

Pentecost
May 31, 2009

John 14:25-27
183-176-185-190

Jesus Blesses His Waiting Church

I. With the Holy Spirit.

II. With His peace.

Dear Christian friends,

“All this I have spoken while still with you.” These verses take us back NOT to Pentecost but to Maundy Thursday evening. They take us into a **long conversation** Jesus had with the apostles around the **dinner table**. Jesus was preparing them NOT JUST for the next few days – the HORRORS of Good Friday – the GLORY of Easter. Jesus was looking beyond that to **Ascension Day** and today – **Pentecost**.

“All this I have spoken while still with you.” The time was soon coming when Jesus would leave them – when He would no longer be PHYSICALLY or VISIBLY present with them. Jesus would leave them – but WITH THE PROMISE to **one day** come again in glory. Jesus was leaving – but He was not leaving all ON OUR OWN. Jesus leaves with a blessing – yes, Jesus is STILL BLESSING His people as we wait for His **glorious return**. As He explains here JESUS BLESSES HIS WAITING CHURCH 1)with the Holy Spirit and 2)with His peace.

I. With the Holy Spirit.

“All this I have spoken while still with you.” For the past three years Jesus had been with the apostles. They had followed Him on His journeys – had heard Him preach and teach – had witnessed His miracles. WHAT A TIME – what a BLESSING – that must have been! You couldn't ask or have a better teacher than Jesus. But AS FOR STUDENTS the **apostles were just like** you and me. They forgot things. They didn't always CATCH ON and **understand**. Earlier this evening Jesus had told them, ***“You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”*** Later on Jesus would say, ***“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.”***

WHAT A BLESSING Jesus had for them! ***“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*** Or as Jesus also put it later on, ***“When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.”***

The apostles needed the Holy Spirit – and so DO WE – so do ALL people! ***“No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord!’ but by the Holy Ghost.”*** It literally takes a miracle worked by the Holy Spirit for anyone to believe in Jesus as their Savior. Nobody decides to **become** a Christian – the Holy Spirit makes us Christians **through His Word**. We ALL NEED the Holy Spirit to make us Christians – to keep us Christians – to help us live as Christians. We all need the Holy Spirit to lead us to understand and believe what the Bible says. To the unbeliever the Bible is FOOLISHNESS and nonsense – a virgin having a Baby who is God Himself – dead people coming back to life. **To the unbeliever** the devil's lies are MORE BELIEVEABLE than God's Word. Paul explained it this way in 1 Corinthians 2. ***“The man without the Spirit (the Holy Spirit) does not accept the things that come from the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”***

WHAT A BLESSING that we have the Holy Spirit to ***“teach and guide us into all truth”!*** The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity – true God from all eternity with the Father and the Son.

He's called **"holy"** because He too is the **"holy"** God and it's the Holy Spirit's job to **make us holy by bringing us** to faith in Jesus and then helping us live holy lives.

Jesus here calls him **"the Counselor."** That's a hard word to **put into** GOOD ENGLISH. It's the Greek word **"paraclete"** – literally one called to your side. The Holy Spirit is AT OUR SIDE to do whatever is needed at the time – to **"comfort"** - **"counsel"** – correct – guide – teach, etc. I **had a professor** who compared it to a football or basketball coach. The coach calls you to his side – SOMETIMES to encourage you – or maybe point something out to you – or even BAWL you out when needed. SO WE HAVE the Holy Spirit at our side. Through His Word the Holy Spirit comforts – encourages – guides – and yes, even BAWLS us out as needed.

The apostles especially needed the Holy Spirit as they became the leaders of the Church **after Jesus ascended** into heaven. They had the responsibility of **leading** God's people into God's Word AND leading them in sharing Jesus with others. The apostles were just like you and me – a MOTLEY ASSORTMENT of **sinful** people. WHAT A BLESSING for them to have the Holy Spirit to **"teach"** them and **"remind them of everything"** Jesus had said! Look again at how the Spirit used Peter and the other apostles that first Pentecost. Peter the denier preached a BOLD, POWERFUL, **no-nonsense** sermon to that crowd. The Holy Spirit especially guided the apostles as they TAUGHT and WROTE God's Word. By the miracle of **divine inspiration** the Holy Spirit so guided them so that they wrote GOD'S VERY WORDS without making any mistakes.

