

THE TWO ADVOCATES
Encounters with Jesus- Summer Sermon Series
West Valley Presbyterian Church
July 6, 2014
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John 14:16-20, 25-27(NIV)

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, 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. ²⁷ 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.

It's late in the evening of the Passover in an upper room in Jerusalem and Jesus' disciples are listening to their master. He's washed their feet during the supper, predicted his betrayal and Peter's denial, and then begins to comfort them with promises of His Father's house having plenty of rooms that have been chosen for each one of them, telling them he is going there to prepare these places and will come back to take them there. Thomas doesn't get it, asking directions how to get there, and Philip wants to see the Father, not just the way. Jesus is *incredulous that they don't remember what he's taught them. He's said countless times, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."*²¹ He's going to die and they still don't know him or what's about to happen. What he does know is that the disciples are in for the battle of their lives. There will be a cost. But he won't leave them alone. And so in this sermon today we're going to discover three things: Who the other advocate is, why Christ is the first advocate, and how these relationships will grant us perfect peace.

Advocate

But we really can't begin our understanding of this passage unless we can define the word *advocate*. Jesus says, *And I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever*. The word in Greek is *Parakletos* from the root verb *parakaleo*. *Kaleo* means to call, or direct someone and *para-* means to come alongside in order to support. Some would translate this word as comforter, but that sounds like handholding or a guide. The word helper seems a little infantile, and the word listener is close but not enough. This word really is a prophetic challenge/call and priestly support- to stand in someone's shoes, to be in relationship. The word counselor might work, if we're referring to a counselor at law, a defense attorney, but an advocate is

1 Luke 9:22

not just a counselor but also a challenger, a defender. They speak for you on your behalf. They are a bridge to power. If you were in court, you would want an advocate: some one who will defend you on your behalf, someone knowledgeable to teach and model and show the way.

The Other Advocate

So this other advocate is the Spirit of truth, called the Holy Spirit, and Christ reinforces this by saying *but you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you*. This Holy Spirit sent by God will teach you all things and will remind you of everything Christ has done, because His job is to point to Jesus. So this other Advocate is to teach us all things and remind us of everything that Christ has said, to work in our hearts, and to come to us. He will not only be with them permanently but in them. ²God will send a person in Christ's place, and in order for this to happen, Jesus has to go away. Somehow through this other advocate, we will be able to see Jesus, even though the world can't. And even though Christ cannot be with us, he will remain mediated by this person the Father is sending. Jesus' work was on the cross. The Holy Spirit's work is in our hearts. If we don't know the work of the Savior we cannot know the work of the Holy Spirit. So The Holy Spirit will teach us, remind us, and enable us to finally understand, all that Christ tried to teach us about his saving work. I love what Tim Keller says. "The ministry of the Holy Spirit is much like a floodlight, it doesn't point to itself, but illuminates the beauty of the thing it is lighting." ³Right now the disciples still don't know Jesus, but later when the Holy Spirit comes, it will illuminate the life of Christ, teach them deep life changing truth and it will help them see the depth of their sin and show them what Savior did for them. So the Holy Spirit teaches, calls us to live according to what he is telling us; the Spirit convicts us and challenges us, calling us to be bold and free and not to be trapped into accomplishments and things. The apostles may not know Christ now, but when he dies the Holy Spirit will be released into the world in power, from God. The *dunamis*; the light/power that captures a shadow has to have something to shine against. *How wide and deep and high and long is the love of Christ,*⁴ when his light shines against that cross and covers the earth with its shadow. The second advocate is telling you about the first. Because the first, Jesus Christ, did not leave us orphans. You are wealthy in his kingdom with his Spirit. Let the Holy Spirit speak to you, it's your job to listen.

