

KNOWING YOUR HELPER

The disciples that had been following Jesus for several years were as sad as sad can be. They were shocked as shocked can be at the news that Jesus would be leaving them. It was more than what they could effectively deal with at that time. Their minds were muddled and numbed because of not understanding why Jesus had to depart from them. Jesus dealt with this problem of their sadness with great care and precision during HIS "last supper" time with them. Therefore, we would do well to take heed to what HE said to them during this emotional setting just hours before the onset of events leading to HIS sufferings for us.

In this midst of this deep sadness, Jesus made it very clear to HIS disciples that another "HELPER" would be sent to them after HE had left them. By summary of implication in the words that Jesus spoke to them about the Holy Spirit, this "HELPER" would be every bit as helpful to them as HE HIMSELF had been. In fact, Jesus declares to them that they would better understand some things later by the help of the Holy Spirit than they had understood so far from HIS teachings. Therefore, we want to later present an adequate examination of these words by Jesus about this great "HELPER" as it applied to them and still applies to us today. However, we want to first present a brief spanning view of some things happening that lead up to this "last supper" setting.

During the last several months before HIS suffering events in the city of Jerusalem, Jesus endeavoured to minimize HIS time of ministering to the crowds so that HE would have more private time with HIS disciples in order to get them ready for the events of the near future. Jesus had been sending HIS disciples out in pairs to "preach the Kingdom of God and heal the sick" as HE had done daily with them watching HIM do so. HE sent them out after HE had given them power and authority over all demons plus the anointing to cure diseases, as in Luke 9:1-2. In verse ten of this this same ninth chapter of Luke, these pupil apostles returned with great enthusiasm to report what had been accomplished by the supernatural help that HE had imparted upon them. Jesus then withdrew with HIS disciples at that time from the others to a town called Bethsaida so that HE could continue HIS intensive private tutoring of these special men. Verse 11 tells us that the crowds found out about where HE was at and went there.

Therefore, Jesus welcomed them and "spoke to them about the Kingdom of God". After speaking to them, Jesus "healed those who needed healing". This was a pattern that happened several times. Jesus would withdraw for a season to privately tutor HIS disciples; however, the crowds would find out where HE was at and go to be with HIM. Consequently, Jesus would keep finding time alone with HIS disciples as often as possible to continue HIS intensity of private tutoring them.

Consider this reading of scripture from the New International Version as recorded in Mark 9:30-32 for a summary of what was happening during this said pattern. It reads: "They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.' But, they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it."

Why did Jesus strive to minimize the time that HE spent in HIS ministering to the crowds and maximize the time that HE could possibly spend in privately tutoring HIS disciples during this season of HIS ministry on earth? It was because of HIS acute understanding of the need to prepare HIS special leaders for HIS sufferings and post-resurrection ascension. Jesus rightfully understood that in their present state of mind; they were in no way prepared for either of these major events to take place in HIS life. Luke 17:22 deals with this situation head on about their missing HIM after HIS ascension into glory. It reads: "Then he said to his disciples, 'The time is coming when you will long to see

one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it." Jesus also in this same time setting, as recorded in verse 25 of Luke 17, reminds them again about HIS suffering that must come to pass before HIS departure from them. That 25th verse reads: "But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation." There must have been numerous times that HE prophesied about HIS sufferings and time of departing from them; yet, they did not fully understand after all of HIS exhortations to them about it.

Following this declaration in Luke 17:22 of how these special leaders would then feel that deep longing for the days of the Son of Man, Jesus spoke forth a parable as in recorded in Luke 18:1-5 with HIS commentary on it in verses six through eight. The purpose for this parable is stated in verse one, which is to inspire HIS followers to always pray and to not lose their persistence. Jesus, obviously, wants them to be able to deal with the coming events of the future. Therefore, HE encourages them to embrace two imperatives that feed off each other. If we will always be praying, the Holy Spirit will honour our efforts with HIS help so that we will have positive results. This will enlarge our courage and give us enthusiasm to keep on praying fervently.

In this parable, Jesus makes use of absurdity in the ridiculous contrast between characters in the parable and characters in their real life. The widow is compared to the elect saints of God. The unjust judge is compared to the Heavenly Father filled with gracious mercy and caring for HIS children. If the widow, without legal representation, can obtain justice from an unjust judge simply by wearing down his resistance to her; the saints of God can SURELY obtain help in time of need from their Heavenly Father in due season. The widow seems to be without financial favours to bestow upon the judge in this story; however, she is desperate enough to tap into an ability to be extraordinarily persistent.

