



### John 15:26-27

#### The Spirit Testifies and We Ourselves Witness: Jesus is Lord

26 " But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

27 "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Jesus had been saying some alarming things to the disciples about the future, and he was about to tell them yet more. I mean it was bad enough when He had been telling them He would soon be leaving them and returning to the Father. But now He has been telling them that as the world hated Him and His Gospel, it would hate and persecute them as well. At that point, it might have gotten a little depressing. As Gordon Keddie put it *“with the best will in the world, talk about the inevitable hatred of the world was not going to raise the disciple’s spirits.”* You all know the big picture, but try to see it from their perspective that night, imagine being in their shoes, because it will help to understand why they so readily scattered later that night when Jesus was betrayed, and then hid in a locked room until he reappeared in their midst. Imagine if you will being a soldier in the hardest fight of your life, and the general comes and tells you, “men its been hard and its only going to get worse, the enemy is going to come at you relentlessly from all sides, O and I have to go.” At this point some of them might have been thinking, *Jesus, if you leave us in such a perilous position, what can we do?*

Well the Lord promises them, that He isn’t going to leave them alone, but that He will send them the Holy Spirit to be their Helper, their teacher, and their advocate, and then He gives them an assurance about their own calling in their future. Simply put He tells them what they are going to do, and how it will be possible.

He says after He goes He will send the Helper to them. The word there translated Helper is παράκλητος a word that meant someone called to your aid, summoned to your side, someone who would stand with you in a court of law and defend you not because they were paid but because they were your friend.

This Helper sent by the Father, just as Christ was sent by the Father, will not be a prophet, or an angel who might be “a helper” in their future ministry, but rather it would be the Holy Spirit who will be to them **THE HELPER**, it is the Spirit who will direct and empower their future ministry.

Now I hope you see from this that the Holy Spirit is not merely some sort of powerful force like electricity. Electricity cannot be your advocate in a court, electricity cannot testify, it cannot pray for you or intercede for you, you do not speak of electricity as he, and you cannot lie to it. The Holy Spirit can do all these things, because the Holy Spirit is not an **it**, it is a **He** - He is the Third Person of the Triune Godhead. The Holy Spirit is God just as much as the Son or the Father. So while God the Son’s Earthly Ministry is coming to an End, God the Holy Spirit’s ministry in their midst is about to begin.

Jesus tells them what the ministry of the Spirit will primarily consist of. Now if you listen to the televangelists, you'd think that the primary ministry of the Holy Spirit consists of making people laugh or shake or fall over or send money to the number on your screen. That is not the case, Jesus says that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is, and always will be, to testify of Christ. The word there is the Greek verb *Martureo*, to bear witness. It's a law court word, when a witness testified in court it was his *Martureo* his testimony as to the truth. And that is what *witnessing is*, it is testifying that Jesus is Lord. The Holy Spirit is vital to witnessing to Christ, no man can do it in truth without first being taught by the Holy Spirit. We have a beautiful example of that in the words of John the Baptist from John 1:29-34: ***"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water." And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' and I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."***

Who taught John to testify that Jesus is the Son of God? The Holy Spirit! In the same way when Peter testified in Matthew 16:16 that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God Jesus said to Him that this was not something he'd naturally figured out, but rather that the Father had revealed it to Him, and the Agency in that revelation is always the Holy Spirit.

But how does that take place? Is it ordinarily the case that God the Holy Spirit testifies directly to men revealing that Jesus is the Christ? Does He normally work through dreams or visions? Nope, faith comes by hearing, the ordinary means through which the Holy Spirit works to bring men to saving faith in Jesus Christ, is this: the preaching of the word. Now please understand without the work of the Spirit, men could preach all day, and no one would be converted. But when the gospel is preached – two things are actually happening – first there is the general call to faith, extended by the preacher, which goes out to everyone who hears and an effectual call to faith which is the work of the Holy Spirit alone: As the Shorter Catechism Q. 31 puts it: ***"Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel."*** So that the Spirit does not ordinarily work without the preaching of the word, and the preaching of the word never works without without the working of the Spirit.

