

John 14:15-21
Parakaleo part 1

Sermon

Hobart, September 18th, 2011

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GOSPEL READING

Joh 14:15-21

¹⁵ “If you love me, obey* my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,* who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.* ¹⁸ No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. ¹⁹ Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. ²⁰ When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”¹

* Other manuscripts read *you will obey*; still others read *you should obey*.

* Or *Comforter*, or *Encourager*, or *Counselor*. Greek reads *Paraclete*; also in 14:26.

* Some manuscripts read *and is in you*.

¹Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Jn 14:15-21). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

INTRODUCTION:

I. RUOK? DAY

A. THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER, 2011 WAS R U OK?DAY.

1. According to the *RUOK Day* website;

It's a national day of action which aims to prevent suicide by encouraging Australians to connect with someone they care about and help stop little problems turning into big ones.

... we want everyone across the country, from all backgrounds and walks of life, to ask family, friends and colleagues: "Are you OK?".

Staying connected with others is crucial to our general health and wellbeing. Feeling isolated or hopeless can contribute to depression and other mental illnesses, which can ultimately result in suicide. Regular, meaningful conversations can protect those we know and love.

It's so simple. In the time it takes to have a coffee, you can start a conversation that could change a life.

B. THIS IS A SIMPLE, BUT IMMENSELY PRACTICAL AND HELFUL SUGGESTION

1. And it is something, especially for Christians, to be practicing, not just on one day a year

S.P.S:

A. WE HAVE BEEN TALKING RECENTLY ABOUT

1. *The Jesus Creed*, the great commandment, to love God with all our being, and to love our neighbour as our selves

2. We saw how this is what the *Lord's Prayer* reminds us is to be at the heart of our prayers

B. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN LOOKING AT HOW GOD DEALS WITH THE EVILS AND INJUSTICES, THE SUFFERING AND PAIN OF LIFE AND OUR WORLD

1. As well as at *Koinonia*; the sharing of life with God and one another
2. In our study of *II Corinthians* at Ulverstone we saw that one of the themes of Paul's letter was the subject of comfort and encouragement

C. TODAY I'D LIKE TO BEGIN ANOTHER SERIES

1. One that focuses on a particular word
2. The Greek word, PARAKALEO
3. Because it is a word that is deeply involved with all these things we have been talking about
4. It is a word that describes God's relationship with us, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit
 - a) And that describes the life Jesus has called us to participate in, in being strengthened and encouraged in our lives, and in our reaching out to others with the good news
 - b) A word that gets to the down to earth, living out of loving our neighbour as our self
5. And it fits in beautifully with the aim of ***RUOK Day***;
 - a) Of seeking to encourage others who may not be feeling or doing so OK

D. PRAYER

BODY:

A. AT THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF IS THE UNDERSTANDING THAT:

1. God is one in three persons, Father, Son and Spirit
 - a) That God so loved his creation, that he sent the Son to be born as one of us, to be at one with us, so that we might be born to be at one with God
 - (1) So that we who are not ok, might become truly OK through being in relationship with him
2. Jesus lived his life as one of us, encouraging, admonishing, reassuring us of God's love
 - a) Living the complete and full life in relationship with the Father, through the encouragement and strengthening and guidance of the God the Holy Spirit,
 - (1) The Paraclete, the one who comes alongside to help
 - b) And Jesus **gave his life** on the cross in order to take on evil, sin and death and win us victory and bring us through all our problems, our sins, our battles against evil,
 - (1) Our battles against selfishness, loneliness, discouragement, suffering and ill health and the final enemy of death
 - c) He was **resurrected** triumphant, inviting us all to share his triumph over all these things that hold us back and get us down and threaten to defeat us
 - d) And he **ascended** to sit with God in heaven, as one of us, one with us and for us
 - e) And he has **remained as one of us**, as our elder brother, our compassionate representative, our mediator and High Priest
3. Before he gave his life for us, he promised his followers he would never leave them alone, but he would send help and support
 - a) He would be with us, through the presence of **God the Holy Spirit**, who he gave the name the "**comforter**"
4. The **Paraclete**,

- a) The title *Paraclete*, comes from the Gk. “parakletos”, which is in turn based on the word “parakaleo”
 - b) **Parakaleo** has a number of meanings, all of which are profoundly important, practical and central to our being loved by God, and loving our neighbour
 - c) Over the next few weeks we are going to explore the four main meanings of “**parakaleo**”
5. All aspects of this wonderful and enlightening and life impacting word, *when enacted and lived out*, play a role in bringing all of us to be **ok with God, ok with ourselves, and ok with one another**
6. Let’s start today with **Jesus’ promise of comfort**, help and encouragement through the *Paraclete*; the Holy Spirit

II. JOHN 14:1-7; 16-17, 27

A. THE DISCIPLES WERE NOT OK WHEN JESUS TALKED ABOUT HIS LEAVING THEM TO BE CRUCIFIED

1. Before and after his crucifixion, Jesus comforted and encouraged his followers
2. Let’s look at the encouragement he gave beforehand

John 14:1

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.”

