

## **The Advocate is Among Us**

Another name for the Holy Spirit, comes from the Greek, meaning 'comforter' or 'counselor or "advocate".' These are all ways we can describe the Holy Spirit.

That's what this day, the Day of Pentecost, is all about: It's about the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ sending the Advocate, the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to the church, to help the church, and to help Christians, in several ways.

So, let's find out how, as we now consider our theme, "The Advocate is Among Us".

How the Holy Spirit will be our Advocate, is what I want to point out today. The three ways that illustrate this on this Pentecost morning are:

- 1) The Advocate or the Holy Spirit, will go alongside us.
- 2) The Advocate or the Holy Spirit, will glorify Jesus, and
- 3) The Advocate or the Holy Spirit, will guide us into all the truth.

Go alongside us, glorify Jesus, guide us into all the truth.

So first, the Holy Spirit will go alongside us. In the Gospel reading from John today, Jesus tells his disciples that he is going to send them the Holy Spirit very soon. And really, this is part of a longer conversation where Jesus tells the disciples that he is going away, that he is about to return to the Father.

This causes the disciples some distress, hearing that their Master is about to leave them. But Jesus reassures them that this is for their own good and that he will not leave them comfortless. And a big part of that reassurance and comfort is that he will send them the Advocate, who will be with them and go alongside them.

This begins when Jesus tells them: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth."

The idea is like you call over to someone and say, “Hey, could you come over here and give me a little help?” And then that person comes alongside you and goes with you to be your helper. That is what an Advocate was in the ancient world. And this is what Jesus says this Advocate, or better known to us as the Holy Spirit will be for the disciples—and, by extension, for us. He will be our Advocate, or our helper.

And notice, when Jesus says he is going away, going to the Father, he says that he will send them “another Advocate.”

“Another” Advocate. Well, if the Holy Spirit is going to be “another” Advocate, then who was the first one?

Well of course we know that it was Jesus himself. He had been walking alongside the disciples for the past few years. And think of it: Jesus had been an Advocate for them, going with them, helping them, teaching them, and guiding them.

That is what Jesus meant to be to the disciples during their time together. So now when Jesus says that he is going away, but that he will send them someone else to help—Jesus is saying that that the Holy Spirit will help them, like he had always been doing.

He was doing this for the disciples. And it will be for us as well.

The Holy Spirit is with us. The Holy Spirit will go with us, throughout our lives, to keep us in the Christian faith, to guard and guide us, to sanctify us and help us grow as Christians.

The Holy Spirit, whom Christ poured out on the church on the Day of Pentecost—that Holy Spirit was given to each one of us on the day of our baptism. That was our own personal Pentecost when we received the gift of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit will go with you throughout the rest of your Christian journey.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus.

Jesus said that in our text today. He said, “He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.”

That is the Holy Spirit’s job, to shine the light on Jesus, to glorify Christ. You know, sometimes we might wonder why the Bible doesn’t say too much about the Holy Spirit, certainly not nearly as much as we read about Jesus. But you know what? That’s just fine with the Holy Spirit. He wants Jesus to get that kind of attention. The Holy Spirit wants people to look upon Jesus and be saved.

I’ve heard this comparison made: It’s like your car is out somewhere in a big parking lot at the shopping mall. But it’s night, it’s dark out, and you don’t know where to find it. Somebody comes alongside you, with a flashlight, and leads you to your car, shining the light on it, not on themselves. You see the car, but you don’t notice the person holding the flashlight, even though you couldn’t have found the car without the person holding the flashlight.

That’s kind of how it is with the Holy Spirit. We don’t notice him much, but all the while he’s pointing the flashlight at Jesus, so we can see our Savior clearly and find him.

Which is so wonderful, how we need Christ our Savior! How we need to know Christ and believe in him and trust in him! For without faith in Christ we would be lost.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came down from heaven for all of us and for our salvation. And he won that salvation by dying on the cross for us, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that we would be forgiven of our sins.

Christ has purchased our redemption, our freedom from condemnation and death and damnation, and won for us our justification and life and eternal salvation, as evidenced by his own resurrection and ascension into heaven.

But all these things that Christ has won for us would be of no benefit to us if we did not know of Christ and come to faith in him.

And that's where the Holy Spirit comes in. The Holy Spirit works through the means of grace, the preaching and teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, to bring us to faith in Christ and to keep us strong in that faith until the day we go to our new home in eternity.

Which leads us to our third point: The Holy Spirit will guide us into all the truth. Again, that's what Jesus told the disciples: "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

The Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth. You know, we live in a world today where nobody seems to be sure that there is such a thing as truth anymore.

Truth, we're told, is whatever happens to be true for you. That's your truth, and that's just fine. Truth becomes relative. But that is all so subjective and shaky and uncertain. The actual truth is, there is such a thing as objective truth. Absolute truth. Truth is whatever God says in his Word. That's what we can be sure of. That's what is certain and firm, and we can build our lives on God's Holy Word.

So if you want to know how things really stand between God and us; if you want to know what is right and wrong in this world from God's perspective, (which is the only one that counts); if you want to know the things that are to come, where this world is headed—then the one place to find that out is in God's Word.

And the Holy Spirit will guide you into that truth. He will open the Scriptures for you. As you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, as you continue to come to church and grow in your understanding of God's Word, it will be the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, who will be guiding you into all the truth.

So today, dear friends, on this great festival day, the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate and rejoice in the fact that Christ has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. He is our Advocate.

And today we've looked at how he helps us in these three ways: The Holy Spirit will go alongside us. He will glorify Jesus. And he will guide us into all the truth. And to this we say: "To You, oh Holy Spirit" we raise songs of thanks and praise." Amen