

Rev. Derek Fairman

6th Sunday of Easter

One of the qualities that our friends exhibit is that they are on our side. Now, that does not mean that they always think that we are right. They are willing to tell us when we are wrong. But in spite of being wrong, they defend us anyway. Our friends will not tell us what we want to hear, but will tell us the truth. They do not tell us the truth to try to humiliate us or make fun of us, but they tell us the truth in order for us to come to our senses, to face reality. They are with us to help us face reality, whereas others might leave us to face something on our own.

In the Gospel reading, the Lord Jesus teaches His disciples that He is going to give them another Advocate, the Spirit of truth. Now, if the Holy Spirit is another Advocate, then who is the first Advocate? The Lord Jesus Himself is the first Advocate with the Father, who intercedes with His Father on our behalf. The idea of the Lord Jesus being an Advocate is that He will be on the side of the disciples, against those who persecute them. He will be on the side of the disciples in Heaven as well.

The Lord Jesus promised them the Holy Spirit to be with them always. The Holy Spirit is also an advocate, although not exactly in the same way as the Lord Jesus. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to carry on the mission that the Lord Jesus first had: teaching His disciples the truth that comes from the Father. He came to bring consolation and peace to the disciples, and to help them recognize that the Lord Jesus ^{was} is still present in their midst. He also came against the world, to shine heavenly light on the darkness of this world.

The Holy Spirit comes to bring us truth, and He comes to shine His light on the darkness in our souls. Sometimes we might wonder whose side our friends are on. If our friends are harsh with us, we might have a difficult time understanding them or we might think that they are like everyone else who is against us. Well, sometimes that happens with the Lord too; when we don't get what we ask for, or it seems like the Lord is teaching us a lesson that we do not like, then we can begin to wonder if the Lord is on our side or not.

Well, the Holy Spirit comes to bring us consolation. Yes, sometimes the Lord has to teach us something about ourselves that we don't like. However, even in the pain that we might experience when we have to face some truth, the Holy Spirit brings the consolation that only He can bring, and He soothes us with the knowledge that the Lord only wants our good, that He does not want to plunge us further into darkness but He only wants to bring us to His light.

