





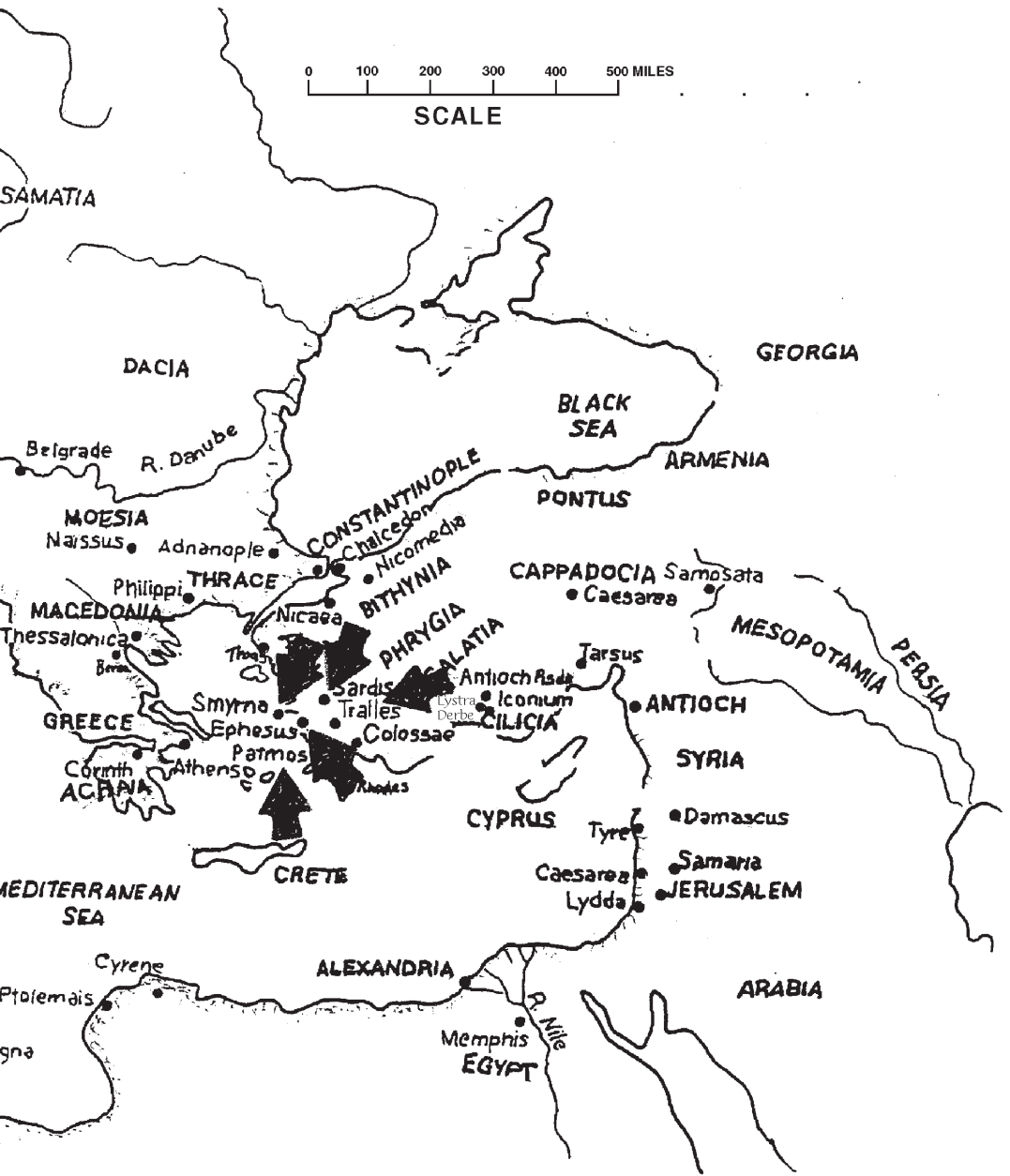
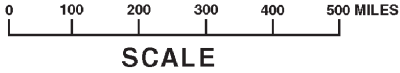
# ROMAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER XIV 96 A.D. - 98 A.D.

