

Theme: Your Helper By Your Side

Text: John 14:25-27 (NKJV)

²⁵ "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶ "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. ²⁷ "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Have you ever noticed that when you have a job to do—even if it's a job you really dread doing—if you have a “helper,” or someone else to share the work with the task becomes much easier and even much more enjoyable? Obviously, it has something to do with the fact that your workload is cut down if you have someone there to help, but it's more than that, isn't it? There's the companionship; the sharing in the activity; the simple knowledge that you are *not* working alone, someone else is going through this with you by your side. This is especially true if you share the particular task with someone whose company you enjoy; someone you love.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, I imagine His disciples all experienced some moments of weakness where they felt like they'd been left alone by themselves to do the work Jesus had commissioned! Sure, He had promised them just before He left that He would be **“with [them] always, even to the end of the age,”** (**Matthew 28:20**) but where was the proof? How could they be sure that Jesus was actually still with them *spiritually*, helping them perform the work of spreading the Good News of Salvation that He had commissioned them to do? That proof came when Jesus sent them the **“Helper, the Holy Spirit”** (v. 26) on Pentecost (as we read in our Scripture reading for today from **Acts 2:1-21**) just as He had promised. This **“Helper”** not only made the work easier and joyful for the Apostles, He was the miraculous power that gave them the very *ability*, and the *desire* to do the work of preaching the Gospel!

This word for **“Helper”** that Jesus uses in our text to describe the Holy Spirit is a very special word in the Greek. It is the word *Paraklatos* (*par-a-klay-tos*), from which we get the word *Paraclete* (not “parakeet,” *Paraclete!*). Maybe you've heard that word used for the Holy Spirit before. This word literally means “one called alongside to help” and it can mean “one who gives protection, help, and security; helper, comforter, counselor” (Friberg Greek Lexicon, Bible Works 4.0). What a perfect word to describe the Holy Spirit!

This **“Helper, the Holy Spirit”** (v. 26) was exactly what Jesus' Apostles needed to withstand the persecutions and trials they would face at the hands of some of the very men who had condemned Jesus. The Holy Spirit was exactly what these men needed to accomplish the daunting task of preaching the Good News of Salvation through Jesus Christ throughout Jerusalem, Judea, and to the ends of the earth (**Acts 1:8**).

This same **“Helper, the Holy Spirit”** has been given to us, as well! How do we know? We haven't had tongues of fire appear over our heads; we haven't been given the miraculous ability to speak in different languages like the Apostles. So how do we know we have been given the **“Helper, the Holy Spirit”**? Well, have you been baptized? Then you've been **“born of water and the Spirit”** (**John 3:5**)! Do you **“confess with your mouth and believe in your heart”** (**Romans 10:9**) that **“Jesus is Lord”** (**1 Corinthians 12:3**)? Then you know you that you have the Holy Spirit—not just *“by your side to help”* you, but as the Apostle Paul reminds us, **“the Spirit of God dwells in you”** (**1 Corinthians 3:16**)! Therefore we also have the assurance of salvation (**John 3:5; Romans 10:9**)!

Jesus reminds us in our text that one of the ways the Holy Spirit is our **“Helper”** is by **1. teaching us**. Jesus said to His disciples, **“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you (v. 26)**. How does the Holy Spirit teach us and **“bring to [our] remembrance the things [Jesus] said to us”**?

Through the Word of God. When we hear and study the Word of God every Sunday, when we read devotions from our Bibles during the week, we are being taught by the Holy Spirit! And this knowledge that the Holy Spirit gives us makes us truly wise in the best possible way—and God has revealed it to many of us since the time we were *infants*! The Apostle Paul wrote of this incredible wisdom that the Holy Spirit teaches us:

- ✠ He once wrote to the young pastor, Timothy,
“...and that from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3:15 EHV).
- ✠ He also wrote to the Corinthian congregation,
“**What we received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we might know the blessings freely given to us by God.** ¹³ **We also speak about these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual truths with spiritual words.** ¹⁴ **However, an unspiritual person does not accept the truths taught by God’s Spirit, because they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually evaluated.”** (1 Corinthians 2:12-14 EHV).

Our “**Helper, the Holy Spirit**” does more than just *teach* us about the salvation that is ours through Jesus’ death and resurrection, He makes it our own! This is what we confessed in Luther’s explanation of the 3rd Article of the Apostle’s Creed: “***I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in true faith... On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead and give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true***” (Luther’s Catechism, Sydow, p. 135).

There is another great blessing that our Savior gives us and all believers through His Holy Spirit. We hear Jesus promise it to His disciples in our text, “**Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**” (v. 27). The Holy Spirit is our “**Helper**” by **2. giving us Jesus’ peace**. When the Holy Spirit enlightens and rejuvenates our dead hearts with His Word He shows us and gives us the “**peace**” that Jesus won for us.

Notice, Jesus says, “**My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you**” (v. 27a). Think of what an incredible blessing peace is—even in an earthly sense. Think of how important it is to have “**peace**” with the people who live around you: Your friends, neighbors, coworkers, your spouse, your boyfriend or girlfriend, your family members. Life can become almost unbearable if we don’t have “**peace**” with the people who are closest to us. Think also of how important it is to have “**peace**” in our country. How prosperous we have been, in part, because we are not constantly fighting wars on our soil. Think of what the people in Ukraine or Israel would give for peace in their countries right now!

But the “**peace**” that we are given through the Holy Spirit is even more miraculous, more valuable, and more long-lasting than *any* kind of earthly peace. The “warring factions” in the story of our lives were us sinful human beings verses the Almighty, Holy God. That is not a battle we could win! We were doomed to lose—eternally. And yet God—the one who was wronged by His own creation—chose to make “**peace**” with us! And He did it, not through a physical war, but through sending His own Son as the “**peace**” offering to take away our sins! That peace was made our own when the Holy Spirit created faith in our hearts through the Word of God. As Paul says in Romans, “**Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**” (Romans 5:1).

That “**peace**” with God in turn gives us “**peace**” with our fellow believers, and inspires in us a love for the souls of our fellow human beings—or as the Bible calls them, our neighbors. Jesus’ “**peace**” also gives us “**peace**” within ourselves. The “**peace**” of a forgiven, clear conscience, and the assurance that our souls have been washed clean by the blood of Christ. Again, this incredible “**peace**” is given to us through the Holy Spirit. We confessed in Luther’s explanation of the 3rd Article, “***In This Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers***” (Sydow, p. 135).

If you've ever been plagued with a guilty conscience before (and who hasn't!), then you know just how priceless this internal "**peace**" is. King David once described guilt as a relentless, "bone crushing" illness that plagued him day and night—a "spiritual" disease that causes emotional and physical pain and sickness (**see Psalm 32:3-4**). It is a plague within us that only confession and forgiveness of sins can cure (**see Psalm 32:5**). Jesus gives that "conscience-clearing cure" to us when He gives us His "**peace**" through His Holy Spirit. He says in our text, "**My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**" (v. 27).

No matter where you are, no matter what you're doing—even if you are alone—you are never alone. You have a "**Helper**" by your side: Holy Spirit. He does more than just "help" to lighten our earthly burdens, He is the one who *enables* us and gives us the will and strength to carry out Christ's Great Commission and spread His Salvation to others. He is our faith-creator, faith-strengthener, and faith-sustainer. He is the "**Helper**" who does more than just give us joy and make our work pleasant, He makes our work *pleasing* to God. On this day of Pentecost we praise our Savior for not abandoning us when He ascended into heaven. He has given us our "*Helper, Comforter, and Counselor*;" right by our side—and within us: the Holy Spirit! Amen.