

Two Great Gifts

John 14:25-27

Ever receive a gift that you didn't want or need? There are probably all sorts of reasons why this happens, but at the heart of it is that the gift giver probably doesn't really understand you and what your real need is. Jesus isn't like that. He understands our lives perfectly. And so when He gives a gift we can be assured that it is exactly what we need. In the passage that we are looking at today, we will see two gifts that Jesus gives to his disciples. Unlike the gift you didn't need that gets sold at the next garage sale, these two gifts from Jesus are invaluable. We need to make sure that we fully receive and experience them.

Opening Discussion: What is one of the best gifts you've ever received?

Read John 14:25-27

1. What does Jesus say will be the roll of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His first disciples when He leaves them (v. 25-26)? Why will this be important for them?

Steve said:

As I mentioned, these promises were unique to the original disciples. The Holy Spirit helped **them** remember Jesus' teachings and then continued to teach **them**. The writings of the New Testament reflect this teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. The teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit to them is a gift to us because **we have the Scriptures** that the Holy Spirit inspired. The ongoing teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit in **our** lives is based upon the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit doesn't give us revelation beyond that found in the Scriptures concerning the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; rather, the Spirit teaches us from what has already been written. This teaching ministry is a gift that each of us needs to receive.

2. If the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry in our lives is rooted in the Scriptures, what implications does that have for us?
3. How can we best put ourselves in a position to received this teaching ministry of the Spirit through the Scriptures?
4. The second gift that Jesus gives to His followers is peace (v. 27). What is this peace?

5. How is the peace that the world gives ("world" = the system of life that operates independent of God) (v. 27) and the peace that Jesus gives different?
6. Is your first thought about experiencing peace typically that you just need better circumstances or that you can find it in Jesus even in the midst of your circumstances? Explain.

Steve said:

You may be listening to me thinking, "This type of peace sounds nice and spiritual sitting here on Sunday morning, but you don't understand **my** fears and **my** troubles." If you're thinking that, you're 100% correct: I'm not omniscient (I don't know the half of what you're facing) and my experience is limited (some of you are facing things I never have). I would simply challenge you with the observation that Jesus told His disciples, "My peace I leave with you" on the night before He was crucified. And Jesus said, "Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful," to men who had no idea what their future held, whose faith would be shaken to the core when they saw Him tortured and crucified as a criminal, and who would (almost) all be martyred for their faith. My point is that Jesus gave the gift of peace in the context of His own and His disciples' unspeakable and unjust suffering.

7. How does thinking about the context in which Jesus spoke about His peace help you believe that you really CAN experience His peace in the midst of troubling circumstances?
8. What do you think you need to do to more regularly experience the peace that Jesus has given to you?
9. What is the main thing that you sense God is saying to you through this passage?