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## WHAT APOSTLE JOHN WROTE ABOUT THE CONFUSION

Revelation from Jesus, Against Synagogues of Satan,  
Reestablish Ekklesia, His Epistles, His Gospel  
(Spiritual Gospel)



In 96 A.D. right after Clement of Rome had castigated the Christian group in Corinth, the Apostle John was released from captivity on the Isle of Patmos. We've heard nothing from John since the council concerning the Jewish Christians of the circumcision in Jerusalem in 50 A.D. He was not present when Paul went back and was subsequently arrested in 58 A.D. John probably left when the Jewish Christians of the circumcision became the dominant Christian group in Jerusalem. James, the brother of Jesus, was the leader and although he was probably John's cousin, I'm sure John disagreed with him about the Judaizers. John had been an integral part of the signs and wonders of the ekklesia in Jerusalem. He had probably been with Jesus more than any other Apostle.

Barnabas in his epistle in 78 A.D. told us about these ensuing times in Jerusalem. *ANF Vol 1, pp 139. And all the more attend to this, my brethren, when ye reflect and behold, that after so great signs and wonders were wrought in Israel, they were thus (at length) abandoned.* These Jewish Christians of the circumcision had no use for the manifestations of the Holy Spirit and therefore no miracles were wrought in Jerusalem for a long time. I Clement showed this may have been the situation in Corinth and this was the reason they were upset with their leaders.

John probably took Jesus' mother with him to Ephesus sometime around 56 A.D. because by tradition Mary was buried in Ephesus. Since 56 A.D. John had become familiar with the ekklesia in the areas of western Asia before he was banished to Patmos. Domitian, the emperor, was probably responsible for John's imprisonment after he succeeded his brother Titus in 81 A.D. Domitian, unlike his brother or father, was evidently suspicious of almost everyone. He was always looking for conspiracies because he executed several of his own dissident proconsuls during his reign. He also took it seriously that people should worship him as a god. John, because he was the last surviving Apostle and a known Christian leader was a likely candidate for

Domitian's wrath. He was incarcerated on Patmos in the early eighties and probably worked in the mines as a slave. Domitian was murdered in 96 A.D. and that was probably when John was released and returned to Ephesus. It was no small miracle that John survived Patmos at such an old age.

The antics of the Emperor Domitian, caused the various ekklesias to retreat even more and be more cautious about their public ministry. This caused the synagogue-like meetings to become more numerous and, as a consequence, there were less and less manifestations of the Holy Spirit. We saw the results of this clearly in the rules put forth by the Didache and the stiff Jewish type organization of the Christian group in Rome as shown by Clement in 95 A.D.

Even though John was on Patmos he was not completely isolated from his Christian friends. Patmos was only sixty miles out in the Aegean Sea from Ephesus. He had probably heard from the various ekklesias in Western Asia and was very concerned about their spirituality. Before he left Patmos, John received the prophecy from Jesus that was called "The Revelation to John". This revelation was for the most part good news because regardless of what was happening to the Christians at the time; Jesus would win at the end. At the beginning of the prophesy, Jesus gave John specific prophesies concerning seven ekklesia-churches in Western Asia including Ephesus. John explained how he received the revelation. ***NIV Rev 1:10. On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."*** These ekklesia-churches probably had been very familiar to Apostle John in the past.

Next was a description of Jesus by John which I pieced together from all the prophesies to the churches. ***AB Rev 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14. These are the words of Him Who holds the seven stars in His right hand Who goes about among the seven golden lampstands (ekklesias), the First and the Last Who died and came to life again, Him Who has and wields the sharp two-edge sword (Word), the Son of God Who has eyes that flash like a flame of fire and Whose feet glow***

**like bright and burnished white hot bronze, Him Who has the seven Spirits of God (Gifts of the Holy Spirit) and the seven stars (messages), the Holy One, the True One, He Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shall shut, Who shuts and no one shall open, the Amen, the trusty and faithful and true Witness, Origin and Beginning, and Author of God's creation.** This was hardly the same forlorn Jesus we saw at the crucifixion. From John's description, He seemed very formidable.

By this time, John had to be over ninety years old, but I'm sure he delivered each one of these prophecies to the various ekklesias in person. To the ekklesia in Ephesus, Jesus had this to say. **NIV Rev 2:2-5a. I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first . . .**The prophecy was obviously about their lack of spiritual manifestations. This was not what the ekklesia in Ephesus was noted for, when Luke wrote Acts 19:11. At that time God did unusual and extraordinary miracles by the hand of Paul, and all of Asia heard the Word of the Lord through the ekklesia-church in Ephesus.

