



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

John 14:12-21

“The Promise of the Paraclete”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We are studying the Gospel of John, and we are in that portion generally called the Upper Room Discourse in which our Lord is instructing the apostles in the light of his soon departure from them. And today we come to the very significant section, it has to do primarily of the promise of the Holy Spirit, and that’s the title of the message today, “The Promise of the Paraclete.” And we’re going to read now verse 12 through verse 21 of chapter 14 for our Scripture reading. Remember, the Lord had just said in the previous context that he was going to leave the apostles, and that produced some questions because they were puzzled over his statement that he would depart from them.

Peter offered a question, then Thomas a question, and finally Philip a question. And now the Lord resumes the mention of his departure and some of the things that will transpire as a result of it,

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask me any thing in my name, I will do it.”

Now if you're reading the Authorized Version, you'll notice I have inserted the personal pronoun me. That's because a number of the manuscripts, some of the best of the manuscripts do have a me here, and it seems to me that it is likely the thing that our Lord said. Scribes were just human beings and of course they copied the New Testament, they copied it frequently, they copied it more than they copied any other document. And as I've said a number of times in this series, the New Testament is the best attested book of ancient history for which we are thankful. But as is the case in all copying, mistakes are made. And early in the copying certain mistakes are made, and then other scribes copying afterwards copy their mistakes. And that is why in some manuscripts we have variation. There are many variations in the copies of the New Testament. It so happens that later in chapter 16 verse 23 the Lord says "In that day ye shall ask me nothing," verse 23 of chapter 16. So, I just feel that probably a scribe, thinking of that particular passage, when he saw before him, "If ye shall ask me anything in my name, I will do it," reflected some previous copyist has made a mistake and I will eliminate the me. And so he eliminated the me because he really misunderstood chapter 16 verse 23 which says, "In that day ye shall ask me nothing." Perhaps he forgot that the word for ask there is a little different one from the one in chapter 14. The one in chapter 14 having the sense normally of to ask in prayer, while the one in chapter 16 is a word that frequently means simply to ask for information, and in the light of that context it's suitable in chapter 16, and really our Lord is speaking about two different topics. So I think that those manuscripts that do have the me are probably correct and that's the way I will expound it this morning. "If ye shall ask me anything in my name I will do it."

It is therefore proper to pray directly to our Lord. Now it's not the general teaching of the New Testament, the general teaching of the New Testament is to address our prayers to the Father in the name of the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. And that is the normal way in which we offer prayer. But it's perfectly all right, it's acceptable to address a prayer directly to our Lord, just as Stephen did when he said, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." So it's perfectly all right to pray that way.

We wouldn't say he hadn't learned his theology yet, that's proper, it's just not the usual thing. We address our prayers to the Father in the name of the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Verse 15,

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (Notice the adverbial addition, forever.) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day (That expression is most likely a reference to the Day of Pentecost.) At that day, (He's talking about the gift of the Spirit.) At that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

You can see in that last verse of course, the different kinds of love of God. “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him.” Someone might say, believing in the universal love of God of all men in the same way, that's no promise at all, because we know that God loves everybody and loves everybody in the same way. That renders our Lord's promise rather meaningless. “My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Why we know that God loves everybody and loves everybody in the same way. Well it's quite clear from this text that our Lord did not accept that teaching. There is a sense in which our God loves everyone in his benevolence and in the fact that he does them good. But his special love, his elective love, his calling love, his justifying love, his redeeming love, his keeping love, his glorifying love is reserved, as our Lord says, for those who believe in him, love him, and manifest their love in the keeping of his commandments. “If a man love me he will keep my words and my Father will love

him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.” How much better sense that makes of our Lord’s magnificent promise, let’s bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these magnificent words which the Lord Jesus gave to the apostles to strengthen them and to encourage them in the light of the fact that he soon would be gone physically from them. We thank Thee however for his presence with them afterwards and his presence with us so that we know that we come behind in no privilege by the fact that Jesus Christ is not visibly and materially present with us. Through the Holy Spirit he is with us, and with everyone of us and with everyone of us all the moments of every day through the Spirit. How great are the promises addressed to the believing saints? And today Lord we would give Thee the praise that is due to Thy wonderful name and express to Thee our gratitude for the blessings of life, of eternal life.

