

## Sermon – John 14.23-31 (Pentecost – 2024)

Exordium: Without the Holy Spirit, Christ's work of salvation would have benefitted no one. Christ's treasure of forgiveness and eternal life which He established by His perfect life, innocent death, and triumphant resurrection, would have been like one infinitely huge check uncashed. But the Holy Spirit distributes this treasure to the world. Through the gospel, the good news of Christ, He creates the holy Christian Church, and establishes it on Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And this Christian Church, all believers are called holy, because their sins are forgiven and they have Christ as their righteousness! This is the Holy Spirit's Work. Dear believers, on this Pentecost, let us give glory and praise to the Holy Spirit, our God for His work of calling, gathering, enlightening and sanctifying the Christian Church on earth, by singing our festival hymn: hymn number 27, v. 1. Please rise.

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

<sup>24</sup> "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

<sup>25</sup> "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.

<sup>26</sup> "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.

<sup>27</sup> "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.

<sup>28</sup> "You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

<sup>29</sup> "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.

<sup>30</sup> "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

<sup>31</sup> "But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

These are Your words heavenly Father, sanctify us by the truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

### **The Word of the Holy Spirit**

Dear fellow redeemed,

Hours before their world was about to unravel, the disciples heard Jesus say to them, **“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.”**

Jesus speaks to them tenderly, proclaiming to them the peace of God. This is the peace that through the forgiveness of sins, God in heaven is not their wrathful judge, but their loving Father.

The disciples will not fully understand this peace. Their hearts were troubled and they had great fear as they saw Jesus arrested, tried, and crucified. They ran, scattered, and hid themselves.

In the words Jesus spoke to His disciples, they had everything they needed for confidence and peace of God’s salvation. But because of the weakness and unbelief of their sinful flesh, the Words of Christ did not find such a strong foothold in their hearts. They had faith, to be sure, but it was weak, because of their lack of understanding.

What they needed was the Holy Spirit, whom He promised would come. He said, **“He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”**

It is the job of the Holy Spirit to teach, not simply to impart knowledge, but to work that knowledge of Christ into hearts, creating and strengthening faith, trust and confidence in Him and His Words.

We cannot do this by our own efforts. Luther’s meaning to the third article of the Apostles Creed says, **“I believe that I cannot by my own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; just as He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.”**

The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, is the Helper, that comes to do for us what we cannot do. We cannot apply to ourselves the heavenly treasures of God by our own ability. We cannot create in ourselves true peace with God. We cannot by our own ability believe that Jesus Christ is our Lord, who alone makes peace between us and the Father in heaven.

The Holy Spirit does this. He did it on Pentecost day.

The primary thing that happened on Pentecost was that the Holy Spirit taught the disciples gathered there all things, bringing to remembrance everything that Jesus said to them. The Holy Spirit implanted Christ and all His words in their hearts, so that they would know Him, believe in Him, and have the peace with God which was theirs through the blood of Christ. The tongues and the gift of healing, which many put the focus on was not the main thing given to the apostles. Those gifts were given in order to be in service of the Words of Christ that the Holy Spirit worked in the apostles' hearts. The gifts were a testimony to the words they were to speak to all people and all nations and all languages.

Note the emphasis on God's Word. Hear again what Jesus told the disciples, "**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.**" He does not present or teaching something new. The Holy Spirit teaches nothing other than the Words of Christ.

The Words of Christ carry the Holy Spirit. Where the Word is, there the Holy Spirit is. When the Holy Spirit came to the apostles and all with them on Pentecost, He put the words of Christ in their hearts giving them a bold faith in Christ, and the peace of God. By the Holy Spirit, they knew that through Christ, they are children of the Father, and that they have the victory over sin, death and the devil.

We see the strength of this Spirit-given-faith in the apostles all throughout acts and the writings of Paul. Take as one example, after Peter and the Apostles were already imprisoned for preaching Christ, they continued to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins, as Christ had commanded them. They were then imprisoned again, and then were beaten and released. As they left, Luke records in the book of Acts, "**They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name**" (Acts 5:41).

The apostles faced much sorrow, hostility, trouble and trials. They faced the anger of the world, the devil and also the weakness of their flesh, but they had the peace which Christ had spoke to them, and which the Holy Spirit continually worked in their hearts.

Because of the Holy Spirit, you have the same faith as these apostles. Though the strength of the faith may vary at different times as theirs did—yes, we are well aware of our weakness of our flesh that makes us waver: we have our doubt, our fear, our cowardice. Yet, recognize that the object of our faith is the same as the apostles: that is Christ and the promises of His saving word!

In baptism, the Word of Christ which was in and with the water bestowed upon you the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit came to you and produced faith in you to trust in Jesus alone as Your Savior. And the Holy Spirit continues to perform this good work in you through His Word and through the Sacrament of the Altar.

You know the Word of Christ. You don't have to worry if there is anything beyond Scripture that the Holy Spirit must teach for you to be saved. There is no hidden teaching that you must get from pope or prophet. There is no further revelation from the Holy Spirit that is coming. The Scripture is sufficient, and it centers on this message for you: Christ came to suffer and die for sinners and rise again as the firstfruit of all who will rise to eternal life in the resurrection. He has taken away all sins, defeated death, and the devil, and whoever believes this has this victory!

The Holy Spirit has worked in us miserable sinners and has created in our hearts the faith which says, **“Yes this is true for me. I am one of those for whom Jesus died. He has taken away my sins. He is my righteousness that makes me acceptable to the Father in heaven. I too, have the victory over sin, death and the devil, because Christ is my Savior. And because He rose from the dead, I too shall live forever in this body, even a glorified body, in the life to come!”**

The Holy Spirit is your Holy Teacher that has implanted this saving Word of Christ in your hearts. And by this Word, he gives you peace. This is a peace that the world cannot give.

Even when the devil, the wickedness and pressure of the world and the weakness of your sinful flesh afflict you. You may have the peace of Christ that surpasses all understanding. The suffering under the cross we must bear will remain ours throughout our lives here, but

we know that these things are only temporary. The Holy Spirit, your Helper and Advocate shall deliver you from all evil, and bring you safely home to heaven above.

Because the Holy Spirit has taught the word of Christ to your souls, you have peace and may also have the boldness of faith like the disciples, willing to suffer for the sake of Christ's name, and rejoicing in suffering for His sake. Whether it is for our confession of faith, or for the sanctified lives that we strive to live, we will suffer.

But what if you do not have this boldness of the disciples? Does that mean that you do not have the Holy Spirit or faith? Certainly not. But we must recall the weakness of our sinful nature, and recognize that we need the Holy Spirit to continue His work throughout our lives. Therefore, are always in need of His Word. When we are fearful and weak and in the midst of trouble, He does come and remind us of the Words of Christ, and He restores to us the peace of His love, forgiveness and salvation.

May our Helper, Teacher and Comforter who has begun the good work of faith in your hearts, perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be; forevermore. Amen.