

The Son and the Spirit

Scripture Reading — John 14:15-21

“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor ... the Spirit of truth.”
John 14:16 —

As a student in seminary, I found the Bible’s talk about the Spirit confusing. One summer, I approached my pastoral mentor and asked him for some clarity. “The Bible talks about the Holy Spirit,” I said. “And the Bible speaks of the Spirit of Christ.” Are they the same—or different?

The pastor smiled and said, “They’re the same. Here’s some homework. Check out the connection between the work of the Spirit and the work of the Son.”

That was good advice. The ministry of the Spirit intertwines with Jesus’ ministry. No wonder the Spirit has sometimes been called the shy member of the Trinity. Why? Because the Spirit tends to stay out of the limelight. The Spirit is continually keeping the focus on Christ. In fact, the reason the Spirit was poured out on Pentecost was to enable the church to speak Jesus’ words and do Jesus’ deeds in the world.

Here in John’s gospel, Jesus promises that the Spirit will come as “another Counselor.” But who is the first Counselor, the first helper? Why, Jesus himself, of course! Jesus has been supremely anointed with the Spirit to carry out his earthly ministry. And the work of the Spirit is so closely connected to Christ that even as Jesus refers to the coming of the Spirit he can say, “I will come to you” (see John 14:18).

Prayer

Lord, we thank you for your amazing gift. May your Spirit live in us and shine through us to all who surround us. Guide us each day to follow you. In your name, Amen.

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