As many of you know, one of my tasks as a Chaplain Resident at Stanford Hospital is to serve in the Cardiac ICU. And I spend a lot of time with families after the doctor declares their loved one is in the process of dying. And like the disciples, many feel unprotected, unsettled, or scared. There are those who understand and begin to make plans and prepare their heart, and others who are angry and simply won't believe it and still others who struggle in denial, saddened that this could ever happen to them. So every day I walk the floors of a hospital listening for the Spirit to assist people in their

2 FF Bruce, The Gospel and the Epistles of John, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub, 1983) 302.

3 Tim Keller. Encounters With God, chapter seven.

4 Romans 8:38

walk with God. And I believe the Spirit walks beside and in my heart. Before I even begin the day, I sit in an office and pray for all the patients I have by name. I Pray that the Spirit will guide me to those that need a listening ear, pray that God will allow my presence and calm heart to offer solace to those who are need: people waiting on the transplant list, or recovering from continued chemotherapy, or suffering from a mental illness that has debilitated them. And then I allow myself to enter the unit. As I walk down the hall, the prompts from the Holy Spirit stop me at certain doors and invite me to enter that person's life. I listen for clues on what's happening in their journey and very often, with the Spirit's help, discover the hidden hurts and history of their distress. And in every case, I know why I stopped there. I was listening. And yes, I see every patient on the floor because it is our work as interfaith chaplains. But the moments I cherish are those when the Spirit illumines a certain person and we go deep because the Holy Spirit dwells in me and I can share Christ's love with someone who is hurting. So the other advocate, lives in our hearts and teaches us, pointing us in the right direction.

The First Advocate

But we cannot know the other advocate, The Holy Spirit, until we understand the First Advocate, Jesus Christ. He says, *I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.* Christ is saying you belong, you are related to me. I am the person who will ask the father to send this advocate to you. I am your brother and I will provide this. No one will see me but you. Because I live, you also will live. *On that day you will realize that I am in my father; and you are in me, and I am in you.* We are intertwined for eternity. So Christ is the first advocate- His work is on the cross, I John 2:1-2- *If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous one.* He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins. He stands in court for us because the judgment seat is before us. Who will defend us? Jesus will. In this world we love to blame our guilt on our mother or father, we blame others for lack of self-esteem, shame, and guilt. Our worldly inner voice tells us we are fools, imposters, and failures. But Jesus is the true advocate, because he speaks for us, we meld into, disappear into our advocate, because he knows the court. ⁵He handles our case and speaks on our behalf. You are lost in him, because you are in your advocate. And he makes our case for us. He knows everything we are, and he's not asking for one more chance for us. He knows that we'll blow it, anyway. He's not pleading mercy or needs to beg. No, his role is to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, the true scapegoat. It's the universal divine court before which we all stand, a divine judgment where we all go. And there is a divine set of eyes watching us. – When we come to the judgment seat, we will all stand judged. We all come up short, we all sin; we all have a rap sheet before God. Some longer than others. He knows all about us and yet he still defends us. All you need to do is show up and believe in your advocate. He's standing before God basing his acquittal of your brokenness on the law. He's saying, "My Father, I know my people are sinners and the law demands the wages of sin is death. But I paid for those sins in full with my blood on the cross. I don't want mercy for them, I want justice." I John 9 tells us *-when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness.* Jesus has gone beyond the

5 Keller, *ibid.*

sympathy of the court to full acquittal. We don't serve any time. We're not working with the earthly court of scales and blind justice, we are working in a court with eyes wide open and a God who sees us and loves and because our advocate Jesus Christ paid it all, he's set us free. We are accepted, forgiven, acquitted because of what Jesus did, and all his sacrifice and atonement is placed on our side of the legal brief. *God made him who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteous of God.* I love what the song says, "Amazing love, how can it be, that you my king would die for me." ⁶