And Lord we ask that if there should be some in this audience who do not know that special redeeming love that Thou hast had for us that through the ministry of the word and the operation of the Holy Spirit, they may come to the faith that saves forever. We thank Thee Lord for the body of Christ and we pray Thy blessing upon each member, those with whom we shall share eternal felicities and blessings. We look forward to that day. We pray Lord that in the meantime we may have central in our corporate life and in our personal life the glory of our God.

May Lord Thy glory be manifested through the preaching of the word, through the ministry of the outreach that this chapel has. May Thy hand be upon it all, the Bible classes, the daily vacation Bible School, the radio ministries, the tape ministries, the personal ministries of the members and officers; we commit them all to Thee. And we pray Lord that Thou will bless them richly and make them fruitful, not to our praise and glory but to Thy praise and glory. We pray for the sick, for the troubled, for the oppressed, for the puzzled, we pray Lord that Thou wilt minister to them out of the riches of divine omniscience and mercy and grace. O God, we leave them all in thy hands knowing

that Thy will accomplish all of Thy purposes in us. Bless Lord though this particular meeting and then in the meeting that follow tonight. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Our subject for today in the exposition in the Gospel of John is, “The Promise of the Paraclete.” In olden times it has been said, believers met God, knew him, walked with him, had the clear and full consciousness that they had dealings with the God of heaven, and had too through faith the assurance that their lives were well pleasing to him. It is said that John Fletcher of Madeley, often in his lectures of the Holy Spirit when he finished them would say to the students who were before him, “Now, let those who desire to know the things about which we have been speaking in experience follow me.” And then he would lead them to a room where together they spent some hours in earnest prayer. One gains the impression that today, that is not really the case, and that there is a great need for a recognition again of the magnificent gift of the Holy Spirit to the church of Jesus Christ. We sometimes loose because of just our familiarity of things the sense of the power of the God of the gospel. And that power is related to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

In the past few weeks as you know, I've been reading the biography of Augustus Toplady which I finished. And then I began another biography reading the biography of David Martin Lloyd Jones. One of the things that I've liked about this is not simply the fact that I knew him and heard him preach, and appreciated his ministry very much. But I've appreciated the biography by Iain Murray and in it, Mr. Murray has a number of citations from Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones's ministry, and some of them were exceedingly valuable. One thing however he has in that book is a citation from John Hutton who was one of the ones who preceded Dr. Jones in the ministry at Westminster Chapel in London. And John Hutton about fifty years ago wrote these words,

“Whenever lamps burn low in the church and love waxes cold, and watchers slumber while the bridegroom tarrys, the restorer and sustainer of his people is always standing at the door. He can create fresh witnesses to himself in the most unlikely quarters, even as he raised up Paul from among

the Pharisees, and Luther from among the mendicants. The gospel of the grace of God has been disproved a great number of times, it has been assailed and wounded and beaten down and left for dead, but it survives by the power of and endless life. Amid fightings within and fears without, the modern church can still say I know that my Redeemer liveth. Who can guess what swift incalculable revival Christ has in store for his desponding people?”

Well the reason we can say things like that, the reason that Mr. Hutton could say something like that is because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church of Jesus Christ. Actually, if General Motors had been run like the church of Jesus Christ has been operated through its leaders, it would have gone into bankruptcy scores of years ago. But the facts are that the Christian church, in spite of its leadership, in spite of its failures is still alive. And the testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ continues. But it is not because of the faithfulness and skills and power of the members of the church, it is because of the power of God. And through the Holy Spirit is the way that God is working in this age.

