

Dear Friends,

Work of the Holy Spirit was really made plain to me in an event in my ministry. A dedicated layman witnessed to a man in his early 50's. There were objections and questions. However, this man who had not known Christ came to know him and began living as a Christian.

I remember the day I was called to the hospital. He had fallen off a ladder, hit his head, and was in a coma. The layman was there at my side. The family was bickering in the hospital corridor. They were talking about a lawsuit. There was disagreement. We were taken in a room. I was given a chance to share a devotion. A few of the people were Christian, but not all. The Holy Spirit gave me words to turn their attention from their grief and their worldly thoughts to the salvation that Jesus had given this man and was there for them too. I know without the Holy Spirit, I would not have been able to share sin and grace and the comfort that God's word of salvation brings.

The family needed comfort and guidance because an even more heart wrenching decision lay ahead. They had to decide whether to pull the plug on the ventilator and other machines. As we sat in the meeting, the family struggled, but the layman, their friend, sitting next to me was filled with the Holy Spirit and gave them wise words of direction. I believe they made the right choice and the family was blessed with the comfort and direction they received.

You and I need comfort and guidance in our daily troubles and when difficult situations present themselves. Jesus' closest disciples were no different. In John 16, at the Last Supper, Jesus promises comfort and conviction through the Holy Spirit. It is for them and it is for us. **You Have Pentecost Comfort and Conviction.**

## **1. Comfort**

Jesus disciples were grieving and confused. He had told them that he was leaving them. In chapter 15, of John, Jesus had also told them that they would also be persecuted. They are filled with grief to the point that they don't know what to say. Jesus cares and comforts his disciples.

A. Jesus comforts them with the promise of good.

1. There are some words here that we might quickly pass over, but we shouldn't. **"But very truly I tell you..." (7a).** This is significant. We are used to people promising that they are telling us the truth. We don't trust spokesman on T.V. and others. Even friends and family make promises with the best of intentions, but at times don't keep them.

Consider who is talking here. This is not ordinary human. This is Jesus, the Son of God. He always tells the truth. He is God and sees the whole picture. He knows what was best.

2. Jesus tells us, **"It is for your good that I am going away." (7b)** The word "good" can be translated "advantage." It is to their advantage he is leaving. What is better than his bodily presence? He had been with them for over two years. If he did not leave, he could not go to the place called "Golgotha" or Calvary. Jesus was leaving to go to the cross to suffer and die for their sins and rise again.

Also, after he Ascended to heaven, he would be with them always and everywhere. Not just in one place at a time according to his humanity. He is also promising that he will send another Companion, the Holy Spirit. All of this is to their "advantage."

3. We may become angry and "speechless" in our prayers with him. Perhaps we have a problem and he doesn't seem to be helping us. Perhaps we are praying for a non-Christian to see God's power in their life and nothing is happening. We need to repent of our anger. Jesus went to the cross for you too. He forgives us for doubting him. He gives us peace and the promise that he is helping us, even when we can't see it!

B. For this reason Jesus also promises of the Holy Spirit.

1. Our Bibles call him by different names. In the original language, it is "paraclete" which literally means "to stand by someone." The Holy Spirit would stand by the disciples as an Advocate when they were dragged into court. He would give them words to witness before the authorities. When Christians and loved ones suffered, he would be their Comforter. When they needed to make plans for their ministry he would be their Counselor. The Holy Spirit works in the same way for you and me today.

2. Jesus kept his promise and sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday. There was the sound of rushing wind that told the disciples something was happening. There were tongues of fire on their heads to show the disciples that their Holy God was present and with them.

What a change over the disciples when they received the Spirit's gifts!

They were clear in their understanding of Jesus' mission. They were courageous in standing up to testify. They communicated clearly the message of salvation in Jesus.

3. You and I may struggle to speak our faith. The Holy Spirit works through the Word. He gives us clear understanding of God's plan of salvation. He gives us courage to stand up and communicate with those around us the great things that God has done for all people. This is Jesus' promise.

## **2. Conviction**

Have you ever shared your faith with someone and they were interested and it seemed that they believed? You were thrilled! Then you go and mention Jesus to someone else and they reject the message and perhaps they ridicule you. It happens.

Jesus shares some words that helps explain this. He tells us that the Holy Spirit is going to convict the world. For some, like the disciples and you and me, there will be conviction. The Holy Spirit brings us conviction through the Gospel.

A. Jesus tells his disciples:

**8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:**

**9 about sin, because people do not believe in me;**

**10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;**

**11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.**

1. Sin – The world believes in sin. But it doesn't believe it is damning.

2. Righteousness – The world thinks their good works are enough. Only Jesus lived a perfect life and ascended to the Father. Outside of Jesus there is no righteousness.

3. Judgement – They think they are standing okay without Jesus. But they are standing with the devil and he is already condemned.

So, the world stands convicted. God has said so in his word.

B. The word "convict" can has the meaning of "convinced." The Holy Spirit has not only convicted us, but he has convinced us.

1. Sin – We are convinced that we are sinners and we need a Savior.

2. Righteousness – We believe Jesus is the righteous Son of God. His righteousness covers our sins and the sins of all people. All who believe in

him are forgiven.

3. Judgement – We believe that we stand with Jesus in his righteousness and we will stand with him in Heaven.

So, you and I are not only convicted, but we are convinced and believe that we have salvation in Jesus.

C. On Pentecost Sunday Peter stood up to preach. There were people who listened and believed and were saved. Of course, there were some in the crowd who did not believe. We know that over time opposition in Jerusalem grew. That did not stop the disciples from confidently sharing the Gospel both in Jerusalem and later away from it.

We have the conviction of faith. We can also be sure the Holy Spirit is working through the message today. People will be convicted, some will even be convinced and saved. So, we can live and serve and witness with conviction.

Conclusion: Do you have a story of how Holy Spirit gave you the right words at the right time to get through a difficult situation or to witness your faith? He did for myself and my friend as we went to the Hospital in Scottsdale. He enabled us to give comfort and guidance to the family of the man with head injury.

You are serving the Lord in all you do. You will have opportunities to offer comfort and guidance. Remember Jesus' promise. We have comfort and guidance from the Holy Spirit. He will help us to comfort and guide others. This is what it means to have Pentecost comfort and conviction. Amen.