

²⁶ “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

The sound of a hurricane without the hurricane. Tongues of flame on the believers’ heads that didn’t burn the believers’ heads. Unschooled followers of Jesus suddenly speaking languages they may never have heard before, and fluently. Those mighty miracles that captured the crowd’s attention that first Pentecost still capture our attention today.

And I don’t want to downplay their importance. For the disciples, those were visible, audible proofs that Jesus was sending the Holy Spirit, just like he promised. For the crowd, they were God’s, “Hey, listen up!” so Peter could tell them about their Savior.

But the mightier miracle that day was invisible. It was the one the Holy Spirit was quietly but powerfully working in people’s hearts. It was the miracle they needed most, and we still need most. And it’s the one Jesus promises in John 15 the Holy Spirit works in us as just the helper we need.

That’s what Jesus calls the Holy Spirit. The **advocate** or “helper.” Someone who comes to help people in a helpless situation. And that was the disciples. Jesus had tasked them with telling the world about him. But did you ever notice how often these same disciples were confused about Jesus or forgot what he said? They were to call the world to believe in Jesus...but did you ever notice how often these same disciples struggled to believe?

Jesus did. But he wasn’t worried for them. Because even though he was about to ascend into heaven, he’d send the Helper they needed. **When the Advocate (Helper) comes, whom I will send to you—he will testify about me.** When the Spirit filled disciples’ hearts on Pentecost, he testified to them about Jesus. The **Spirit of truth** helped them remember and understand all the **truth** of what Jesus said and did, and helped them trust it all so they could confess it boldly.

But do you see that in helping them, the Spirit helped you? The saving message of all Jesus said and did? The only reason we have that **truth** today is because the Spirit on that day helped them remember and understand...and then inspired them to write it down in the bible for you. And the only reason you believe it is because the Spirit came to you through that message, and – like for them – he helped you understand it and trust it. Yes, thank God today for sending just the Helper you need!

But realize that he still *is* the Helper you desperately need. It can be easy to forget that. To assume since you trust Jesus now, you always will. That since you know the truth, don’t need to keep hearing it – at least not urgently. But the disciples spent almost every waking moment for three years learning from Jesus. They still needed the Holy Spirit to come and **testify about him**. Don’t you think you might, too?

Think about it: Why is it that we still find worry in our hearts on an almost daily basis? Jesus gives us promises that cover all our worries...but we live forgetting them, or just not trusting them. Why do we still feel guilty about our failures? Jesus took our guilt to the cross...but we live forgetting that or doubting it. Why do we sometimes still live as if being right with God depends on my behavior? God says it depends on Christ...but we forget and doubt. Why do we sometimes still choose to sin? Jesus tells us his will is best for us...but we fail to trust it really is.

Our sinful hearts are like sieves – so easily the truth, or trust in it, slips out of them. Left to ourselves, we would quickly lose both – and with them, our salvation.

But Jesus hasn't left us to ourselves. He still sends just the Helper you need, just like he promised. Through Word and Sacrament, the Spirit **testifies about Jesus**. He shows you Jesus, carrying all your guilt to the cross, dying and taking it away; even gives you body and blood to assure you your guilt is gone. The Spirit shows you Jesus, saying, "It is finished" - assuring you Jesus did all it took to make you right with God. The Spirit shows you Jesus rising from death, ascending into heaven, ruling all things for your good. In word, reminds you of all his promises that take away your worries. The **Spirit of truth** keeps the truth in your heart, and keeps your heart trusting it – keeping you saved.

He doesn't come with wind, fire, and foreign tongues; but that's okay. Those miracles just left the crowd confused anyway. It was through Peter's words that the Spirit testified about Jesus and worked the miracle they needed most: Saving faith. It's through the word he still works the same in you. Don't neglect it; cherish it. Keep hearing it. That's how Jesus keeps giving you just the Helper you need. Amen.