To the ekklesia in Smyrna, Jesus had an understanding attitude. **NIV Rev 2:9-10. I know your afflictions and your poverty---yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.** This sounded like an ekklesia that had retreated from the public places because of the influence of the synagogue- like meetings. The synagogue of Satan was to John, truly from Satan, because they were obviously robbing the true ekklesia of members. Saying they are Jews but are not fits their appearance because the Roman officials probably thought they were Jews. These synagogue-like meetings for the so-called Christians

were a detraction and impedance to the public ekklesia in Smyrna. The ekklesia in Smyrna needed to draw on the power of the Holy Spirit available to them.

To the ekklesia in Pergamum Jesus again showed some understanding. ***AB Rev 2:13-14a. I know where you live, a place where Satan sits enthroned. (Yet) you are clinging to and holding fast My name and you did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas My witness, My faithful one, who was killed, (martyred) in your midst where Satan dwells. Nevertheless I have a few things against you: you have some people there who are clinging to the teaching of Balaam . . .***The ekklesia in Pergamum was probably in direct competition with the Great Altar of Zeus-Sotar, which was located in that city. Anything from the ekklesia was probably met with resistance. He told them they needed to straighten out some of their members who were clinging to the teaching of Balaam. A united group was necessary to be a good witness.

To the ekklesia in Thyatira, Jesus gave them encouragement because some good things were happening that were better than before. Sounds like some Gifts of the Spirit were in evidence. ***NIV Rev 2:19-20 I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first. Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of foods sacrificed to idols.*** Here again was a rotten apple in the barrel. He told them He would get rid of her for their sakes (Rev 2:22). He told the rest to hold fast to what you have until I come.

To the ekklesia in Sardis, Jesus told them if they didn't wake up they would miss His coming. ***NIV Rev 3:1b, 3a. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of God. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent.*** He told them they had done nothing that meets the requirements of God. This ekklesia obviously was not experiencing any manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Yet, there were a few in Sardis who had not soiled their clothes (Rev 3:4)

To the ekklesia in Philadelphia, Jesus told them they have a good heart, and have not renounced His name. They have showed very little power indicating not many manifestations of the Holy Spirit, but they have kept His Word. Here again was the Synagogue of Satan which was probably the synagogue-like meetings of the Christian groups. ***NIV Rev 3:8-9. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars---I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.*** Those that attended these synagogue-like meetings would eventually know the ekklesia-Body of Christ was God's plan for man.

To the the ekklesia in Laodicia, Jesus scolded them for being nothing. It sounds like they were an ekklesia in name only and were probably meeting as an interested group for the betterment of mankind. Sometimes our churches don't come up to the standards of the local Rotary Club. ***NIV Rev 3:15-17. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one of the other! So, because you are lukewarm---neither hot nor cold---I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.*** This showed how Jesus looked on these who were not doing anything of a spiritual nature. It's like he told the Samaritan women in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit".

In conclusion, Jesus told them, I stand at the door and knock, if anyone opens the door I will come in and eat with them (Rev 3:20). These ekklesias needed to repent and do as Jesus had instructed them. They were to operate by the revelations from God and manifest the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

After delivering these prophecies, John was in Ephesus, and I'm sure he was aghast at their spiritual state and how much the ekklesias had changed since he had been away on Patmos. The synagogue-like meetings had taken their toll. Only the ekklesia in Thyatira showed improvement in their spirituality. John felt the need to write his epistles to all the ekklesias to goad them out of this spiritual morass. He had rather see them personally (2 John 12) but because of his age he could only write to them.

In his first epistle John established the attributes of the ekklesia. ***1 John 1:3, 7-8. What we have seen and (ourselves) heard we are also telling you, so that you too may realize and enjoy fellowship as partners and partakers with us. And (this) fellowship that we have (which is a distinguishing mark of Christians) is with the Father and with His son Jesus Christ, the Messiah . . . But if we (really) are living and walking in the Light as He (Himself) is in the Light, we have (true, unbroken) fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses (removes) us from all sin and guilt---keeps us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations. If we say no we have no sin---refusing to admit that we are sinners---we delude and lead ourselves astray, and the Truth (which the Gospel presents) is not in us---does not dwell in our hearts.*** The fellowship was the Body of Christ and because they walked with Him and participated in the Gifts of the Spirit, they were in an unbroken fellowship with each other. Jesus cleansed all of them from sin because all of them were sinners and redeemed by His atonement. You can tell he had read Matthew's Gospel.