Many Bible teachers have pointed out this, that the Old Testament is the age of the Father, for the Father is prominent in the Old Testament days. When our Lord comes on the scene, still living under the age of the law, then the focus of attention changes and the Lord Jesus Christ is prominent. The Holy Spirit is still not prominent in the ministry of our Lord, though he is mentioned in the Old Testament, mentioned by our Lord, his ministry is largely future. And the time of our Lord can be called the day of God the Son. God the Father, God the Son, but now from the time of the Day of Pentecost onward in fulfillment of the promise that Jesus Christ has made this is preeminently the age of the Spirit whose duty is to testify to Jesus Christ. So we have the age of the Father, the age of the Son and the age of the Holy Spirit. This is his day, so to speak, but he like all testifies to Christ.

Well the theme of this section is the departure of our Lord, it was interrupted by those questions that Peter and Thomas and Philip offered, but now the theme is resumed by our Lord.

And we have several great promises here and I would like to center attention just on these promises. This is a magnificent section, I really was tempted to devote three messages at least to the section, but in order to make a little progress in our exposition, it's good to at times go just a little bit faster and after all, we're up in the fifties now on messages in the Gospel of John. And so, in order to make a little progress, I'm going to center attention on several of the greatest of the promises that are found here.

And the first one is the promise in verse 12, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do because I go to my Father.” Now that is a remarkable promise. Greater works, Jesus says, “Greater works than these that I have done, shall the believer do because I go to my Father.” Can you imagine any believer, any human being, doing a work that could be called greater than the work of our Lord? How could anyone possibly do a work that was greater than a work that Jesus had done? His works were the perfection of divine workings. Our Lord even though he performed most of his ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit performed that ministry perfectly. How is it possible for him to say, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do.” I think I could have understood this if he had said simply the works that I do shall he do also, that is he will do works that are works done by God as he becomes the instrument of God. But greater works, that's difficult to understand. Our Lord's works were perfectly spiritual, even at our best; ours only might be classified with his, providing the Holy Spirit is the author and perfecter of them, but greater works?

Well when I was going through theological seminary, I took some classes under Lewis Sperry Chafer as everyone did at Dallas Seminary. He was a marvelous teacher, and if anything, a greater grader, because he gave every body ninety-fives to a hundreds. In fact, if you got lower than ninety-five you knew that Dr. Chafer was very displeased with your paper, you weren't sure what it was, because he frequently didn't put anything on the paper, but you knew that if it was lower than ninety-five, you were in the lower ten percent of the class. Talk about escalation of grades, those

were the good old days. Well I often got one hundred on my papers. Now even in my proudest moments and I've had quite a few proud moments, unfortunately, they're sinful moments as well. But anyway, even at my proudest, most arrogant, sinfulness, I knew I wasn't worth a hundred, maybe ninety-nine, but not a hundred. [Laughter] And Dr. Chafer graded so many of them a hundred of course you expected to get a hundred. Well, one day he was grading papers evidently, and he was marking of ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine, came to my paper, a hundred, and ninety-nine and so forth a hundred, et cetera, but here is a paper that comes before him it's obviously the finest of the lot so far and what are you going to do one of them or two of them or half a dozen of them with a hundred already, and now you come to one that's just clearly in a different class? It was Merrill Unger's paper. And so in a moment of creativity, he graded it one hundred plus. Now I think you can go to the seminary, and I believe that even on Dr. Unger's master's thesis he graded it one hundred plus.

Well, “greater works than these,” shall ours be one hundred plus and our Lord's be one hundred? No, it's likely that our Lord means greater in quantity, not quality. In other words, “He that believeth on me, well he will do the works that I do because there will be works done in the power of the Holy Spirit as I have done my works. And greater works than these shall he do, because I go on to my Father.” And after all, remember that when the Lord Jesus finished his ministry, there were about five hundred believers, Paul mentions five hundred, and Peter preaching on the Day of Pentecost saw three thousand come into the body of Christ. Well, later on we read that five thousand did. So it would seem that our Lord means greater works, greater in quantity not greater in quality. And when you add the magnificent ministries that the Holy Spirit has done through individuals down through the years, I think you can understand our Lord's words.

