

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
Grant Park, Illinois
Pentecost, June 16, 2019
John 14:23-27**

Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Uncertainty in life can often produce a lot of fear in people's hearts. A young child who has never been swimming is afraid of their dad carrying them out into deep water. A college student nervously packs up to leave home and live in a dorm with a complete stranger. The middle aged man who has been having chest pains learns he needs to have triple bypass surgery. The widow stares at a fresh pile of dirt and wonders how she will go on without her husband of 57 years.

Uncertainty produces fear in people's hearts. Our gospel lesson shows us Jesus knew and understood this important fact about people. The upcoming uncertainty and fear wouldn't have been obvious to his first disciples, but we have the benefit of context to see what Jesus knew was coming while his disciples did not. Our lesson begins, **"Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."**

"He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

Jesus speaks these words on the night he was betrayed. He knew what was going to happen to him that night, but his disciples didn't. He knew his impending arrest, trial and crucifixion would leave the disciples confused and hurting, but he knew this grief would be short lived since he would soon rise from the dead. However, Jesus also had a more permanent departure on his mind when he spoke these words. He knew in exactly six weeks he would visibly leave this world for good.

Jesus' ascension into heaven meant Jesus' disciples would be left alone without their master and no clear cut plans for the future. It was a time of uncertainty and fear. Yet, Jesus knew this and he made a very specific promise to still the worried hearts he was going to leave behind. **"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."**

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." Jesus knows he will soon be leaving his disciples behind, but he makes them an important promise. He promises to send the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, to come and be with them after he has gone. What would the Holy Spirit do for the disciples? Jesus promises the Holy Spirit would help them remember everything Jesus said to them.

What benefit would these men receive by having the Holy Spirit help them remember everything which Jesus had said to them? Well, think about it like this. How often do you remember every detail of an important conversation which you have? I would imagine you'd remember the highlights from right after it, but what slowly happens over time? Don't you soon start to forget what was said and don't even the highlights sometimes start to fade?

Jesus makes his disciples an extraordinary promise with these words. He promises them that they will remember everything he has said to them. What is so important about Jesus' kept his promise to help

them remember what he said and to send the Holy Spirit to them? Today, we are celebrating Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church. One amazing miracle which the Spirit blessed the disciples with was the ability to speak in different languages.

Yet, there is still more to the gift of the Holy Spirit than the ability to speak in different languages. What else did Jesus have in mind when he spoke these words? **“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”** Jesus also had in mind another gift which the Holy Spirit would bless the disciples with: the ability to write down the words of the Bible.

We call this special gift of the Holy Spirit verbal inspiration. Verbal inspiration is a term you probably haven't heard in a while, but you can picture it this way. Picture the Holy Spirit as a trumpet player and the writers of the Bible as the trumpet. Is a trumpet able to produce sound on its own? No, it needs someone to blow into it to produce sound. The Holy Spirit “blew” into the men and they produced the words written in our Bible.

The trumpet picture also leads to another important lesson. Does the trumpet always produce the same sound? No, it is capable of producing many different sounds. High sounds. Low sounds. Fast sounds. Slow sounds. Long sounds Short sounds. Lots of different sounds. In the same way, the Bible has different “sounds” because not every author sounds the same. Paul has one way of writing, Peter another and John a completely different style.

What does this have to do with Jesus' promise? **“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”** Do any of you know when the book of John was written? The best guess we have is John was written after A.D. 85. When did the events written in John take place? Roughly around the year A.D. 30.

Now, I want you to think about the gospel of John. (Maybe you can read it at home if it has been a while since you last read it). One of the characteristics of John is it is filled with long and detailed conversations which Jesus had during his time on earth. Would you be able to remember a conversation which you had over 50 years before (even if it were really important)? No, you wouldn't, but this is where we see the beauty of Jesus' promise. The Holy Spirit reminded John what happened.

What does verbal inspiration have to do with you and me? It has to do with another promise Jesus makes in our lesson. **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”** Jesus promises to give us peace. Where is one important place where you and I can learn about the peace which Jesus gives? Doesn't the Bible consistently, clearly and unchangeably reveal Jesus' peace to us?

Your heart is troubled because you've sinned. Doesn't the Bible reassure you Jesus has forgiven your sin? Your heart is afraid because you received horrible news you have cancer. Doesn't the Bible reassure Jesus loves you, he is in control of the situation and will work everything out for your eternal good? The

world you live in is constantly changing. You don't know which way is up or down. Isn't the Bible a firm anchor and your unchanging rock in the midst of the world's turbulent storm?

What gives you comfort in the difficult and challenging situations I mentioned? Your comfort doesn't come from a book written by men. No, it comes from a book given to you by God himself. **"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."** The Holy Spirit reminded the men who wrote the Bible of everything Jesus did on earth for your benefit.

There are many things in life which will leave us uncertain and afraid. It is just what life does to us. However, our lesson reminds us we don't need to be afraid of uncertainty because Jesus has worked to remove uncertainty from our lives. How? **"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."** He sent his Holy Spirit to reveal his love for you through the Bible. Amen.