So what does Jesus tell the Apostles will be their work after He goes back to Heaven? They will be His witnesses, they will also bear witness. And why? Because they had been with Jesus from the beginning. They had seen the things He did, heard His sermons, received His instructions. They weren't people who heard about Jesus second hand, as I said before, Jesus didn't have to tell His followers the angel spoke with me in a cave he didn't do miraculous things were no one could see them, he did them out in the open and His disciples were eyewitnesses. When Gabriel supposedly spoke to Muhammad it happened in cave where no one could see. But when Jesus spoke with Moses and Elijah On the Mt. of Transfiguration and then the father spoke from heaven, three of his apostles were right there. That is why Peter wrote:

***2 Peter 1:15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.***

*16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.*

Witnessing is not a matter of “once upon a time” or “wouldn’t it be nice if” or “here’s what might have happened” or even “here’s what I heard happened” but rather “let me tell you what actually took place.” This gospel that the Apostle John wrote is his testimony, his record of the things he saw when he was with Jesus that other might know the truth, and believe in Jesus, and enter into eternal life as a result: That is why he wrote: *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:31)*

Now with the mention of the Holy Spirit and the Apostles, Jesus has now identified Seven Witnesses who Testify that He is the Son of God. They are:

- 1) John the Baptist
- 2) God the Father
- 3) Christ Himself
- 4) His Works
- 5) The Scriptures
- 6) The Holy Spirit
- 7) The Witness of Christians – The Apostles and all those people whose lives have been transformed by their witness and the work of the Spirit.

**Now that brings me to my first application:** We’ve had all this law court language, so imagine if you will you are in a Court Room, the court of the world, and the trial is over whether or not Jesus is in Fact the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

**First on the witness stand is John the Baptist**, who testifies “yes this is the Son God,” **then comes God the Father**, who testifies *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”*

**then appropriately Christ Himself takes the stand** and when asked if He is the Christ He says “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me.”

**So next they call upon the testimony of His miracles**, and conclude that Jesus was “attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know”

**Then the court searches the scriptures** looking into the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments and Find that He is indeed the Prophet whom Moses spoke of, and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, the Living Redeemer of Job, and the Lord our Righteousness of Jeremiah.

**Then the Holy Spirit** again testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

And then finally the call for a seventh witness goes out, the Court Calls you:

Would you be able to testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God? Do you have a testimony of your own to the deity of Christ? And not a halting, “I’m not sure but whats the harm” kind of of way, because this is a courtroom and you’ve been sworn to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth! And as JH Oldham said: *“Unless you commit yourself, unless you stake everything on the truth of what you say, you cannot be a witness.”* – J.H. Oldham

So could you go up there and join your testimony to those other witnesses. Or would you be embarrassed or ashamed. Wave them away, make excuses. Dart out of the courtroom. I hope that is not the case because as JC Ryle put it so well:

*“Let us never forget, as we leave this passage, that the position of the Apostles is that which, in a certain sense, every true Christian must fill, as long as the world stands. We must all be witnesses for Christ. We must not be ashamed to stand up for Christ's cause, to speak out for Christ, and to persist in maintaining the truth of Christ's Gospel. Wherever we live, in town or in country, in public or in private, abroad or at home, we must boldly confess our Master on every opportunity. So doing, we shall walk in the steps of the Apostles, though at a long interval. So doing, we shall please our Master, and may hope at last that we shall receive the Apostles' reward.”*

**Second Application:** Perhaps you fear you won't know what to say! I'm not a trained speaker! Brothers and Sisters, not ONE of those eleven Apostles were trained speakers. That is why he assured them:

*Luke 12:11 "Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say.*

*12 "For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."*

And that was borne out:

*Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.*

And it has happened again and again in Christian history.

**2 Tim 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

**8** Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

**Third:** You who do believe. Don't be afraid of persecutions, don't fear that the world will overcome the gospel. The World will rage against Christ, the Gospel, this very week I've seen it happening in my own life, had things sent to me designed specifically to tear down my faith and build up doubts.

*“We ought, therefore, to observe carefully in what manner we ought to remain firm among so many storms. It is because “we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which have been given to us by God,” (1 Corinthians 2:12.)*

*This single witness powerfully drives away, scatters, and overturns, all that the world rears up to obscure or crush the truth of God. All who are endued with this Spirit are so far from being in danger of falling into despondency on account of the hatred or contempt of the world, that every one of them will obtain glorious victory over the whole world.” – John Calvin*