But do not pass by that last clause, “because I go to my Father.” In other words, every good work that we do, and if we do many good works, it is because Jesus Christ has gone to the Father. In other words, the power to perform the works that he did and the power to do greater works than these flows from our ascended Lord who gives the Holy Spirit and through the Holy Spirit

accomplishes the things that he desires. So it is Christ glorified doing more good works through the saints than Christ in his humiliation. So that is the meaning of the text it seems to me. In other words, the Lord Jesus has made a magnificent promise and prophecy that those who believe in him shall be the instrumentality for the works that he did and greater in quantity. So it's a prophecy of a magnificent spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ which of course has come to pass as you might expect.

Now the second of his promises, is the promise of answered prayer. “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that shall I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” Now, it is perhaps possible that this is the way that some of these greater works shall come to pass, through prayer. “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. And if you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” Now we've commented on the text, this is a prayer, it seems to me addressed to our Lord, or at least he authorizes such a prayer, and it's perfectly all right to pray that way though the proper usual New Testament order of prayer is to pray to the Father in the name of the Son, because of our union with him, because of our federal or covenantal relationship with him, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that is as the Holy Spirit leads and guides us. Now that is it seems to me one of the most magnificent promises that could possibly be offered to us. “If you ask me anything in my name I will do it.”

I have a friend, he's now with the Lord, he took this text to be an unconditional promise, not to be read in the light of anything else in the Bible. Now he didn't do it like some, some would look at this and say, “if the Lord Jesus said if we ask him anything in his name I will do it, I think I'll find out who's going to win the Indy five hundred and put just a few dollars on that particular person.” Or the Kentucky Derby, or how the Cowboys will do this fall. Well of course, the promise is not to be taken in that sense. There are other passages in the Bible that tell us that our prayers are to be in accordance with the will of God. We are to read all that the Bible says on prayer together, and not select things out which may be misunderstood in their context. Now I have this friend, he's now with the Lord, but he took it the other way. He was a very godly man and so he looked at this

text and not knowing his hermeneutics as he ought, never having attended a Believers Bible Institute on Tuesday night, he read this, “If you shall ask me anything in my name I will do it,” and he said to me once, he said, “Lewis, that’s an unconditional promise. And it means that if I ask him anything in his name, whatever it is, he will do it.” Therefore, not I will ask him about the Kentucky Derby or about the Indy five hundred or how the Cowboys will do, but he said, “Therefore, I rarely ever use this text, because I feel that I don’t really know the things that I ought to ask so well.” Well that’s a godly approach, but nevertheless, I tried to suggest to him that it should be understood in the light of passages like 1 John 5 in which we are, “Ask anything in accordance with his will, he will do it.”

But under any circumstances, this is a magnificent promise, “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” It is a blank check. Now can you imagine a father and a mother who has a daughter or a son or perhaps twins who are going to college in the fall? And can you imagine as they get them ready to go to college, they buy all of the clothes necessary. They take them to the school that they are going to enroll in, they go into the business offices, they pay all of their tuition and other charges for the year, and then they come back to the room and they say, “Now here is a little check book, and as you notice there are lots of checks in here and I’ve signed them all, and whenever you need any spending money, whenever anything comes up that you have need for a few extra dollars, here it is. It’s all signed and all you have to do is to fill in the amount.” Wouldn’t it be nice to go to college that way kids? I did not go to college that way. I stayed home under the same old domineering iron rule. But nevertheless, it would just in my imagination, it would have been wonderful to have a situation like this. Well that is what God has done for us. He says, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son if ye shall ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”

Now let’s come to the third and climactic promise, the promise of the Paraclete. Paraclete incidentally is simply the transliteration of *parakletas*. A Greek word used here in verse 16 translated comforter, which means simply, literally, one called alongside in order to help. This word incidentally was used of a barista or a lawyer, one called alongside to help. It was used in other ways

too. The word itself means to encourage or to exhort, or to comfort in the sense of encourage and things like that. Now, he says, in verse 15, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” And notice that little if, because that is the beginning of this entire passage. And so, this opening statement is a kind of protisis, a kind of premise for what follows, “If you love me keep my commandments” and then, “I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter.” And the rest of the promises flow out of that. It is for those who love him and for those who keep his commandments.

