

John 15:26,27; 16:4b-15 ²⁶ " But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷ "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. ^{4b} these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ " But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' ⁶ "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ "of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. ¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. ¹³ "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. ¹⁵ "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

“Then you will know that I am the Lord”

In Ezekiel 37 the Lord shows Ezekiel a valley of dry bones and tells Ezekiel to preach to the bones. As Ezekiel preaches the bones begin to grow sinews, and muscles, and skin. Then the Spirit breathes life into them. But this is not the real miracle. But then the Lord says, “Then they shall know that I am the Lord.” He repeats this phrase over and over throughout the vision. For the Lord to give life to dead bones is nothing, but to create faith in the hearts of sinful men; that is the miracle of the Holy Spirit.

The same thing is true about the day of Pentecost. The fire, the speaking in tongues, the great wind are just the introduction. The high point, the real miracle is that 3,000 souls believed in the name of Jesus.

So this is the miracle today as well. Some might think it a miracle that these six kids made it through their questioning, or that they actually passed the test. But the true miracle is that the Holy Spirit created faith in their hearts in baptism and lead them to confess that faith today.

This is the sole focus of the Holy Spirit, to take us dried up bones, like you, and to make the dead alive again in Christ.

Listen to how Christ describes the Holy Spirit in our text.

The Helper

He is the helper, the one who stands by our side. For what purpose is He at our side? He is there to help us witness to Christ.

You confirmands were nervous about getting up here to the microphone and answering questions. But you guys had it easy. You weren't up here alone. There are six of you. Think about poor Anikah next year who will be up here all alone. Or think about years to come when you will need to confess your faith in word and action at high school or at college. Then will be times when you won't have your family and friends surrounding you. There will be times when you feel like you are all alone.

Yet you are not alone. The Helper, the Holy Spirit will be with you. This also is the miracle of the Holy Spirit that He gives to us strength to stand and confess Christ in the middle of a perverse and sinful generation.

Many things I have yet to say to you

There are many things I wish we had had time to discuss in confirmation class. But I only had you guys for a year and a half that isn't nearly enough time to even begin to learn all the scripture teaches.

One of you told me the first week of confirmation, "We already know it all, Jesus died for our sins, blah blah blah." In one sense you were right that is the heart and soul of Christianity. But one could also say all there is to farming is, "you plant the seed, you water it, you wait for it to grow." Of course these it a lot more detail if you want to be successful at farming, and there is a lot more detail if you really want to learn about the Lord and grow in your faith.

Jesus was faced with a situation. In three years He did not have enough time to teach his disciples all the details. He was about to leave and there was so much more to tell them. But that is okay says Jesus I have a plan. I will send the Holy Spirit.

So also you, you have only begun to learn all the Jesus has to teach you. But He has given you His Holy Spirit who will lead and guide you as you search and learn the scriptures.

He will tell you of things to come

That would be great if we could hear the voice of the Spirit and every time we were about to go wrong He spoke up wait a minute don't do that.

We actually we do hear the voice of the Spirit. But there are two problems: One we don't hear His voice because we don't listen for it, or we don't recognize it because we aren't spending time in His word. Two often we do hear it and do recognize it and we just go right ahead and ignore it on purpose.

But that isn't what Jesus is telling us here, He is not promising that He is going to tell our future, but rather His.

We often make the mistake of doing what one pastor calls narcceigesis. That means we read the text as if Jesus is speaking specifically to you. But the text doesn't say "Hey Carson, or Hey Isaac, the Holy Spirit is going to come and tell you things yet to come in your life." Rather Jesus speaking to his disciples the night before his death and resurrection says the Spirit will 'teach you those things that are about to happen." In other words the Spirit is going to teach them about His death and resurrection.

Jesus makes this even more certain in the next verses. He will not declare new things to you, or things from himself but he will declare the things of me. He will take from me and declare it to you. The one and only job of the Holy Spirit is to declare Christ crucified for sinners.

Again here is the miracle of the Holy Spirit, his one and only job is to take the message of Christ crucified for sinners and proclaim it to the World, and through the preaching of that Gospel to make sinners into believers.

Notice how Jesus summarizes the witness of the Holy Spirit in three

Sin - because they did not believe in me

There are many ways to convict the world of sin, but Jesus just gets right to the punch line here. The only begotten son of God came into the world spoke the eternal truth of God, died and rose again from the dead and you did not believe in him. He freely offered you forgiveness of sins and you refused it? Why because you didn't want to admit that you had sin.

Here again is the miracle of the Holy Spirit that we who did this to the only Son of God are still saved through faith in Christ.

Of righteousness - because I go to my Father

His resurrection and ascension prove that He is both right and righteous. He was condemned for blasphemy, yet God raised Him from the dead, clearly what He said was not blasphemy.

The jews said, "we know this man is a sinner." Yet he ascended to the right hand of God, clearly the Father judged him to be the most righteous man who ever lived.

Everything comes back to his resurrection. Did He rise from the dead? yes. Then he must be God, and everything he said must be true. He is both right and righteous.

The miracle of the Holy Spirit is that He takes that righteousness which is Christ's and gives it to us.

Judgement - because the ruler of this world is judged

Do not think to yourself, it doesn't really matter, surely God isn't going to punish this or that offense. Judgement is coming.

Satan thought he could stand against God's judgment. He tried twice and failed both times. If he could not what chance do you have? None on your own.

Yet again we see the miracle of the Holy Spirit, that through the Gospel we can stand in that day of judgement.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit that you who were dead in sin have by His power been given life, so that through Him you may stand and believe and confess that Jesus is Lord.

Amen.