Peace

So we have another advocate, the Holy Spirit to live in our heart to guide and teach us, and our first advocate who has died for us and defends us in the court in heaven, and as the best legacy he could leave them, he bequeaths peace unto them.⁷ Christ says, "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.*" The peace Jesus is talking about is not the cessation of hostilities from enemies but rather the gift of calmness and confidence, wholeness or shalom that comes from union with God and faith in him and his purposes. The World's idea of peace is something that comes through destroying of enemies and consists of physical and emotional confrontation. But Jesus' peace is grounded in God and not in these circumstances. It is the peace that Jesus himself has exhibited, throughout the book of John even while he knows he is about to be killed. But they will be living out the peace, which he himself has already been experiencing. They will have his troubles but they will also have his peace, for they will share in his own relationship with the Father. *Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Fear is evidence of a lack of faith in God and a denial of his presence, his goodness and his grace. And the disciples are focused on themselves and not on Christ. When we experience such fear, we can take comfort that our life in God grows, because it is his perfect love that drives out fear. Christ's announcement that his departing is near should fill them with joy instead of disturbance and fear.⁸ What the world presents as peace is that life is nasty, brutish and short and then you die. --It's temporary, based on circumstances and people, --when the market is up and the deal is made you feel at rest, peaceful and if the market's down or you feel some failure or agitation there is a lack of peace. Why? Because this kind of peace depends on circumstances and we choose not to think about bad times. Christ's peace works the opposite way- not by thinking less, but by thinking more. Not by ignoring reality, but by paying attention to it. Christ gives us true things to think about that overcome the darkness of this life; the ability to face impossible situations, honesty in the face of lies and bribery, walking alongside people who are unloved or imperfect. While the rest of the world finds distraction and looks away, we

⁶ Amazing love- lyrics by Chris Tomlin.

⁷ <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-Bible>.

⁸ <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/ivp-nt/Jesus-Contrasts-Disciples>. attained on 6/9/14.

head straight into the concern. We will know his peace in our hearts when we live more like him.

And Philippians 4 reminds us that his peace will guard our hearts. *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.*⁹ You see the word for guard in this passage means a little soldier, a sentry. And the sentry stands guard at the opening of your heart; nothing bad will come in, and nothing good is allowed to leave. This unique peace guards your heart and your mind. The world can't do that. Only God can.

Some of you may not know this but my mom, Judy Hovey, was an orphan. During the great depression, people were so poor that children were often put in orphanages so that they could eat and have something to wear. After my grandfather was killed and my grandmother married another man who abandoned her, she was destitute. She had four young daughters and no money and was forced to put two of her children, my mom and my Aunt Sarah, in a home simply because she'd run out of relatives and needed to preserve what little dignity she had. With her sixth grade education she was able to sell hamburgers on the corner. But my mom had an advocate, a dear Christian couple, The Dixons, who worked at the orphanage and took her under their wing taught her and encouraged her and defended her against ridicule and low self-esteem. They guarded her heart. She managed to make it out of the orphanage and become a registered nurse and then later a nurse practitioner. But none of this would have occurred if she didn't have an advocate, someone to stand in the gap for her and defend her when she made mistakes and tell her she was loved. It took special people. God did not leave her an orphan. He sent someone to come alongside and protect her from the cruel injustices of this world. She realized at an early age, she was special, a princess, and a child of the King. And she never forgot that. She remembered the peace she received. As I was growing up, we took in all sorts of relatives and wayward people into our home because she wanted everyone to feel as though they belonged to someone. She became an advocate. She followed the way of Christ.

So our challenge today is really three things. The first is believe in Christ our first 5
advocate with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, knowing he died for you and continues to defend you in His Father's court; and receive his Spirit, the second advocate, who will continue to teach you and convict you to follow the ways of Christ. Second, listen to the Spirit about Christ's infallible case and he will give you infallible peace, Jesus' permanent peace, not a temporary world peace. Then take the peace you have and reciprocate, give it away to someone who is troubled and afraid, accept sinners for who they are and love them anyway, become the advocate they need, because God first loved you. Finally, as a spiritual descendent of these disciples, remember these words are meant for you too. I love the story that Tim Keller talks about- a woman who appeared unconscious and on her death bed was surrounded by relatives who noted "It's a shame; she's had such a hard life. She's seen two husbands die and she's often been sick and on top of it all she has died poor. Suddenly she opened her eyes and shouted, "Who calls me

9 Philippians 4:7

poor! I am rich and I will stand before him bold as a lion”. She had peace because she had listened to the Advocate. I’ve got the only husband who cannot die, the only disease that can really and truly kill me, has been conquered by the Savior. How can you call me poor? Indeed, how can we? You are not an orphan. You are rich. And the first advocate died for us that we might celebrate his life and resurrection by coming to his table. All who seek to know the Lord Jesus Christ are welcome to this table. We come in faith and repentance and love.