

**THE BIG IDEA:** When we know the Helper, we'll trust his help.

### The Take-Off

There was a man who fell over a cliff, and as he went over the edge, he started clawing, grabbing and reaching for anything that could help him.

As luck would have it, he grabbed a small branch sticking out from the face of the cliff about 15 feet from the top.

The problem was that he was hundreds of feet from the bottom. So he started calling for help (wouldn't you??).

After a long time, Jesus appeared at the top. "I'm here, and I've come to help you."

"Thank you, Jesus! Can you throw down a rope or something?"

"No. Let go of the branch." "Say what???" "It's ok. You can trust me. Let go."

After a VERY long silence, the man over the cliff yelled back, "Is there anyone else up there?"

Now, hopefully none of us will ever find ourselves in that same position, but the reality is that we don't really trust the help we're being offered if we don't know the person offering it.

If your car breaks down on the side of the road and a stranger stops to offer assistance, you may very well refuse help from the best mechanic around simply because you don't know him from a thief.

Last week we established pretty clearly that we need help, and that Jesus knew we needed help and so that's why he sent the Helper.

But if we don't know who the Helper, it's hard to really trust him, isn't it?

Today's Big idea sums that up: when we know the Helper, we can trust his help.

That's the goal this morning. I want to help you know a little more about WHO the Holy Spirit is.

Let's start with one that will clear up a common misconception:

### 1. The Helper is God

- a. Most people totally get God the Father and God the Son.
- b. Well, I don't mean that we fully understand it, but I do mean that we have accepted that when John says that the word was with God and the word was God, we don't argue the point. We accept it.
- c. We just celebrated Christmas and talked a lot about "Emmanuel" - God with us. That's Jesus. GOD with us.
- d. But when it comes to the Holy Spirit, so many times we don't think of him as God.
- e. Maybe after last week you see him as a good idea - as a helper. The Bible uses the Greek word "paraclete" to describe him - a counselor, comforter, advocate, helper.
- f. But we can't just see him as a good idea. The idea of the trinity means that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are one God in 3 persons.
- g. That can seem confusing but I don't think it has to be. I'm one man, but I'm a dad, a son and a husband all at the same time. Paul the father, son and extremely awesome husband! God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- h. But for many, we treat it more like the Father, Son and some guy named Clete!
- i. Sometimes we treat the Helper as "a member of the godhead once removed" or like Jesus' crazy uncle!
- j. But that makes us more skeptical of him, right? Because we've heard (or experienced) crazy uncle stories!
- k. [Share crazy uncle stories]
- l. Here are some verses that show the interaction and relationship of the trinity:
  - John 14:16 - the Son asks the Father to give the Spirit
  - John 14:26 - the Spirit is sent from the Father to remind us of the Son's words
  - John 15:26 - the Spirit is sent from the Father to testify about the Son
  - Luke 3:22 - the Spirit descended as the Father spoke about the Son
  - Matthew 28:19 - we're sent to baptize in the NAME of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (not the NAMES)
- j. Seeing the Helper as anything less than God changes how we interact with him, doesn't it? He becomes an option instead of a necessity. An add-on to salvation like super-sizing a meal at McD's!
- k. But the stakes get higher when we see the Helper for who he is - God.
  - Acts 5:1-4
  - It's one thing to lie to a guy named Clete.
  - It's quite another to lie to God!
  - One of the reasons we don't fully understand the Holy Spirit is BECAUSE he is God.
  - How many of us understand God? Exactly. And yet we still believe him.

- When we understand that the Helper is God, we lose the luxury of stiff arming him until we fully understand him.
- We can't afford to ignore God.

## 2. The Helper is a person

- This is kind of an obvious one, and it goes along with the first one, but the Helper is a person.
- I once spent 2 weeks in TN with my sister and 2 of our cousins. Laura was the only girl, and so we called her "It" the whole time. It was fun for us, but hurtful for her.
- Welcome to the world of the Helper, who gets called "it" all the time.
- But "he" is not an "it"
- A few verses to show the person of the Holy Spirit:
  - Acts 28:25 - he speaks
  - Ephesians 4:30 - he hurts
  - 2 Corinthians 13:14 - he interacts personally with us
- Sometimes we're guilty of reducing him to a formula or a process, and that creates distance and confusion
- We use formulas and forces. We love and know people.
- Don't lose the power of that verse in 2 Corinthians - the Helper longs to fellowship with you
- That's the longing of a person, not a force. But the kind of fellowship is what proves our last point...

## 3. The Helper is our friend

- He want to fellowship with us. This isn't an invitation to a covered dish lunch after the service, it's an invitation to intimacy.
- Look with me at John 14:16-17
  - Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit (v. 16)
  - Jesus clearly teaches that the Helper isn't received as a stranger (the world can't receive because the world doesn't know)
  - This is the language of relationship
  - But you and I know the Helper because he "lives with us" (v. 17)
- I don't know about you, but family lives with me and I'd be open to friends moving in, too
- But a stranger? No way.
- The Helper is our friend, and that changes everything about our relationship with him, doesn't it?
- Friends don't embarrass us (at least on purpose). They don't use us or intentionally hurt us.
- Friends are FOR us, and that's why we want to be WITH them.
- It's not different with the Helper.

### The Landing

Last week, we made it very clear that we need the Helper's help.

But the reality is that we won't trust his help if we don't know him, and so this morning I want you to allow yourself to move a little closer to a friend.

Did you catch the progression in who the Helper is?

- First, he's God, but that's not enough for him. He doesn't just want to be a cold distant God dispensing power at some Holy Ghost vending machine, because
- He's also a person. He longs, hurts, communicates. In short, he desires to be intimate with us as
- A friend. One who is for us.
- Maybe this is challenging the way you see the Helper, and I'm glad, because until we see him for who he is, we'll never trust him when he leads us.

**But when we know the helper, we can trust his help.**

Let's pray.

Crazy Uncle stories...

My crazy uncle has one glass eye (he lost his real eye in a gun fight with a barrel). When I was young, he used to cough and pop it out into his drinking glass at restaurants. My grandma would get furious.

Uncle fed a deer a piece of bread. With his mouth.

My uncle would throw quarters into our fish pond then pick me up by the ankles and make me pick them out and give them back to him.

When I was younger, one time at church my Nana was singing and had her arm raised praising God etc and my uncle ran up to her and gave her a high five in the middle of the service. He also used to write love notes in the hymn books, making them out to be to & from other people in the congregation. He was always doing crazy random stuff in church.

My Uncle Frank:

- Used to raise fighting roosters in his back yard
- Taught me how to shoot dice when I was 6
- Noticed a cancerous growth on his neck, so he sliced it off with his pocket knife
- Used to own 5-6 dogs, until he came home one day and found that somebody had broken into his house. Since the dogs obviously hadn't done a good job protecting his house, he shot them.