

Youth Teaching Resources

May 20, 2018



Easter: Keeping Close (April 1-May 20)

John 15:9-17 – “Real Love”

John 17:6-19 – “Questions of Belonging”

**John 15:26-16:15 (RCL 15:26-27, 16:4b-15) –
“Goodbye, and Hello”**

Season After Pentecost: The Perils of Pauline ... Thinking (May 27-July 8)

Romans 8:12-17 – “In the Flesh, of the Spirit”

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Goodbye, and Hello

John 15:26-16:15 (RCL 15:26-27, 16:4b-15)

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

PARENT PREP

How do we come alongside our children? It is a hard transition to make. You start with your child being entirely dependent on you, to where they can move about and begin to do things on their own. Then your child decides they can do things on their own and they don't need your help, but wind up coming back to you because they do need your help. But, if we are truly doing our job as parents, we are to help our children be independent. At some point, you will end up walking side-by-side with your child and even to where they are leading you. What steps are you taking to make this transition to independence?

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip "I Thought We Were Negotiating Here" from *Erin Brockovich*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability, and then facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What was being "negotiated" during this scene?
- 2) Why does the company want to settle?
- 3) Who were the different parties advocating for during this meeting?
- 4) How does your belief in the cause help you advocate for the cause?
- 5) How do you advocate for your faith? Who helps you advocate for your faith?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading John 15:26-16:15. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony's commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Who is the Advocate that Jesus promises his disciples?
- 2) What does the Advocate do for the disciples? What does the Advocate do for us?
- 3) What warnings does Jesus give the disciples about what they are about to encounter? Why would Jesus tell them these things?
- 4) Why would it be an advantage for Jesus to go away from them?
- 5) What is the role of the Advocate/Spirit for the world?
- 6) Do you believe the Spirit was welcomed by the disciples or not? Explain both sides of this question? Is this why the Spirit is still misunderstood today?

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) Where does the name Advocate come from?
- 2) How is Jesus seen as the prophet in this passage?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": How did Jesus prevent the disciples from stumbling?

Transformation

Conclude the session by re-reading John 15:26-16:15, but as you read through the passage again, have the students listen as if the words of Jesus are directed specifically at them. After reading the passage again with this new filter, facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) How did you hear the passage differently listening as if Jesus spoke to you?
- 2) How have you experienced the Holy Spirit in your life?
- 3) How do you know it is the Holy Spirit?
- 4) How would other people know that the Holy Spirit has affected your life?
- 5) Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit affect your life when your life was difficult?
- 6) Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit leading you to do something?

Close with a prayer thanking God for the continued presence of the Holy Spirit in each of our lives as we continue to learn to walk in the way of Christ.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartlege

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

The text—Today’s text jumps backward from our previous studies in Jesus’ “Farewell Discourse,” mainly because it is Pentecost Sunday, and this is where Jesus spoke most about the coming “Advocate.” The Revised Common Lectionary reading skips Jesus’ warning about coming trials in 16:1-4a, but we will include them in this study.

The Advocate—Our text includes several references to the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete/ Advocate, illustrating various roles the Spirit will play. The English language has no exact equivalent, which explains the range of translations from “Comforter” to “Helper” to “Counselor” to “Advocate” – and the decision by some to give up and simply transliterate the Greek term as “Paraclete.”

This is not the first time Jesus has used the term: in 14:16-17 he said “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.” Jesus also speaks of sending the Spirit as Paraclete in 16:7: “Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”

Other statements speak more directly to the Paraclete’s purpose. In 16:8-11, Jesus speaks of the Spirit’s ministry as it relates to the world, a more pointed description than a similar reference to the Advocate’s testimony in 15:26-27.

In 16:12-15, the Spirit’s purpose is related more closely to the disciples: the Spirit of truth will teach the disciples what they need to know, and in doing so glorify Christ.

Jesus, the prophet—Predictions such as those in 16:1-4a, that disciples would be put out of synagogues and even killed, contributed to Jesus’ reputation as a prophet as well as the growing conviction that he was the longed-for Messiah.

Hard questions?—Reading today’s text challenges us to ask some hard questions. Though we are from a later generation of disciples, Jesus’ words also speak to us.

Have we experienced the presence of the Spirit/Advocate in our lives? How do we know, and how would anyone else notice?

Can you remember times of particular struggle or trial when you felt the Spirit’s comforting presence in your life – times when you believe you couldn’t have gone on without God’s help?

Have you ever sensed God’s leadership through the Spirit in your life? When? How?

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartlege

The Hardest Question is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

How did Jesus prevent the disciples from stumbling?

The first verses of chapter 16 are worth a closer look. “I have said these things to you,” Jesus said, “to keep you from stumbling.” Whether “these things” refers to the entire preceding discourse (chapters 13-15) or to the more immediate context is unclear. It refers, at least, to the preceding promise that the Advocate would support them as they testified in Jesus’ behalf after his departure.

The word used for “stumbling” is from *skandalizō*, the root of the English word “scandalize.” We relate the word to “scandalous” behavior that is offensive to others, often in association with sexual wrongdoing.

In the New Testament, the word could carry the connotation of causing offense, as in John 6:61, when Jesus asked the disciples if they were offended/scandalized by his teaching that relating discipleship and the hope of eternal life to eating his flesh and drinking his blood (6:47-59).

More commonly, the word suggested the act of causing someone to be tripped up and fall away from faith. Jesus tells his disciples that suffering lies ahead because he wants to prepare them in advance. Jesus doesn’t want them to fall away in fear or confusion when persecutions come, but to find strength in knowing that Jesus told them to expect it.

Many of Jesus’ followers had expected him to act as a military Messiah who would demonstrate great power and lead the Jews to victory over Rome. They had a hard time accepting the idea that Jesus’ victory was over sin and death, rather than any earthly power.

Jesus spoke much of how his ministry had introduced the kingdom of God, but that did not mean all people would suddenly pledge allegiance to Christ and live in peace.

Hard days were coming. As the religious leaders of early Judaism had rejected Jesus, so they would reject the disciples and others who proclaimed the gospel. They would suffer persecution for their faith, and some would even be martyred. Knowing this in advance would not only keep them from being disillusioned, but act as confirmation that Jesus’ other teachings were true, as well. This, in turn, would help them avoid stumbling.