Now the condition of his coming is expressed then in verse 15, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” Loving him, he will later say, leads to obedience. Look at verse 21, “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” So he is not suggesting that it is possible to love him and not keep his commandments. Everyone who loves him keeps his commandments. Not perfectly necessarily, but he is essentially a covenant keeping individual. That’s what the Bible means when it says that we have been saved and we do not thereafter go on sinning. The believer’s life is characterized by obedience. Not perfect obedience, but by obedience. And there is a manifestation of the life in obedience. When you see an individual who is living in sin and who is not obeying, you do not have any right to go to him and say, “You say you are a believer, you are a believer.” The Bible says that those who truly believe in Christ will keep his commandments, and also they will not live a life characterized by sin. They fall into sin, they do disobey. Peter disobeyed, he went out and wept bitterly, that was evidence that his nature was different. Judas who did not know him went out and committed suicide. Great difference between people who truly have come to know Christ and have his nature, and others who don’t.

“If you love me keep my commandments.” Loving him leads to obedience and leads also he says at this point, to the out poured Spirit. My daughter who many of you know, Grace Munroe, when she was just a little girl, about four years of age, and I came home one day. I remember just saying to myself, “I think I’ll test Gracie.” And so I sat down on a chair and she came over, and we were talking and I said to her, “Gracie, take my shoes,” and I took off my shoes. “Take my shoes into my closet and put them there and bring back my slippers.” And so she did it, she went in, she

brought back my slippers, made no comment what so ever. And later, I said to her mother, “You know, I came in and I said to Gracie, take my shoes into the closet and bring back my slippers and she did exactly what I said and came back and then she didn’t have one word of murmuring, one word of objection to what I had said.” And her mother said, “Oh she always does things like that for those she loves.” And then she added, “Sammy,” that was her brother’s name. “Sammy just uses her for a slave.” Well she was crazy about Sammy, and so anything that he asked of her she did it. It was an expression of the love that she had for him. Now, that’s what our Lord is talking about when he says, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” And then, “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.”

Now he goes on to give the content of the promise and he says, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter.” Now notice of course, this is a gift of grace, it is not something that is owed us, but it is a gift. “I will pray the Father and he will give you another comforter.” Now he uses a word translated another that means another of the same kind. As you know, the New Testament has two words, one meaning another of a different kind, one meaning another of the same kind, and this is another of the same kind. In other words, our Lord is implicitly saying he’s a comforter too, but he’s going to pray the Father and he will give you another comforter, translated by the Revised Standard Version as counselor. The idea is called alongside to help as I said previously, to call alongside to strengthen, to be called alongside to guide. There is a magnificent text that Paul writes in Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Now that’s a different word, but Wycliffe, when he translated this in his old English version translated it, “I can do all things through Christ which comforteth me.” For the word comfort meant to strengthen in the days of Wycliffe. And in the days of Queen Elizabeth and the translation of the Authorized Version, there’s still a great bit of that connotation.

So, the comforter is not simply one who comes along to pat our heads and to ease our consciences or anything like that, in fact, the comforter is really a discomforter, and might be called a discomforter because he reminds us of the ways in which we have failed. No comforter means

strengtheners. He shall give you another strengthener, one who will guide you, one who will exhort you, one who will encourage you and yes occasionally, one who will comfort us. He's an unpaid advocate who pleads a particular cause, and he pleads the cause of God. Isn't it interesting we have a comforter at the right hand of the Father, who pleads our cause with the Father, and then we have another comforter who dwells within us who pleads the cause of God with us? So we have two comforters, one in Heaven, and one in our bodies. And that means of course we cannot do anything, we cannot say anything, we cannot actually go anywhere that we do not take him with us and he does not hear all of our conversations and take part in all of our life.

Now he is called the Spirit of truth in verse 17, “Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive.” That means, my dear friends, that the Holy Spirit never leads us contrary to the truth of God. There are often people who say that they are guided by the Holy Spirit in this way, or they've had this experience along these lines. And a student of the word of God knows that that cannot be true, because those experiences are often contrary to the Bible. Now the Holy Spirit never does anything contrary to the word of God. All of his actions are wedded to the word of God.

