

The Counselor Will Come

✠ Testifying (15:26,27)

✠ Convicting (16:4b-11)

In the name of Jesus who always keeps His promises, dearly loved of God the Holy Spirit:

Historic week – faces! A warehouse receipt checker was wearing her name tag, but not a mask. I said, “Hi, Kay! It’s so nice to see your face.” Oh, she brightened up. “It’s so nice to see your face too!” ***For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*** (2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV84) Imagine looking into the face of God’s own Son for three years, but now Jesus says He’s going away to suffer and die on the cross. Remember how you and your fellow disciples argued about who was the greatest? Remember who washed everyone’s dusty feet? Only Jesus. We need Jesus’ promise: **The Counselor Will Come.**

✠ Testifying (15:26,27)

“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father—he will testify about me.” There’s a fine note in the EHV Study Bible on this word **Counselor**: *The Greek word translated Counselor refers to a person who comes to the side of another person to say whatever is needed at the moment: admonition, comfort, guidance, and so on. The title was sometimes used for an advocate or defender in court. In 1 John 2:1, Jesus is our Advocate before the Father, pleading our case for forgiveness by his blood before the throne of God. In John’s Gospel, the Holy Spirit is our Counselor or Advocate, pleading God’s case to human hearts, bringing them to faith. In 2 Corinthians 1, we are advocates, applying this comfort of the gospel to other human hearts. Here Jesus is promising to send the Holy Spirit. This promise was fulfilled in a special way on Pentecost (Acts 2).¹*

“And you also are going to testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.” What awesome testimony by the Lord’s Apostles! Fifty days after Jesus’ resurrection, the dear Holy Spirit came as promised and ***“filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw divided tongues that were like fire resting on each one of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, since the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak fluently.”*** (Acts 2:2-4 EHV²) Pilgrims in Jerusalem for the Pentecost celebration marveled at ***“the wonderful works of God”*** in their own languages. As in every crowd, comics mocked the miracle: ***“They are full of new wine.”***

What’s this now? Who’s speaking up? You don’t mean that bragging, swearing, pathetic Peter who denied Jesus three times in spite of warnings? The Holy Spirit uses the most unlikely to witness. Why is Peter so bold? Jesus has been crucified. Now the disciples really are in danger of the same from Jewish religious leaders. Yet Peter is **Testifying** as Jesus promised because the Holy Spirit is **Testifying** through him. And don’t you love how this fisherman responds, now that the Lord has set his heart on fire with God’s truth? ***“These men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day.”*** Then he’s quoting the Holy Spirit through Joel about prophesying, proclaiming God’s truth. Men and women will be foretelling the future about Judgment Day coming. ***“I will show wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and a rising cloud of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And this will happen: Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*** (Acts 2:15,19–21)

¹ [Holy Bible: Evangelical Heritage Version Study Bible](#) (Jn 14:16). Midland, MI: NPH (1-800-662-6022); Wartburg Project.

² EHV ~ Evangelical Heritage Version (<http://wartburgproject.org>) © 2019. NPH: 800-662-6022, Amazon-Kindle, LOGOS.

And that, dear friends, is what drove the Apostles onward. They had nothing to gain by **Testifying** and everything to lose. Christ's followers did not find fame and fortune as they spread the Good News of Jesus throughout the world. All found persecution and a martyr's death except John. He suffered exile on the lonely island of Patmos where Jesus gave him Revelation one Sunday. No one then or now wanted to hear about a teacher who died on a cross. No one would believe that he could rise from the dead. Then ascend back to the right hand of God his Father? But such is the courage and conviction the Holy Spirit gives. Ordinary men and women speak up about what they have seen and heard. We can't help **Testifying** because we are convinced that *"there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."* (Acts 4:12)

Convicting (16:4b-11)

"At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:10) But hearing that Jesus was going away naturally made the disciples extremely sad. Separation anxiety is not just for little kids, especially if one or both parents abandoned you in youth. Jesus helps His disciples deal with separation by sharing more truth: *"I did not tell you these things from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going away to him who sent me, and not one of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Yet because I have told you these things, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth: It is good for you that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."* What better comfort than *the Counselor* at our side?

The Counselor guides us in the last verses by teaching us the outcome of this **Convicting**: *"When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, because they do not believe in me...."* *"God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. The one who believes in him is not condemned, but the one who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God."* (John 3:16-18) By rejecting God's Son, the world of non-believers takes back its guilt, washed clean by Christ.

"About righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me..." In Messianic prophecy the Holy Spirit describes Jesus as *"the Lord our Righteousness."* (Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16) Now that Jesus has ascended to the Father, whoever rejects Jesus in unbelief, rejects the only **righteousness** which God has provided and approved for Judgment Day. Christ's **righteousness** can only be received by faith. Unbelief rejects God's Son who provided your full price ticket to heaven.

About judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned." The Holy Spirit comes **Convicting** everyone who sides with the devil. Unbelief rejects God's own Son, the single Savior whom God has provided. Unbelief puts sinners back on the losing side, in the bank vault of earthly wealth, pomp and pleasure – all set to explode. Christ lit the fuse by sending the Holy Spirit. The explosion on the Last Day seems far away only because God's patience makes for a long fuse. But the moment it blows, the elements will disintegrate in a flash. A world of satanic allies will receive the condemnation they chose by their stubborn, Creator-Savior-Spirit-rejecting unbelief.

How do you know God wants better for you? Because Jesus promised then sent the dear Holy Spirit on Pentecost, **Testifying** through the apostles and **Convicting** you with this conviction in Christ. *"It is finished,"* Jesus said just before He laid down His life for you, for me, for all. He wanted us to hear this Good News again today that thanks to Jesus, our sins are all forgiven. Thanks to the Father, Easter means God is satisfied. Thanks to Jesus' Ascension, our Brother is in full control of the rest of earth's story until the big Day when all things pass away. Until then, there's no mask on Jesus to hide God's loving kindness and tender mercy from you. Thanks to the dear Holy Spirit in God's powerful Word and sacraments, Jesus' face is beaming brighter than ever. He wants to see you and your family back in God's house every week if possible. There's just nothing like seeing your face lit up with Jesus. Amen.

For *The Preacher's Apprentice (TPA)* sermon study or copies: m.cordes@comast.net . New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church
You can also call: 651-484-1169. Hear the sermon at www.newlifeshoreview.com . 180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126