3. What is the solution Jesus offers?
4. **Faith**;
 - a) Trust in God, and Jesus
5. Jesus is comforting and encouraging the disciples by putting the troubles ahead into their true perspective
6. Which is what he does for us, and others when we or others are in a place in our lives that is not OK

² There is more than enough room in my Father's home.* If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?*

B. WHAT IS THE MESSAGE HERE?

1. There is more than enough room in God's life, in his family, his kingdom
 - a) There is more than enough room in God's heart for all of us
 - b) His whole being is about loving and relating, about encouraging, restoring and unifying everyone and everything together in himself

³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going."

C. JESUS DOESN'T LEAVE HIS PEOPLE ALONE

1. God's plan was always to bring us to where he is, to be with him

⁵ "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶ Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is.* From now on, you do know him and have seen him!"

D. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO NOT BEING OK

1. He is the way, the truth and the life

John 14:15-17

¹⁵ "If you love me, [you will] obey* my commandments.

E. GOD, FATHER, SON & SPIRIT; IS LOVE

1. Loving relationships involve loving actions

* Or *There are many rooms in my Father's house.*

* Or *If this were not so, I would have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you.* Some manuscripts read *If this were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.*

* Some manuscripts read *If you have really known me, you will know who my Father is.*

* Other manuscripts read *you will obey*; still others read *you should obey.*

F. WHAT DID JESUS COMMAND US TO DO?

1. Love God with all our being, and love our neighbour as ourselves
2. But we need help to do so

G. V16

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,* who will never leave you.

H. THE PARAKLETE

1. The Greek translated “Advocate” is *parakletos*
2. Originally it meant someone called into help, and it often applied to someone called to stand beside you in court, and speak on your behalf
 - a) The meaning developed to include someone who intercedes with God for us as an advocate, and who also exhorts, guides and directs us.
3. Theological Dictionary of the NT discusses the usage of “parakletos”:

The Rabbis. Here again the idea of the heavenly advocate is common. The law, sacrifices, and good works have this function along with the righteous, interceding angels, and the Spirit, who both pleads with God for grace for Israel and reminds Israel of its duty toward God.

The NT concept. More richly developed, and difficult to define, is the idea in John of a Paraclete working in and for the disciples. First Jesus is such [John] (14:16), then the Spirit, who, completing the work of Jesus, leads the disciples into all truth (14:26), witnesses to Jesus (15:26), and convicts the world (16:8ff.). The Greek term may well go back to the term used by Jesus himself in his mother tongue. In translation the many secondary senses rule out a single equivalent. ...the basic thought is that of “Advocate” but the more general “Supporter” or “Helper” is perhaps the best rendering.²

* Or *Comforter*, or *Encourager*, or *Counselor*. Greek reads *Paraclete*; also in 14:26.

² J.Behm, *parakletos*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament-Abridged in One Volume*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 19885. p.783-4.

4. Clearly, Jesus is reassuring his followers, then, and now, that God is there for us, whenever we find things difficult.

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,* who will never leave you.

5. Dr. Gary Gulan says about this word “Paraklete”

This word for “comfort” (Gr. “paraklete”) recorded by John (John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:17) was being used by Jesus in a way that was obscure to the disciples but would be a new characteristic of God shared with them through the Holy Spirit. The disciples were going to experience fear, disillusionment, confrontation, and a crushing of their hopes, when Jesus would be put to death and buried. This word shows that Jesus was a “comforter” to them while he was alive because he was “personally along side them.” Jesus also taught there was another ‘comforter’ of the same kind that he would send to them and who would be inside of them.³

I. JESUS GOES ON TO TELL AS MORE ABOUT THIS COMFORTER.

¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.* The Advocate, the Paraclete,

J. PARAKLETE: ADVOCATE

1. The Comforter is sent by the Father, and the Son
2. He comes to encourage, to comfort, to guide, to lead us into the truth about God, and to lead us in the new life with him, the life where all is ok

¹⁸ No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.

3. Jesus keeps reassuring them that they would not be alone

* Or *Comforter*, or *Encourager*, or *Counselor*. Greek reads *Paraclete*; also in 14:26.

³ Dr. Gary M. Gulan, *The Ministry of Mending*, “Comfort” Greek “*paraklesis – parakletos – parakaleo*” ©1993 (Rev. 96,10): http://www.beyondthepulpit.org/articles/doc_download/1471-qparaklesisq-comfort

* Some manuscripts read *and is in you*.

4. The Holy Spirit is Jesus and the Father present with us

- a) The Holy Spirit is God who comes to us so we are not alone, not abandoned like little children without a parent

¹⁹ Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. ²⁰ When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

5. The Holy Spirit is the communion of the Father and the Son, and Jesus in us, and us in him

²¹ Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”

6. Jesus, through the Spirit, loves us and reveals himself and the Father to us

John 14:23-27

²³ Jesus replied, “All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them. ²⁴ Anyone who doesn’t love me will not obey me. And remember, my words are not my own. What I am telling you is from the Father who sent me. ²⁵ I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. ²⁶ But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. ²⁷ “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.