Many years ago I had a young lady come to talk to me. She was sent by her mother, but she came to talk to me and she was involved at that time in the charismatic movement. And as we talked, I said “well let's open the Bible and see what the Bible has to say about this.” And she replied, “Well Dr. Johnson you know that you know a whole lot more about the Bible than I do, I couldn't talk with you about what the Bible says, and furthermore,” she added, “Dr. Johnson I've had this experience, and no matter what you should say to me I could not possibly accept it. I have had this experience.” We do not judge the Bible by experience. We judge our experience by the Bible. That's a very important principle. We do not judge the Bible by our experiences; we judge our experience by the Bible. If we have an experience that appears to go contrary to the Bible, we doubt the experience. He is the Spirit of truth, and everything he does is wedded to the truth of Scripture.

Now he says, “Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive.” Do you notice that? Not does not receive, cannot receive. Now I know what you're expecting, Dr. Johnson is

going to quote his favorite text, yes I am. In fact I wouldn't be surprised you are saying if Dr. Johnson doesn't have this on his tombstone. And Martha's here, so don't pay any attention to what I'm saying Martha. But I've cited it so many times because I think it has a message for us. “The mind of the flesh is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be so that they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” I wouldn't mind that text on my tombstone, except I think I have a few other texts in addition to it. It might be a distortion of the expository ministry, but it's such a great text, and we need it in these days. We cannot please God of ourselves. We cannot know the truth of ourselves. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they're foolishness to him, neither can he know them.” Not does, cannot, the natural man does not please God, cannot please God. And Jesus says, “Even the Spirit of truth whom the world,” not, does not receive, “Cannot receive.” In other words, the world in its natural state is blind, cannot see, it is blind and rebellious and cannot please God and as Jesus says, “The Spirit of truth cannot be received by the world because it does not see him nor does it know him.”

But he adds, “You know him for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.” And if you ask why they know him? It's simple to answer in the words of our Lord, “No man can come to me except the Father which have sent me draw him.” So Jesus says, “He's the Spirit of truth, the world cannot receive him because it seeth him not.” That explains so many things. It explains how the world does not understand Christianity, will never understand Christianity will be rebellious against Christianity and if it had the opportunity it will persecute Christianity and persecute individually the believers of Christianity but always will Jesus says.

Now he adds on the other hand, “You know him for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.” Now that is a magnificent promise. “He is with you,” the Old Testament relationship. “He shall be in you,” the New Covenant, New Testament relationship. The age of the Spirit, “He shall be in you.” There are some believers today who like to say that everything that we have Old Testament believers had. Well there are many things the Old Testament believers had, that we have, and many things that we have they had. For example, they were regenerated so far as we can tell by the Holy

Spirit. But, the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit is something that believers in this age have. There was important dispensational distinctive fact that took place on the Day of Pentecost. That was the coming of the Spirit. That is something unique in this age. Not the ministry of the Spirit, certain ministries he performed, but the full fledged coming or gift of the Spirit and the permanent indwelling of every believer since that day had its beginning on the Day of Pentecost.

Now let me in a moment, try to prove that fact. I don't think it needs any proof, because Jesus has already said in John chapter 7 in verse 37 and verse 38, “In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” And in the 8:30 class, you have to say things in the 8:30 class to keep them awake you know. And I said in the 8:30 class that I know that I was right about this because John says I was right, and in verse 39 of chapter 7 he says, “And Lewis was right.” And of course they were interested, they awakened for a moment and looked in verse 39 and I said, there it is, you won't find that rendering in any New Testament version or translation you pick up, it will not say and Lewis is right, but still he is right. But, “This spake he of the Spirit,” John adds, “which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” In other words, the giving of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of this unique ministry in the age of the Spirit is the Day of Pentecost.

