

**Devotional Thoughts :: THE ADVOCATE by Jim Cymbala****THE ADVOCATE by Jim Cymbala - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/2/13 6:17**

During the Last Supper, Jesus told His disciples—the students who had learned from Him and been friends with Him for three years—that He was going away. Imagine how upset the disciples must have been to hear such a thing! He was their leader. He was a miracle worker. He was the one with the perfectly wise response when the Pharisees verbally cornered them. When He spoke, He spoke with an authority unlike any they had ever heard. No one had taught like that before.

How could He leave them now when they needed Him most? And more confusing, He said that His leaving would benefit them. “But truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away” (John 16:7, emphasis mine). That statement must have flabbergasted the disciples. How could it be good that Jesus was going away? This was the teacher they had eaten with, walked with, traveled with, watched and learned from. Any benefit from His leaving had to be impossible for them to understand.

Fortunately, Jesus explained the reason why. “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:16-17). Then again He said, “But verily I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you” (16:7).

Now the whole picture began to unfold. The Father sent the Son to accomplish a specific work, to attest to God’s love. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). God would show that love by sacrificing His Son on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. And after the Son accomplished His work on the cross, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, the Son would send the Spirit.

Although the disciples couldn’t comprehend it at the time, it was better for them to have the invisible Holy Spirit in them than it was to have the physical Jesus with them. The divine Person who was coming would help them understand everything He had said.