He reminded them they had the Holy Spirit. ***AB 1 John 2:20-21. But---you hold a sacred appointment, you have been given an unction---you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all know (the Truth). I write to you, not because you are ignorant and do not perceive and know the Truth, but because you do perceive and know it, and (know positively) that nothing false---no deception, no lie---is of the Truth.*** They knew better than to wander off and be subject to deception like the synagogues of Satan. This Holy Spirit was what was in their hearts from the beginning. ***AB 1 John 2:24. As for you, keep in your hearts what you have heard from the beginning. If what you***

**heard from the first dwells and remains in you, then you will dwell in the Son and in the Father (always).** Jesus has promised them power and they shouldn't let anyone deceive them or lead them astray.

Then John really pointed out the problem with the synagogue-like meetings with designated leaders and teachers which went against the ekklesia. **NIV I John 2:27. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit---just as it has taught you, remain in him.** He told them they didn't need someone to teach them. Have faith the Holy Spirit will teach you. John wanted them (the ekklesia) to let the revelations from God with the ensuing Gifts of the Holy Spirit teach and control all things. John was rebuking the synagogue-like meetings where studious debate and teachings had replaced the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. John told them we can do this because we have Jesus in us. **NIV I John 3:24. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.** He made His home in them by the Holy Spirit Whom He had given them. By these manifestations of the Holy Spirit God revealed Himself to man.

He also told them to love one another as God loved them. **NIV I John 4:12-13. No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.** They could love like God because they had the Holy Spirit and because of this love they knew God was love. By His love, God revealed Himself through the Christians.

Then John outlined the Trinity for the believers of the ekklesia. Jesus and the Holy Spirit abide in each other. **AB I John 5:6-8. This is He Who came by (with) water and blood (His baptism and His death), Jesus Christ, the Messiah; not by (in) the water only but by (in) the water and the blood. And it is the (Holy) Spirit Who bears witness, because the (Holy) Spirit is the Truth. So there are three witnesses in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three**

**are One; and there are three witnesses on the earth, the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree---are in unison, their testimony coincides.** There were three, the Father, the Word (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit. We have salvation because of His blood (the cross), the water (His baptism) and His Gifts (because Jesus is in us). The first Epistle of John completely explained God's plan for the redemption of man.

The Apostle John who was the elderly elder wrote the third Epistle to a man named Gaius. In the third Epistle, he showed he had read the previously written Didache and was completely repulsed by its instructions to the Christian groups. **AB 3 John 5-7. Beloved, it is a fine and faithful work that you are doing when you give any service to the (Christian) brethren, and (especially when they are) strangers. They have testified before the church of your love and friendship. You will do well to forward them on their journey, (and you will please do so) in a way worthy of God's (service). For these (traveling missionaries) have gone out for the Name's sake---for His sake---and are accepting nothing from the heathen (the Gentiles, the non-Israelites).** The Didache was written to the synagogue-like groups who at least had some prophesy; otherwise, they were just like a Jewish synagogue.

He brought up Diotrephes who obviously wanted to be the leader of a group. **AB 3John 9-10. I have written briefly to the church; but Diotrephes, who likes to take the lead among them and put himself first, does not acknowledge my authority and refuses to accept my suggestions or to listen to me. So when I arrive, I will call attention to what he is doing, his boiling over and casting malicious reflections upon us with insinuating language. And not satisfied with that, he refuses to receive and welcome the (missionary) brethren himself, and also interferes with and forbids those who would welcome them, and tries to expel (excommunicate) them from the church.** You can tell from this, the old apostle had no use for leaders such as this. The ekklesia was not meant to work that way. This was a prime example of the negative actions of the synagogue-like meetings and the influence of the Didache on their leaders.

After the Epistles, John probably taught in the ekklesias what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit during His time on earth. Since most of the ekklesias were lacking in the works of the Holy Spirit, the people probably prevailed on John to write his own Gospel. So in 98 A.D., John wrote the Gospel according to John which was for the most part about the Holy Spirit according to Jesus. In fact, Clement of Alexandria, the first theologian, who wrote in 200 A.D., said the Gospel of John is "the Spiritual Gospel".

John began the Gospel by proving Jesus and God are the same. **AB John 1:1-3. In the beginning (before all time) was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. He was present originally with God. All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him was not even one thing made that has come into being.** This was to solidify the deity of Jesus for the believers.