And I'd like to remind you of something else. Do you remember when Paul was writing to the Galatians, he said in Galatians chapter 3 that Israel was under the law? And he said that we are not under the law. And then he likened it if you remember to a child who was living under a slave guardian. He said, in Old Testament days Israel and believers in Israel of course he's talking about the believers, were sons, but they had to live like slaves because they weren't free. They were sons, but they were under a slave guardian. The slave guardian was the law. “But then in the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law that he might redeem those who were under the law.” And further he said, “That we might receive the adoption of sons.” And to

confirm that he has also sent forth the Holy Spirit into our hearts crying Abba Father. Now it's clear in his teaching, he goes on to say, “And so now we are no longer slaves but we are sons.” Now he's talking about believers, and he's saying that they were slaves because they had to live under the law, they had a slave guardian, but now the slave guardian has been done away with, and they are living like sons. The background of course is a child growing up, he reaches the age at which he changes his garments, and he no longer wears the toga praetexta, the crimson bordered toga that marked him out as a immature son, but now he wears the toga virilis a toga of a mature man, and Paul's talking about that change.

Now I'd just like to set out for you just a little syllogism. Major premise, the sending of the Holy Spirit to indwell the saint is based upon and grounded upon the adult status of the saint. In other words, he says in order for us to have the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we need to be adult saints. Old Testament saints were not adult saints, they were under the law. Minor premise, that's the minor premise, the Old Testament saint lived his life in a minor status. Paul says he's a *nepios*, a child. And he never attained to an adult status, *huios*, sonship, until the coming of Christ and the institution of the adoption. Therefore, the Old Testament saint as a child did not qualify for the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit; consequently they were not permanently indwelt by the Spirit. But every believer in this age is permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Now that is an important thing, and Jesus says he is with you, he dwells with you, he was there to help, to encourage, to endue with power on occasion, but to permanently indwell every believer, that reaches its historical climax in the Day of Pentecost and the redemptive coming of the Holy Spirit as preparation for the fulfillment of the promises of God. And now, he is with us permanently. What a magnificent thing it is!

I mentioned Dr. Chafer, Dr. Chafer at Dallas Seminary had a interesting experience which he liked to tell us about. And I know some of you have heard it and you'll please pardon me. You can think about the Indy five hundred now if you like. But, he used to tell us how he came to understand that the believer that thirty three things happened to the believer when he believed in

Christ. He said that he was invited to take a vacation in New England, because someone gave him the use of a home. And he decided that since he was going to take a month off from ministry, he wouldn't take any book, he would just take his Bible. And they would just relax. Well he told us that when they arrived it began to rain. He said it rained for thirty days. And Dr. Chafer said “That was the first time that I realized that it could rain that much and no flood come like in Noah's day.” But he said, all I had to do was to read the Bible. So he said, “I began at the Gospel of Matthew and I thought after I'd read a few chapters I ought to note down something to read for, some purpose.” So he read to write down the things that happened when a person believed in Christ. And when he got through the end of the Book of Revelation, he had tallied thirty-three distinct things that happened when a believer believed in Christ. Every Dallas Theological Seminary student for many years cursed the day that Dr. Chafer finished the Bible because they had to memorize the thirty-three things for many years.

Well Dr. Chafer said he went back and the thought, “I better read the Bible again, after all it's only about ten days into the month.” So he went back and he read through the Bible again. And again he came to thirty-three things that happened. Now Mr. Olsen who also tells the story in one of his books says he read it the third time through. I don't remember whether, I remember him telling us the story, but didn't remember how many times he read it through. But he read it through perhaps the third time and again, thirty-three things happened. Now Bob Theme's got a different count, he read it through and said there were thirty-four things that happened, but he didn't tell me he read it three times, so I still believe Dr. Chafer was probably right. Now then Dr. Chafer when he finished the third time and the thirty-three came up again, he said that he was in a two story house and he shouted out and his wife called down from above and said, “What did you say Lewis?” And he said, “Well I just found out I'm a thirty-third degree Christian and it didn't cost me a penny.”