K. WE SEE CLEARLY AGAIN THE ROLE OF THE ADVOCATE,

1. The Holy Spirit represents Jesus

- a) He is sent by Jesus request, by the Father

2. He teaches us and reminds us of what Jesus taught

3. By implication the Holy Spirit is the gift, the gift of God’s presence. peace of mind and heart so we don’t need to be troubled or afraid.

4. That is why he is called the *Paraklete*, the *Comforter*

L. GCI STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the triune God, eternally proceeding from the Father through the Son. He is the Comforter promised by Jesus Christ, who unites us with the Father and the Son, and transforms us into the image of Christ. The Spirit works out in us the regeneration Christ accomplished for us, and by continual renewal empowers us to share in the Son's glorious and eternal communion with the Father as his children. The Holy Spirit is the Source of inspiration and prophecy throughout the Scriptures, and the Source of unity and communion in the church. He provides spiritual gifts for the work of the gospel, and is the Christian's constant Guide into all truth.⁴

III. COMFORTED TO COMFORT

A. AS WE LEARNED IN II CORINTHIANS

1. We are comforted, not only because we need comfort, support, help and guidance
 - a) But so we are able then to comfort and help others

II Corinthians 1:4

⁴ He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

2. Tom Wright;

The whole idea of the word [parakaleo] is that one person is being with another, speaking words which change their mood and situation, giving them courage, new hope, new direction, new insights which will alter the way they face the next moment, the next day, the rest of their life.

3. Barnett; p.31 read all

The comfort we receive from God through Christ we are both to give to and receive from one another.

God's comfort, therefore, is not to terminate on the one who receives it.

If we would be used by God to comfort and encourage, we must be prepared to listen without interruption so as to allow others to express to us their deepest feelings.

⁴ <http://www.gci.org/aboutus/beliefs#Spirit>

CONCLUSION:

A. SINCE THE BEGINNING, THINGS HAVE NOT BEEN OK WITH LIFE ON EARTH;

1. In individual lives, and as communities

B. GOD CONTINUALLY COMES ALONGSIDE US

1. Bringing help, comfort, counsel and encouragement through the Holy Spirit, the *Paraklete*
2. and urging us to receive his love, and to know and share in the life of his Son

C. SHARING IN THE LIFE OF GOD ENTAILS DOING WHAT GOD DOES

1. Being *parakletes*
 - a) Bringing aid, encouragement, comfort, and godly counsel to those who are not ok
2. In the next few weeks we will look more closely at the four main meanings of this highly relevant and practical word, *parakaleo*
 - a) How it describes what the Holy Spirit is doing, and calls us to join in doing as well,
 - b) That more *not ok* people might be comforted and encouraged

D. HOMEWORK:

1. With that in mind, I'd like you to think about a time when someone said or did something encouraging for you, that has had a lasting impact in your life
 - a) And be prepared to share it with us

E. PRAYER

NOTES

IV. RUOK? DAY

<http://www.ruokday.com.au/>

The screenshot shows the homepage for RUOK? Day 2011. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the RUOK? logo and the tagline "A conversation could change a life." To the right of the logo are links for "ABOUT R U OK?", "R U OK? VIDEOS", "HOW TO ASK R U OK?", "REGISTER NOW", "R U OK? MERCHANDISE", and "MEDIA & POLICY". Further right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and a "NEED HELP NOW?" button with a question mark icon and a "Click here" link.

The main content area features a video player with a play button. The video title is "RUOK? Day is Thursday, September 15th, 2011". The video thumbnail shows a man speaking, with a yellow speech bubble that says "RUOK? DAY Thursday Sept 15th". To the right of the video player is a "MAKE A DONATION" section with a list of links: "How do I get help now?", "How can I help others?", "Accessing free resources", "Dealing with bereavement?", and "Our stories". Below these links are two small video thumbnails: "Watch 2010 Hype" and "Watch Natalie Tran".

Below the video player are three columns of content:

- WHAT IS R U OK? DAY?**: A graphic with yellow smiley faces and the text "RUOK? DAY Thursday 15 September 2011". Below the graphic, it says "R U OK? Day 2011 is on 15th September. On this day we want everyone across the country from all backgrounds and all walks of life to ask friends, families and colleagues: 'Are you OK?'. It's so simple. [Read more](#)"
- FREE RESOURCES**: A graphic showing a crowd of people holding yellow balloons. Below the graphic, it says "R U OK? Day has developed resources to encourage people to connect with friends and loved ones. Sign up for R U OK? at Work, R U OK? at School, R U OK? at Uni, R U OK? in Health and R U OK? in sport. [Read more](#)"
- PRINCIPAL SPONSOR**: The Medibank Community Fund logo, which is a colorful, multi-lobed shape. Below the logo, it says "As part of its commitment to encouraging all Australians to stay connected and get involved in their local communities, Medibank Community Fund is proud to be the principal sponsor of R U OK? Day. [Read more](#)"