In the imaginative mind of this author, this woman is spewing out verbal threats to continue bothering this judge after he informs her that he will not rule in her favour. After enduring several minutes of this from her, this judge orders his bailiffs of his court to forcefully escort her out of the area. While they are dragging her away, she is still yet in the process of shouting out her promises of harassments. Now, this judge is sure that she is gone for good and will not return. Who would possibly return when such treatment is meted out? The bailiffs have returned and there does not seem to be any sighting of this widow. Shortly thereafter, there seems to be a rustling in the long line of people waiting to have their cases decided by this judge. At first, the judge does not pay any attention to this. The stirring in the crowd becomes more pronounced and someone seems to be making significant progress of moving forward in the positions in the waiting line. Suddenly, this judge realizes that this same widow has worked her way to the front of the line as the people are admiring her tenacity and boldness. As she stands before him again, she declares that she will never give up trying until he rules in her favour and avenges her against injustice from her adversaries. Once again, this judge calls for his bailiffs to forcefully remove her from this place. Once again, these legal "bouncers" remove her with much ado and it does provide quite a show for the others. This is repeated several times.

They remove her and she is right back at the front of the line in quicker time at each turn. Those waiting in line have adopted her cause and are allowing her quick progression through the line as they are so fond of her tenacity. Finally, these bailiff "bouncers" now refuse to forcefully remove her any more. Both of them have received multiple injuries from the bites, scratches, and kicks that she has administered to them. They are even willing to be fired by the judge, if necessary. The crowd is cheering her on as she continues to verbally threaten the judge with more demonstrations of her anger and her insistence for justice from him.

Finally, this unjust judge gives in and awards her justice for no reason except because of her continuance in being persistence. It has finally wearied him to the point of wanting

to get this thing over with as quickly as possible. Therefore, he awards her due justice even though she has nothing to offer him in return such as money, special favours, political influence, etc.

Jesus presents two questions for consideration in HIS commentary concerning this parable, as in verses 6 to 8. The first question reads:

"And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?" Immediately, Jesus declares that the answer to this question is in the strong affirmative. Jesus says: "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily". In other words, Jesus declares this question to be an unworthy inquiry. HE invalidates it as being one that is illogical in its basis. After this strong invalidation, Jesus moves to the real question of concern. That question of real worth to HIM reads: "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will HE really find faith on the earth?" There we have it from HIM who knows us better than anyone else does and knows HIS Father very well. We can count on the Heavenly Father being very faithful to us; however, can HE count on us to have the kind of faith that HE is looking for in HIS people?

If this widow had been blessed to have a capable lawyer to handle her case, she might not have had to resort to such extreme measures to win favour from the judge. The lawyer might have been able to put this judge in a position of remembering a legal obligation that would be in his best interests to fulfil. Accomplished lawyers are not at all intimidated by how the judges use the language of law in their decisions. In fact, they are able to converse with the judges tit for tat at every turn without any sense of inferiority. Accomplished attorneys at law can be of benefit to judges in ways that the ordinary citizen cannot even possibly approach. They can help a judge become more powerful. There is no mention in this parable of an attorney representing this widow as a legal advocate for her need for due justice.

The word that Jesus uses to describe the "HELPER" that HE would be sending to HIS disciples, is similar to the word that describes the work of an attorney at law or lawyer. The English translation of that word is "PARACLETE". Paraclete has the following definitions that are associated with its meaning: advocate, counsellor, helper, and legal power of attorney to execute the estate for parties to a covenant. The Webster Dictionary gives the following entries of a definition for the word advocate: (1) One who pleads another's cause (2) One who argues or pleads for a cause or proposal. As a verb, it is defined as: to plead in favour of. A preferred legal counsellor would advise you as to your legal rights and help you fully understand the legal language of a contract or covenant. An authorized executor of an estate is given the legal power of attorney to declare the written wishes of the testator to his or her family and see to it that such is properly distributed. (A testator is a person who has deceased leaving behind a valid will for distribution of his or her possessions.) All of these things are within the proper jurisdiction of the Holy Spirit in the spiritual realm. For that, we have every reason to be very grateful that such is true for us. Jesus also refers to this HELPER as the Spirit of truth, as in John 14:17a.

John 14:16-17a reads: "And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth." The Holy Spirit is the absolute personification of all truth and there is no deception within HIM. The Holy Spirit is capable of providing truth information concerning every aspect of life. You name it and HE knows about it. Furthermore, HE knows what you need to know when you need to know it and HE knows why it needs to be dispensed to you. Moreover, HE knows when the condition of your heart is such that information you feel that you need must be hid from you lest you make a mistake or misuse the information. This is because HE truly is a Person of the Divine Godhead, rather than being a simplified "it".

The Holy Spirit gives assistance to the host of angels and the Divine Godhead in making decisions. HE is every much as valid a partner in the work of our redemption and sanctification as God, the Father and God, the Son. In fact, the particular assignment that the Holy Spirit has is vitally important for the ongoing victory and sanctification of saints. That particular assignment is to make application of the gifts and grace of God from within the believers. It is from this inner working of the applications of the Holy Spirit that the Holy Scriptures were "originally inspired" so as to be "infallible". Inspired in this context indicates that it came directly from the Divine Godhead through the Holy Spirit all the while using the personality and cultural factors of the human instrument. In many cases, the human author was like a modern office secretary taking dictation from her boss and later composing a letter based upon said dictation.