Well one of those things is this, the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. That is the way in which the Lord Jesus comes to us. And he does come to us through the Holy Spirit. No one has ever come back to authoritatively tell us about the life beyond the grave except the Lord Jesus. As

you know, either the beginning of this year or the end of last year, the friends of Harry Houdini gathered again around his grave, and again sought to bring back his voice from the dead because Mr. Houdini had said when he died, that he was going to make contact on his birthday. And for a number of birthdays all of the magicians and all of the other fakers gathered around his tomb and sought to hear his voice and they never ever heard the voice of Houdini and they never will hear the voice of Houdini. But last year they had a special celebration, going to have some persuasiveness, and so they gathered around, they turned the lights down, they burned the incense, they did all of the other things that you're supposed to do. And they called out, “Oh Houdini, speak to us, oh Houdini speak to us.” I don't have time to tell you a story, but every time I think of that I think of a story that I heard once about someone speaking to a dead person. But anyway, “Oh Houdini, speak to us!” And poor old Houdini, he cannot speak, he is under judgment at the present time so far as we know. We don't know if he was a believer in Christ, everything seems to be the other way around. He's awaiting some further information in which the Lord is going to speak to him.

Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy as is recorded to have when she died to have given instructions before her death to set up a direct telephone line from her tomb to the Mother Church of Christ Scientist in Boston. And that telephone of course has never rung, it is not a hotline, it is a cold line, very cold line.

But through the presence of the Holy Spirit we have contact with the Lord Jesus Christ. Richard Legallienne is right when he says, “Loud markers in the roaring streets say Christ is crucified again. Twice pierced his gospel bearing feet, twice broken his great heart in vain. I hear and to myself I smile, for Christ talks with me all the while.”

Well he concludes by saying, “At that day,” the Day of Pentecost, the day when the Holy Spirit comes and we all know his permanent indwelling presence. “At that day, you shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me and I in you.” “Ye in me,” that's our position. We are in our federal head, and “I in you,” that's the power of the Christian life. This is the language of an element. We are in him and he is in us. How can someone be in me and yet at the same time I be in him? Well

that’s the language of air, water, fire, and earth. Just as the poker is in the fire and the fire is soon in the poker, or as the bird is soon in the air and air is in the bird, or the fish is in the water and water is in the fish, or the plant is located with its feet in the ground, and the elements of the ground are in the plant, so the Lord Jesus Christ by his death has accomplished by his death such a vital union that it can be said by Paul, “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.”

The Holy Spirit is the one who has made this union a workable thing. And every believer in Jesus Christ is permanently indwelt by him. That is enough to make even people in Believers Chapel say hallelujah. That’s a magnificent promise to think about, permanently indwelt by the third person of the Trinity who glorifies Christ according to the Scriptures through us.

Well, our time is up, what a magnificent series of promises then, greater works, prayer power, the personal presence of the Lord Jesus in the Spirit, the responsibility set forth as Jesus said, to believe in him, love him, to realize the blessings of life through the experience of relationship to him. I invite you to lean on him, to draw on him, and through that to realize the blessings of the relationships that we now share through the Holy Spirit of union with him. If you’re here and you’ve never believed in Christ, of course these promises are not yours. They’re ours. And we invite you to enter into relationship with him whereby these promises may become yours too. Come to Christ; believe in him, you’ll never have a greater Savior than the Lord Jesus Christ. You’ll never have one who will meet your needs as he does. You will have never throughout all of the ages of eternity reason to be sorry for the decision that you make by the grace of God. Come to Christ, believe in him, receive him, and with him all the promises that he offers.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for the blessings of life. We thank Thee for the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for the union we enjoy with him. We confess our often failure and taking advantage of the blessings that are found in Christ, the blessing of answered prayer, the blessing of union with him, the blessing of the other promises of God which are so great. O Father, forgive us for our sins and our failures, and encourage us and motivate us to appropriate the

“The Promise of the Paraclete” by S. Lewis Johnson
Copyright © 2008 Believers Chapel, Dallas, Texas. All Rights Reserved.

blessings of life by Thy grace. And for those Lord who do not know him, O work mightily in
 their...

[AUDIO ENDS ABRUPTLY]