John started right away with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Body of Christ. **AB John 1:16. For out of His fullness (abundance) we all received---all had a share and we were all supplied with---one grace after another and spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, and even favor upon favor and gift (heaped) upon gift.** Here John reminded the ekklesias what Jesus gave them at the beginning and implied they should be using these Gifts.

He then told what John the Baptist said about Jesus. **AB John 1:33. And I did not know Him, nor recognize Him; but He Who sent me to baptize in (with) water said to me, Upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descend and remain, that One is He Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.** It was prophesied to John the Baptist; Jesus would fill us with the Holy Spirit.

In the witness to the Samaritan woman, Jesus made being spiritual, a basic part of being a believer. **AB John 4:23-24. A time will come, however, indeed it is already here, when the true (genuine) worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth (reality); for the Father is seeking just such people as these as His worshippers. God is a Spirit (a spiritual Being) and those who worship Him must wor-**

**ship Him in spirit and in truth (reality).** You can't worship God without being spiritual because God is a Spirit. This showed the futility of the Judaizers' beliefs in the Law and the old Jewish ways.

John remembered this story about the Jewish leaders discussing the fate of Jesus. **AB John 11:47-48. So the chief priests and Pharisees called a meeting of the council (the Sanhedrin) and said, What are we to do? For this Man performs many signs (evidences, miracles). If we let Him alone to go on like this, everyone will believe in Him and adhere to Him, and the Romans will come and suppress and destroy and take away our (holy place, and our nation (our temple and city, and our civil organization).** I believe John remembered this for a reason. He wanted to show the Jewish Christians of the circumcision how spiritually corrupt the leaders of the Jews were during the time of Jesus. These Judaizers, although they believed in Jesus, doggedly held onto the old traditions of the Jews. By not accepting the works of the Spirit and having their own synagogue-like meetings, they had become a stumbling block for Jesus' ekklesia.

Then John aimed directly at the Judaizers. **AB John 12:42-43. And yet (in spite of all this) many even of the leading men---of the authorities and the nobles---believed and trusted in Him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear (that if they should acknowledge Him) they would be expelled from the synagogue. For they loved the approval and the praise and the glory that come from men (instead of and) more than the glory that comes from God. --- They valued their credit with men more than their credit with God.** The Jewish Christians of the circumcision had done exactly as these. They wanted approval from man more than from God. The synagogue-like meetings began because the Judaizers wanted to hold on to the Temple rites, keep the Law and, like the Jews, have their own synagogues (James 2:2). Now that the Temple and all vestiges of the Jewish government had been destroyed, they continued to hold onto the synagogue-like meetings because the Romans allowed the Jews to keep them.

But let's not kid ourselves, the main reason these believers held onto the synagogue-like meetings was because they were hesitant about the

Gifts of the Holy Spirit because these Gifts operated from the revelations from God. They were Words of Wisdom, Words of Knowledge, Prophecy, Wonder Working Faith, Miracles, Healings Discerning of Spirits and Tongues. They were a lot like the Jews of old who didn't want to hear and talk to God, but would rather Moses did that for them (Exo 20:18-19). Ordinary people tend to fear the manifestations of God.

This hesitancy about the Holy Spirit was because the Judaizers didn't quite know how to handle the divinity of Jesus. They kept the Law because they felt this would insure the forgiveness of their sins rather than depend completely on the grace of Jesus Christ. When you boil down the problems that have plagued Christianity through the centuries, they were all caused by the lack of faith in the deity of Jesus. If Jesus was questioned at all, the Holy Spirit will not be manifested because He only revealed what came from Jesus. Jesus' most intense teaching about the Holy Spirit was in chapter fourteen of John's Gospel. I believe this chapter was the main reason John wrote the Gospel.

He started in chapter fourteen with Jesus telling them if you know Me, you know the Father. You know Him and have seen Him (John 14:7). Jesus went on---I have been with all of you for a long time (verse 9). In verse 12, He then told them, I go to my Father, but you disciples will do even greater things than I have done. Then Jesus brought up the Holy Spirit. ***AB John 14:16. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners and Standby) that He may remain with you forever.*** This Comforter, Helper, and Advocate, that God will give you, will remain with us forever.