WHAT A BLESSING that we also have the Holy Spirit helping us share Jesus with our **neighbors** and the **world**. We can be intimidated by the task – afraid of how people will **react** – convinced it won't do any good. We can come up with **all kinds** of GOOD SOUNDING excuses for keeping our mouths shut. But we have the Holy Spirit. He guides and leads and helps us **share Jesus** and God's Word with others. **Remember**, it's our job to TELL – that's it! It's the Holy Spirit's job to ACTUALLY CONVERT people through the Word we share. We want to do the BEST JOB telling others about Jesus – but the RESULTS are in God's hands not ours.

II. With His peace.

Jesus has another precious blessing for His waiting Church. ***"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you."***

Let's be clear here. Jesus' peace doesn't mean we WON'T HAVE any problems as we go through life. Jesus never promises us an EASY life – that life will be FAIR – that we'll enjoy **good health**, prosperity, etc. Jesus **never promised** that life will always go JUST AS WE want it to. **Some** people get all ticked off at God when He DOESN'T DO **exactly** as they want – when their life as **they'd put** it, "STINKS!" Wait a minute! You can't hold God to promises He NEVER MADE! **Just because we don't understand what God is doing doesn't mean GOD DOESN'T KNOW what He's doing.**

As Christians we have been so blessed by God. But God makes clear that **as Christians** we are NOT EXEMPT from the **hassles** and hardships of life. In fact being a Christian will ACTUALLY BRING more problems into our lives! Jesus tells us, ***"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*** Paul says, ***"we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God"*** and ***"everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."***

That's why it's SUCH A BLESSING to have Jesus' peace! Jesus gives us ***"the peace of God that goes beyond all understanding"*** – peace WITH GOD Himself – real, lasting peace – peace that's a BLESSED FACT **no matter what** we may be feeling or going through at the time.

Jesus gives us the peace of sins – ALL sins – fully and **freely** FORGIVEN. Take an honest look at your **heart** and **life** and compare it with God's call to ***"be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy."*** Does ***"holy"*** really describe the language you always use – the **way** you treat and talk about people? Is ***"holy"*** the perfect description of ALL the shows and movies you've watched – the jokes you've told – the sites you've checked on the internet? Does ***"holy"*** describe your daily walk with God – your priorities and morals? Remember, this is holy AS GOD DEFINES it – not as we or others see it. Remember ONLY HOLY people are acceptable in God's sight. **Only holy** people will live forever with God in heaven.

ONLY Jesus can give us the peace of sins forgiven and a new relationship with god. This peace is based NOT on **anything** WE DO – not on how sorry we are or how much we **clean up** our lives. This peace is based ONLY on Jesus and what He's all done in our place. We owed God a life holy in **every way** – **every day**. Jesus actually lived that holy life and He gives us all the credit for it. We deserved death and hell – deserved to be banished forever from God's sight – for the way we've treated God and His Word. Jesus – the sinless Son of God – took ALL THE BLAME for the sins of the whole world and was punished in our place. Jesus shed His **holy, precious** blood – sacrificed His holy life on the cross – to personally pay for all our sins IN FULL. Jesus gives us HIS PEACE – the peace that trusting in Him everything is OK between God and us. The peace **that in Him** we can be absolutely sure that God LOVES us – has forgiven us – calls us His dear children.

"My peace I give you." Jesus gives us the peace of His PRESENCE – that HE is always with us as we go through life. Jesus gives us the peace of His **almighty** POWER – that He is in control of all things – working everything for our eternal good even when it DOESN'T LOOK or **feel** like it. Jesus gives us the peace of His many PROMISES – promise He will never go back on.

Jesus gives us the peace of ETERNAL LIFE in heaven. Our Savior who died for us rose triumphant from the dead on Easter morning and He shares that victory with us. WHAT PEACE to know that the very moment we die we will join Jesus in His heavenly glory. WHAT PEACE to know that when Jesus returns in glory He will raise our dead bodies back to life and we will then live glorified body and soul with Jesus in that ***"new heavens and new earth, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain."*** WHAT PEACE to know that's not just a NICE THOUGHT or good possibility but **Jesus'** GIFT and promise to us.

With that peace Jesus goes on, ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."*** With Jesus as our Savior we need not be ***"troubled"*** by PAST sins or PRESENT problems. With Jesus as our Savior we need not be ***"afraid"*** of what the FUTURE might bring. We have Jesus – His peace. TOGETHER we'll face each day until we are **face-to-face** in heaven.

"All this I have spoken while still with you." Thank You, Jesus, for telling us this. Thank You, for blessing us with the Holy Spirit and Your peace. Amen.

Hymn #185