, Jesus says, “He abides with you and will be in you. He has been with you in Me. It’s better to be in you than with you in Me, right? It’s been wonderful. You’ve had the Holy Spirit with you because He’s operated through Me. And now when I go away, He’ll go from being with you in Me to being in you, the divine Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ.”

He also says in verse 17 that the world can’t receive this; the world can’t get it. They don’t see it. They don’t know the Holy Spirit; they don’t see Him. They’re spiritually dead and blind.

I think it’s very important that He said that because He had just said back in verse 12 that, “You’re going to do greater works than what you’ve seen Me do. And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything quoting My name, or in My name, I will do it.”

Wow, we’re going to do greater things than Jesus did; and anything we ask in His name, He’s going to do. They must have been super-charged thinking the world was just going to fall at their feet. So He has to tell them, “Oh, by the way, the Spirit’s going to come upon you, but the world is not going to respond positively.”

In fact, in chapter 15, verse 18, He says, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you’re of the world, the world would love its own. But because you’re not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this, the world hates you. “So you will do greater works. I will answer every prayer in My name. You will go forth with power –” Acts 1:8 “– when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. But don’t expect anything but persecution.”

John 16:33, “In this world, you shall have tribulation, tribulation.” Persecution came, and it came hard, and it came fast; it came early, early in the book of Acts. The Jewish leaders persecuted the apostles, and then they started to persecute the church, and they stoned Stephen to death. And under Saul, the persecution, the bloodbath was launched. It scattered the church.

Every once in awhile, some news media people call me up and want me to comment on the persecution of Christians today. And I love when they ask that, and my response is, “What else would we expect? They killed Jesus; they hated Him. He said they’d hate us.”

They hate the truth; they hate the Bible; they hate the Word of God; they hate the gospel. That’s natural antipathy in the heart of the sinner that can only be broken by the power of God. Not surprised at all.

But they will have the Holy Spirit. And in spite of the world’s hatred, greater things will happen; not greater in kind, but greater in extent; and they have. The gospel’s covered the globe, hasn’t it, through history.

Now that takes us to the second of the three members of the Trinity. “The presence of the Holy Spirit –” verses 16 and 17 “– the presence of the Son –” verses 18 and following. “I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you.”

Wow, He just said He would send the Holy Spirit. Now He says, "I will come." That's the Son of God talking. "After a little while, the world will no longer see Me physically, but you will see Me spiritually. And because I live, you will live also."

What's He talking about? Is He talking about His resurrection? Of course. He's talking about His resurrection, that's part of it. But that's not the main idea. He's going right through the grave and out the other side and live forever. "And because I have eternal life, you have eternal life," is what he's saying.

In that day, in that day, when it all is said and done, I think in that day, from Pentecost on, when the Spirit came, "You will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. Whoever has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And he who love Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to Him."

There, he's simply saying, "I'm coming back. I'm sending the Spirit, but I'm also coming back to you." In fact, what did He say in Matthew 28:20 at the Great Commission? "I will never –" what "– leave you for forsake you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come back. Yes, after three days from the resurrection."

But that's not what He's saying. "I will come back as the eternally living Son in whom you will live." It's like Galatians 2:20. Galatians 2:20 couldn't say it any more profoundly. You remember these words: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ –" what "– lives in me."

That's what He's talking about: "I'll be back to live in you forever, to live in you forever. And in that day when the Spirit comes and I come, when the Spirit comes and I come, the truth with dawn on you and you will understand the Trinity. You will understand that I am in My Father, My Father is in Me; you're in Me and I'm in you." Staggering reality. And reminding them again in verse 21 that this is only for those who love and obey: "For those who love and obey, they are loved by My Father and loved by Me, and I will disclose Myself to that person." Really, it's just beyond comprehension.

Some people think being a Christian means you believe a certain set of facts or a certain part of history. Some people think being a Christian means you've joined an association, a group of people because you like their moral position. No. Becoming a Christian is being in living union with the triune God at its core. That's what it is. It is eternal life.

What does it mean to have eternal life? It means to have the eternal life in you, the eternal life in you, and the eternal life is none other than God Himself, which then leads us to the third member of the Trinity, and we'll drop down to verse 24: "Jesus said, 'If anyone loves Me, He will keep My word.'"

There it is again. Again, the qualifier: This is only a promise to those who are lovers of the Lord and demonstrate it by patterns of obedience: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep my word; and My Father will love Him –" and look at this "– and we –" what do you mean we? "Me and My Father will come to him and make Our abode with him."

