



CHRIST
EVANGELICAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH (PCA)

Sermon Reflection Guide; John 15:26-27

1. On the heels of expressing the difficult reality of the world's hatred, Jesus comforts us by reminding us of the coming of the Holy Spirit in verse 26 and calls the Holy Spirit our "Helper". How does this help us to better understand the role of the Holy Spirit? What do you think most people think the role of the Holy Spirit is?
2. At the end of verse 26, Jesus further explains the role of the Holy Spirit as, bearing witness about Christ. What is a good illustration for how to think of this and how does help explain the role of the Holy Spirit?
3. In verse 27, Jesus tells us that not only will the Holy Spirit bear witness about him, but we, His followers, will as well. How is the witness of the Holy Spirit connected to our own witness?
4. What are some things that may intimidate you from witnessing about Christ?
5. What are some practical ways we can begin to share the Gospel with others and be a witness to Christ?

Sermon Summary

Last week we were introduced to Jesus' teaching in this section of John concerning the Christian and the world. Last week we encountered the difficult reality of the world's hatred of Christ and his followers, the reasons for that and what our response should be. This week we as Jesus continues on this topic, we see the encouragement and the comfort he gives in the form of promises about the Holy Spirit. We will walk through this text by considering the following phrases, first, "When the Helper Comes", second, "He Will Bear Witness", and third, "You Also Will Bear Witness".

Let us begin with the phrase that Jesus uses in verse 26, "When the Helper comes". The word that our English translations translate as "Helper" is the Greek word, *parakletos*, which is sometimes transliterated as "paraclete". This word literally means, "someone who is called alongside". This helps us to better understand what Jesus means when he calls the Holy Spirit, our "Helper". Richard Phillips writes, "The Holy Spirit is the divine person who is called to our side to continue the ministry that Jesus began. There at our side, the Spirit calls out to us, in the words of Puritan John Owen, 'to support, cherish, relieve, and comfort the church.'" Jesus knows that in light of what he has just told us about the reality of the world's hatred, that we will need, desperately need the ministry of the Holy Spirit to help, comfort, cherish and relieve us. The good news is that we will never have to stand alone against the world's hatred because Jesus tells us that God the Father will send the Spirit at the request of the Son in order to strengthen us as we live for Christ.

As we move on to the phrase "He will bear witness", we are reminded that not only is the Holy Spirit our helper, but he is the one who bears witness to the truth. Specifically, Jesus says, it is the job of the Holy Spirit to witness to the truth of Jesus, to expose to us and to the world exactly who Jesus is. RC Sproul writes, "It is the task of the Holy Spirit who is sent by the Father and the Son, to apply the work of Christ to our lives. The Spirit never brings attention to himself, but always drives attention to Christ and His

accomplishment.” A great illustration that helps us to understand this role of the Holy Spirit is that of a flood light shining on a beautiful building. When we see this in action, we never say to ourselves, “Wow! What a beautiful flood light!” Rather we say, “Wow! What a beautiful building!” In the same way the Holy Spirit is like a flood light drawing our eyes to the beauty of Christ. One of the main ways we see the Holy Spirit doing this is through the inspiration of Scripture and the writing of the apostles. It was by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that the apostles wrote the New Testament, which is a bearing of witness to Christ. We also see this in lives of the Apostles, like Acts chapter two in the very first Christian sermon ever preached by the Apostle Peter, he preaches Jesus. He preaches to that crowd in Jerusalem on Pentecost about Jesus, about the birth, the life, the death and the hope of Christ. As the Apostles went throughout the world preaching and witnessing about Jesus they found, as Jesus had promised, great persecution. But what was it that compelled them and strengthened them even in the face of great persecution? It was the Holy Spirit and the good news is that, that very same Holy Spirit is at work in us even today!

As we move to the third heading, we see that Jesus tells us that not only will the Holy Spirit bear witness, but amazingly, “you also will bear witness”. We need to see here that there is a great connection between the witness of the Holy Spirit and our own witness. First, the Holy Spirit bears witness to our hearts of the truth of our need for Christ and our need to repent of our sins and by faith trust in Christ alone, then we are compelled to go out and be that same witness to an unbelieving world. We do all this knowing it will take the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit just as it did in our own lives to see others come to Christ themselves. As we consider the world that Jesus tells us will hate us, it is very possible that we could find the prospect of sharing our faith very intimidating for at least two reasons. First, we may be intimidated because we fear the rejection of others as we share our faith. It is certainly true that some people will reject us and the Gospel when we share it, but it is also true that not everyone will. It is possible that as we share our faith the Holy Spirit will work in someone’s heart and rather than rejection, they will see their need for Christ. We may also be intimidated because we feel unequipped. But in reality is that is not true. If you have been apart of our church for any length of time you know the Gospel, in fact you know well enough to share with others your own testimony and how they too can be saved by faith in Christ alone.

As we close, we should consider some practical ways that we can actually begin to share our faith and witness to others about Christ. First, we must never lose sight of the fact that a true Christian witness is always a witness to Christ. We should never assume that the people in our lives already know Jesus, we are the ones he calls to witness about Him to others. Second, we must also never forget we are utterly dependent upon the Holy Spirit to do the saving. It is never us or our work that saves others it is always the miraculous work of God. Third, we should begin praying right now for God to give us opportunities to share the Gospel with others. Pray that God would grow our relationships to places that our friends and family would be open to hearing the Gospel. Our witness begins with praying for others that we might witness to them. Fourth, we can always let people know about our faith in Christ through natural and casual ways. We do this through telling them that we go to church or we are apart of a City Group or Bible study or offering to pray for them. There are lots of ways to bring up our faith in natural and casual ways. Fifth, we can offer to read the Bible with them. You may be surprised to learn how many of your friends and family have never read the Bible and would be eager to do so if you only invited them. Sixth, we can always invite them church. A recent study of unchurched Houstonians revealed that many would be very likely to attend church with a friend or family member if they received a personal invitation. We have so many opportunities to witness to our friends and family so begin praying right now for God to move your heart to do so.