

John 15:26-27  
Pentecost  
May 23, 2010

**John 15:26-27 (New International Version)**

<sup>26</sup>“When the Counselor 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. <sup>27</sup>And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

The day of Pentecost was an amazing event. Imagine being there—hearing the sound of violent wind, seeing the tongues that looked like fire on the disciples, listening to God’s message spoken in your native language, no matter where you hailed from and being touched by Peter’s sermon. What must the line of three thousand people wanting to be baptized have looked like? What a day! It is appropriate that we celebrate it as a festival of the church year.

Then we look around at our world and our church and ourselves. We see apathy and indifference and even churches chucking the Word and replacing it with popular opinion. Rather than griping or moping in pessimism, let’s return to the promise of Jesus in the text. It’s still happening that

THE SPIRIT IS COMING (He is coming)

I. To testify to you 26

II. To testify through you v27

The Spirit is coming as He was sent by the Godhead. When these words were spoken we find ourselves in Jerusalem with Jesus and His disciples on the evening of Maundy Thursday. With His death looming in less than twenty-four hours, Jesus had many items to share with them. They would face a challenging world. In the previous section He told how many people in the world would hate and persecute them, just as they had reacted to Jesus. To cope with the difficulty He promised them the Spirit.

Note the process of the Spirit’s coming: “When the Counselor 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.” Jesus sends the Spirit from the Father; the Spirit goes out from the Father but testifies about the Son. Clearly, the persons of the Godhead are one, fully united in work and purpose. They are equals. Next week’s Trinity Sunday will bring more about that.

The one promised is the Spirit of truth. His message is the gospel, which is the absolute truth. It tells us how God planned in eternity to send His Son to save us. Jesus entered our world miraculously, born of a virgin, for marvelous work. He lived as the substitute for the entire human race, perfectly obeying God’s commands. He served people and their needs and taught of the kingdom of God. He spoke out against the hypocrisy and false emphasis of the religious leaders. Then He was condemned to die on a cross, not for His own crimes, for there were none, but bearing the load of sin for the world. He endured the penalty that God’s justice demanded and suffered the pains of hell. He died on that cross. On the third day He returned to life, as prophesied in the Old Testament and as He Himself had promised. He descended to hell to demonstrate His victory over Satan and then appeared to these same disciples and others. A few weeks later He returned to heaven as far as His visible presence was concerned, where He rules in glory at the right hand of His Father.

God the Holy Spirit brings that message to make us certain of our salvation. We have no doubt. We live with the confidence that His victory is our victory. What a blessing the Spirit brings! Even in the face of opposition and the hatred that Jesus warned about, we are not

shaken from our foundation of trust. The Spirit keeps us strong. Live close to Him and in His truth and enjoy such security.

It may seem unbelievable and too good to be true. The Spirit makes us sure. Just as the Law identifies and condemns our sins as it convicts us of breaking its provisions, so the gospel fills us with joy and peace. We know we have heaven waiting for us. The reality of that glorious future sustains us in difficulties, comforts us when we are sad and lonely, and lifts us in hope when we are grieving. The Spirit comes through the gospel powerfully. Use the means of grace, that gospel message in the Word and sacraments and experience His power in your heart and life.

## II.

So filled, then see with the disciples the Spirit coming to testify through you. The Savior reminded the apostles that they had been eyewitnesses of His work. "You have been with me from the beginning." They had heard His teaching; they saw His miracles; they had accompanied Him to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He had prayed and was arrested. Following those events would come His trial and condemnation to death. Above all they would meet Him after His rising. They would watch Him ascend. What privileges they enjoyed!

That background gave them a message to share. Jesus had provided training and even sent them on some practice runs. Soon they would be equipped by the Spirit, so "You also must testify." And how they did! It started on the day He fulfilled the promise to send the Spirit, the day of Pentecost which we are celebrating. Peter, who had once been so intimidated by the question of a servant girl during the trial of Jesus that He denied knowing the man, now stood up and addressed a crowd numbering in the thousands. The Spirit's power richly blessed His testimony. The people were struck with their guilt in rejecting and crucifying Jesus. They repented and three thousand were baptized that day. From there the message went out to the world. Oh yes, it took a little nudging from persecution to get them moving and the laity even took the lead, but the Twelve became Christ's ambassadors. Nearly all of them would one day lay down their lives for the truth. The Spirit gave them faithfulness.

Now our Savior presents the same assignment to us. No, we didn't sit at the feet of Jesus as He taught nor did we walk the roads of Palestine with Him, but through the Word the Spirit has brought us conviction of the Lord's truth and that Jesus is the Savior of the world. The events in His ministry are real to us. We know His work and the impact it carries for life and for eternity.

God's message of salvation is compelling. Knowing its wonderful truths fills us with urgency to share it. The Spirit will bless our testimony. It may not happen as dramatically as far as numbers are concerned and certainly not the outward signs, but each conversion is a miracle possible only by the Spirit's operation. As the Word goes out the Spirit does His work.

Sometimes we have the desire to witness for Christ but we don't know how to channel our efforts. Each of us was placed in a family. If you were blessed with a believing family you can offer Christian encouragement to each other, as we all face struggles and with them, the temptation to fall away from faith. Some of our relatives may not be believers or are straying from the Lord. These we can bring the Spirit's gospel call. Each of us has a place in life, whether it is at work or in the neighborhood, at school or at places of recreation. There we interact with numerous others. As we treat them with kindness and compassion, we bring God glory. Watch for resulting opportunities to speak your faith. On the group level, being involved in and supporting the work of our congregation and synod is also testifying for the Savior.

At the close of the service today you will hear a message about opportunities to participate in the work of outreach. It's not all about cornering strangers to ask about their spiritual beliefs (not everybody has the gift for such activity). Some tasks involve building relationships in the community or developing a mindset of joy in the Lord and a welcoming atmosphere in the congregation. Give attention and consideration to that presentation by Pastor Chworowsky. What he shares will not exhaust the possibilities but it will raise our sights to some of the things we can do together.

The Spirit is present today; He is alive and well. He comes each time we use and share the Word. He brings the results God desires. Live in the Word and the Spirit will testify through you.

The Spirit is coming with wonderful blessings to you and to others. All praise and glory to God! Live in faith in Jesus. Share the faith with confidence. Souls will be saved, including your own.