Now this is the third member of the Trinity, the Father, presence of the Father. It is correct to say that you are the temple of the living God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You need to acknowledge that, and you need to acknowledge each person of the Trinity.

Sometimes we pray, “Our Father, who art in heaven,” because that’s the way the Lord taught us to pray. But on the other side of the cross, we could easily say, “Blessed Father, who dwelled in me. Blessed Spirit.” You can communicate with each member of the Trinity – talk to the Son, talk to the Father, talk to the Spirit. Communicate with the triune God.

But Judas says, “Why are you going to disclose Yourself to us and not the world?” Why does he ask that question? Because they were still choking on the idea that He was supposed to be the Savior of the world and bring the kingdom.

Why is this thing so narrow? “Why after three years is it just us, hovering, hiding in an upper room because we’re worried we’re going to get arrested and hauled off? We’ve already had a betrayer out of the ranks.

“What’s going on? Where’s the kingdom? Where’s the power? You’re not overthrowing Rome, nothing good is happening. The Jewish religious elite have turned on You. What’s going on? Aren’t you supposed to be the Savior of the world?” to which our Lord answers and says, “If anyone loves Me” — He says it again – “he’ll keep My word.” That’s the person that My Father will love, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.” The Trinity lives in every believer.

On the other hand, verse 24: “He who does not love Me, does not keep My words.” In other words, if you don’t obey the Word of God, you don’t love God no matter what you say. “And the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.” Again, the qualification for being a true believer that Jesus lays out here, He received from the Father. They’re all in agreement.

This is a way to view your own identity as a Christian I don’t think most Christians ever think about, never. So no wonder Jesus says in Luke 6, “Why do you call Me Lord and not do what I say? What’s that? If you call Me Lord and love Me, and obey Me, then you give evidence of being the temple of the eternal triune God – Father, Son, Holy Spirit.”

This is who we are. And, again, it’s not manifest. People see us only as human beings. We’re not. We have supernatural life; and because you are the temple of the triune God.

Go back with me to where we were earlier in the service, Colossians 3. Since this is true – and this is why I read that earlier in the service. Since this is true, since verse 3 is true, since you have died and you’re old life is hidden with Christ in God, since Christ is our life, since you are literally in constant union with eternity, since he that is joined in the Lord is one spirit – you are one in Christ – since that’s true, verse 5, doesn’t it make sense to reject immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry?

You don’t have to go someplace to worship God, you are the temple. Are you going to bring idolatry in on a personal level? Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6, “He that is joined to the Lord is as one spirit.” And then he says this: “If you join yourself to a harlot, you’ve joined Christ to a prostitute.”

You're going to do that? Furthermore, you don't want to be characterized by anger, wrath, malice, slander, abusive speech. You want to set aside – "verse 9" – all the lying, all the old practices, evil practices." You want to be characterized by renewal. You want to live as one who – "verse 10" – is in the image of the One who created him. You want to live like One recreated by the Creator, chosen by God, holy and beloved – "verse 12" – so you should be characterized by compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance forgiveness, and of course, love, the perfect bond of unity."

Really, it's who we are that determines how we act, isn't it? Who you are is you are the temple of the living God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Do you adorn that reality? Do you let your light so shine before men that they may glorify your Father in heaven? Do you bring honor to Christ, honor to the Spirit, honor to the Father? The Trinity is in complete intimate life-giving union with every true Christian. That powerful reality should be a purifying reality. Let's join in prayer.

All of this is so staggering because we are but dust. We are the least of all things because we are fallen creatures with such strong proclivities and propensities toward sin and iniquity and transgression. We are so utterly unworthy. We have nothing to commend ourselves to You. We cannot earn our salvation. There's none of us righteous; no, not one. We are all evil; we are all gone astray.

But, Lord, it would be one thing for You to simply rescue us. But You've done so much more than that. You've not only rescued us from sin and death and hell, but You've taken up Your abode in us; and You know us personally by name. You know this, O God, that the only reason we love You is because You first loved us. You set Your love on us, the chosen, and You recreated us to love You obediently in return. We want to be the kind of people that bring honor to Your presence in our lives.

Truly, You never leave us; You never, ever forsake us. This is what Jesus said in the Great Commission. But this is what You said, our Father God, way back in Deuteronomy: "I will never leave you or forsake you." And Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be ours forever. This is the security of our salvation, this is the hope of heaven, and this is the loving salvation that motivates us to a life of purity and faithfulness.

Bring that to pass. Use Your Word, dwelling richly in us, to be the barrier against the sin that dishonors You, and lead us in paths of righteousness and ever-increasingly into the image of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

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