# Congregational-Presbyterian Church

 **“Another of the Same Kind”**

**John 14:15-18**

**September 9, 2018**

This morning, as we continue our series on the Holy Spirit, we join Jesus and his disciples in an Upper Room somewhere in Jerusalem. Jesus has told his disciples that he will soon be going away and return to the Father, and now he reveals God’s plan to send another Person to them, a Person he calls the “Advocate” who is the Holy Spirit. I invite you to turn with me to John 14:15-18

“If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 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. No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.”

Included in that paragraph are several remarkable facts about the Holy Spirit, this gift from the Father to those who believe in his Son. First, Jesus says that this Spirit will be “another,” a separate but similar Person to himself. He uses a word for “another” which in Greek means “another of the same kind.” The Father sent the Son into the world. Now, with the Son returning to the Father, the Father sends the Spirit who will continue the work of Jesus in and through faithful followers of Jesus. For three years Jesus has been their Advocate, their Comforter, their Helper, their Counselor, their Teacher. But as he leaves he is not abandoning them as orphans – his ministry with them will continue in the form of the Spirit.

One way in which the Spirit is doing the ministry of Jesus in us is by fulfilling Jesus promise to his disciples that he would never leave them nor forsake them. For example, in Matthew 28:20, the last recorded word of Jesus to his friends is: “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” This means that once the Holy Spirit comes into your life, he does not leave. He does not come again and again, needing to be constantly asked to return. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, the Spirit lives in you and he will never leave you, which means that Christ will never leave you.

Another way that the Spirit is continuing the ministry of Jesus in us is as the revealer of truth. He is, as Jesus says in John 16:13, “the Spirit of truth.” What the Spirit does and says can be absolutely relied upon to be real – no confusion, no deceit, no contradiction of what Jesus has said or done in his ministry. The primary way in which the Spirit has given us the truth is through the Bible, the Word of God. It was the Spirit who moved the authors of the Bible to write as they did. It is the work of human beings and the work of God come together in a text which teaches us the truth about God. Understood and interpreted through the Spirit who lives in the believer, the Bible is absolutely dependable.

The Spirit of truth also reveals truth to us through his inner working in our hearts. Can you think back to the first time you realized that you were a sinner, that Jesus had died on a cross to forgive your sins, and that you now believed in him? Not simply something you had heard and thought sounded reasonable with your mind, but something that stirred within you a deep longing. In your heart you sensed a deep desire to give your life to this Jesus. Perhaps your mind didn’t fully grasp it, perhaps it still doesn’t, but your heart has responded to the love of God as revealed by the Spirit of truth and it is now yours.

The earliest I remember having this feeling within, this sense of the love of God for me that has accepted me as I am, was at the age of ten. I was at a Christian summer camp and the speaker was talking about Jesus. I had grown up in the church, attended Sunday School practically since birth, and I had heard about Jesus hundreds of times. But this time it became real to me. This time it touched something deep inside me. This time the Spirit of truth made it come alive in me. I knew in a way different from any other knowing that I was a child of God.

The primary work of the Spirit is to make Jesus real to you and to me. The mark of a life filled with the Spirit is an ever-deepening consciousness of Jesus Christ in us, continuing to teach us, comfort us, heal us, and to bring us closer to our heavenly Father. Jesus who declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” continues, through the ministry of the Spirit living in us to show us God’s way, to reveal to us God’s truth, and to give us all we need to live God’s life. As individuals and as a congregation, it is the Spirit living in us who will transform us into people who know Christ, become like Christ, and share Christ.