

The Holy Spirit: Our Comforter

Scripture Focus: John 14:25-27; 16:4b-7, 12-15, 25-33

Last week the focus of our lesson was the Holy Spirit as advocate. Advocate can also be translated as comforter. Let's think more about the Holy Spirit as a source of comfort, bringing peace. As Jesus approached the time of his execution and shared his last lessons with his disciples, their anxiety became palpable. He again stressed the point that the advocate (comforter) would be sent by the Father and would remind them of everything that he said. Then Jesus makes this promise, to them and to us; ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not let them be afraid."*** (John 15:27)

- When an individual has been a source of comfort to you, how was that realized. What did the person do, or not do? Think of the person, the circumstances, and how peace may have been experienced.

Perhaps there are those who have been a particular source of comfort because:

1. They did not minimize our feelings. They acknowledged the circumstances that gave rise to our anxiety, depression, and/or sorrow.

Jesus said to his disciples, ***"But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts."*** (John 16:6) "These things" included foretelling the persecution they would suffer as his followers. (John 15:18-27)

2. They truly "came alongside" with sensitivity and kindness rooted in love.

That is how the Holy Spirit comes to us – out of love, desiring our peace. Throughout John chapters 13-17, Jesus over and over again reminds the disciples of his love for them. ***"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*** (John 15:12) Also see John 14:18-20.

In addition, notice there is an obligation that we have in response if we want to fully benefit from the comfort and realize peace. It is difficult to comfort a person who is filled with resentment, bitterness, even hate. The Holy Spirit addresses this as well, as the One who convicts and instructs. More on that next week!