

## **Lent Day 31**

Wednesday March 21, 2018

### **Reading:** John 16:1-15

<sup>12</sup> “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.<sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

### **Reflection**

Can you imagine what it would have been like for you to be born without parents? I don't mean born into a system of care like an orphanage, but just without parents, without care. A baby has no ability to care for itself; it can't feed itself, clothe itself or move itself. A baby without parents, or any care, would surely die within days. Things wouldn't be much better if that same scenario occurred in early childhood either. Parents normally ensure food, clothes and nurture is provided, as well as guidance on how to navigate life and the world successfully. Take that away and the child may not die, but will certainly be malformed.

The other side of the coin is just as dire. Imagine an adult who hasn't learned to separate from their parents. They cannot fathom work to earn money to get necessities. They must seek the answer from their parents for every move they make. Again, this wouldn't necessarily lead to death, but it is a malformation. We understand that the parent and child relationship is essential but transitory. The ultimate goal of parenthood is to mature and release children into independent adulthood. We never cease being a parent to our child, but how we parent from infancy to adulthood is radically different. We never cease being a child to our parents but the way we rely on our parents is radically different from our infancy to our adulthood. This is called growing up and it's one of the goals for every person.

God has a concern for us to grow spiritually as well as physically and that means the same rules apply. Jesus needs to prepare his disciples for a hostile world because he is returning to the Father but his disciples are going on living in this world. While he was with them (infancy) he didn't tell them about the danger — he was taking care of it. However, now that he's leaving they are going to be more independent and they will need to navigate it. But, this isn't abandonment, like, good luck to you guys. No, he is sending his Spirit.

While the Spirit dwells in us, there is less immediacy with the Spirit than walking side by side with Jesus on the roads of Palestine. We still have access because the Father has given all things to the Son and the Son reveals all things to us through the Spirit, but it's meted out differently. This is not because we're unwanted or being punished, it's because we have grown more mature and do not need that same immediacy. We have matured and this way we mature more. This is the appropriate growth and why the apostle Paul could be so frustrated with immature believers — they were acting like children rather than the adults God had made them to be.

### **Prayer**

Father, thank you for maturing us and trusting us to walk as adults. Thank you for the gift of your Spirit and help us to walk in his power. Amen.