Then comes verse seventeen. I believed John lived many years before he realized all that Jesus had told them. For sure the disciples didn't know what Jesus meant by this verse in the upper room on that fateful night, and had to wait until the day of Pentecost for some understanding. It was probably in God's will that sixty nine years later, after his many life experiences, John knew enough to relate this to us on paprus for all to read. ***AB John 14:17. The Spirit of Truth, Whom the world***

*cannot receive (welcome, take to its heart), because it does not see Him, nor know and recognize Him. But you know and recognize Him, for He lives with you (constantly) and will be in you.* Jesus told them, the Spirit of Truth, the world cannot receive. There was nothing about the Holy Spirit that was worldly. The world didn't see or recognize Him (Holy Spirit). But they (disciples) did because He lived with them. I'm sure Jesus had a wry grin on His face as he said this. Here Jesus was talking about Himself because they knew Him and He had been constantly living with them. So, like the Father (verse 7), Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the same.

Jesus went on to say, "And will be in you", which of course happened on the day of Pentecost. Jesus was in them. Many verses confirm this as in verse 20, when Jesus said, "I am in My Father and you in Me and I in you". In verse 18, "I will not leave you orphans...I will come back to you" (on the day of Pentecost). Then in verse 26 of chapter fourteen Jesus could see the disciples were not yet ready to understand the Trinity and He said, "The Spirit will teach you all things and He will cause you to recall everything I have told you".

Jesus prophesied to them in John 16:7, "It is profitable and advantageous for you that I go away". This enabled Jesus to be many places at once through the people and the coming Body of Christ. Jesus then foretold the Gifts to the Body of Christ. **AB John 16:13-14. But when He, the spirit of Truth (the truth-giving Spirit) comes, He will guide you into all the truth--the whole, full truth. For He will not speak His own message---on His own authority---but He will tell whatever He hears (from the Father, He will give the message that has been given to Him) and He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come---that will happen the future. He will honor and glorify Me because He will take of (receive, draw upon) what is Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you.** The Holy Spirit will tell you the things that are to come (prophecy). He will take what is Mine and reveal it to you (Words of Knowledge and Words of Wisdom). These are the revelations, Jesus told the disciples about at Caesarea-Philippi (Matt 16:18) when He said, "I will build my ekklesia" on these revelations from God, similiar to the one received by

Peter. Here John reminded the Christians, the ekklesia-Body of Christ was to replace Jesus on this earth.

After Jesus left the upper room, He and His disciples went across the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane. There Jesus prayed to God for His disciples to be one and even prayed for those who would later come to believe also to be one. (John 17:20). Jesus was prophesying about the coming Body of Christ where all would be one as He and God are One. ***AB John 17:21-23. So that they all may be one (just) as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe and be convinced that You have sent Me. I have given to them the glory and honor which You have given Me, that they may be one, (even) as We are one: I in them and You in Me, in order that they may become one and perfectly united, that the world may know and (definitely) recognize that You sent Me, and that You have loved them (even) as You have love Me.*** Jesus said I have given to them the glory and honor which You have given Me. These are the Gifts of the Body of Christ which by the ekklesia, would show the world that God sent His Son Jesus. Thus the Apostle John through his witness and writings made a renewed plea that God wanted to reveal Himself to them by His manifestations. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Body of Christ was the conduit whereby the world would know that God sent His Son.

This marked the end of the Apostolic Age. From here on there was the Body of Christ with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit meeting as an ekklesia-church and another entity whereby Christianity became mired in hierarchy and organization that could be compared to the "Gates of Hades". God had finished His work to make a way for mankind to be redeemed back to Himself for eternity. By the Holy Spirit and its manifestations it was made possible for man to have the same relationship that Adam enjoyed at the beginning. Jesus explained the Redemption of mankind in chapter fourteen of John's Gospel. He told the disciples in 14:9, "Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father, then in 14:1, He said, "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me." So this showed that Jesus and the Father are One and in 14:16 He told them the Holy Spirit was coming to remain with them forever. Then in 14:17 Jesus told them you know the Holy Spirit for He lives with

you and that's "Me". So like He said, the Father, the Holy Spirit and I are One. At the end of verse 17 He said the Spirit will be in you. In verse 14:20 Jesus put it all together when He said, "At that time-when that day comes (day of Pentecost) you will know that I am in My Father and you are in Me and I am in you". This would complete the Redemption process whereby man has a spiritual connection to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit---what man had when they created him in the beginning.

It's the same as at the beginning, man has the choice. He can have this spiritual relationship or struggle through life on his own. Paul said it quite well in Ephesians 1:13, we can enjoy this down payment while we are on this earth.