Jesus declared to them, as in John 16:12-15, that they would better understand what HE had been saying to them by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In fact, there would be concepts understood then that they could not now bear hearing from HIM. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit would make known everything belonging to Jesus; so that they could fully partake in the power and authority needed to fulfill the ministry of Jesus in the earth. John 16:12-15 reads: "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when, He, the Spirit of truth, comes; He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; rather, He will speak only what He hears. He will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to Me by taking from what is Mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is Mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you." This is like the work of the executor of the estate taking what has been provided by the death of the testator (Jesus Christ) and revealing it to the family (the saints of God). In this case, the executor (the Holy Spirit) also provides revelation information on what has been accomplished for us through the resurrection and glorification in heaven of Jesus. If we do not know the extent of the power and authority given to us nor how to properly exercise it, we are then helpless to fulfil our mandates. No one can teach this to us like the Holy Spirit can.

Take note of the verb -"guide"- that is used by Jesus in verse 13 of John chapter 16, as in "He will GUIDE you into all truth".., and all of its implications. This verb definitely implies that the Holy Spirit is not going to force you into recognition of truth concepts. HE will rather expertly motivate you into embracing revelation not ever previously known to you. HE will help you to see that these concepts are truthfully expounded in the scriptures. He will keep in mind the capacity of your heart and your mind to process through certain truths at each particular point in time. The Holy Spirit will constantly prepare your mind and heart to move forward in the grasping of the full counsels of God. He will not allow you to be stagnant in your understanding unless you absolutely decide to be that way. As part of the guidance, HE "will remind you of everything I have said to you", as in John 14:25. In our case today, the Holy Spirit will remind us continually of what is written in the Word of God and what has been spoken to us prophetically. This means that HE is capable of giving us a remarkable memory for the Word.

Having this HELPER will give us an advantage over any of those that are not blood washed saints. John 14:17 declares that concerning the Spirit of truth "the world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you." Think of the full implication of this statement. We have an inside connection with a person who knows everything and is able to fully communicate what we need to know. We have access to information that will help us in our business endeavours just as Jesus gave directions to those of HIS group that were fishermen. When they followed HIS directions; they were rewarded with a great catch of fish, as in Luke 5:4-6 and also in John 21:6. We can be recipients of clever inventions that can be helpful to the public and be shown how to successfully market them. We can be recipients of ideas that speed up work production at our work places and thus, be handsomely rewarded for it. We can be shown how to most effectively motivate others to follow our leadership and thus, lead them into remarkable production that results in

reward for the entire team. We can be taught how to communicate by writing so that it produces a profitable income for us. We can be taught how to communicate in public speaking and be paid well for doing so. This HELPER does give us a most remarkable advantage and keeps us from being as orphans in the world.

However, we must embrace the Holy Spirit in all that HE wants to do in us and through us. One of the problems that we have is our lack in knowing how we should be praying as is necessary. Romans 8:26 addresses this lack in us. It reads: "In the same way (with groaning), the Spirit helps us in our weakness (to break through). We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words (from our learned languages) cannot express." First Corinthians 14:2 reads: "For anyone who speaks in a tongue (unlearned language) does not speak to men, but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; (since) he utters mysteries with his spirit." Therefore, he bypasses the limitations of his mind and communicates directly to God what needs to be said as he lets the Holy Spirit communicate for him. Speaking in a tongue also serves as a powerful tool for emotionally strengthening a person for warfare and ministry, as in the first part of First Corinthians 14:4. Paul makes the suggestion that a person pray in a tongue then ask to be able to understand what he needs to understand from that exchange from himself to God and from God back to him, as in First Corinthians 14:13-15. This author has found this to be very effective for himself. Praying in a tongue releases him from emotional baggage weighting him down and assures him of making the connection with God. Asking for understanding about the exchange provided via "tongues" helps greatly in the growth of being able to understand things with the mind. A saint does not have to know everything said via "tongues"; rather, that saint must trust the Holy Spirit to reveal what is needed to be revealed.

Since praying in the Spirit with tongues edifies the believer doing so, we need to understand that this spiritual exercise is that help from God that enlarges the saint's capacity to yield to the Holy Spirit for much more effective manifestations in the spiritual and ministry gifts. Therefore, it is not an "least" gift as far as personal prayer is concerned; rather, it is an absolute necessity if we want to be as effective for Jesus Christ as we can be.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we declare that we want to embrace everything that the Holy Spirit has for us and is for us. We appreciate so much that YOU have sent HIM to us to help us. Send us teachers, if necessary, to teach us how we might maximize HIS ways of helping us. Help us to get ready for an enlarging of our capacity to receive all that the Holy Spirit is meant to be to us and all that HE can do for us. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

This article was written by Kent Fowler, Evangelist, from the city of Carrollton in the Dallas, Texas area in the U.S.A. Evangelist Fowler is an ordained minister with World Ministry Fellowship Interdenominational that is headquartered in Plano, Texas.