

# The Promise of a Helper

John 14:15-21

## Introduction

Last week we talked about how Jesus was preparing His disciples for His impending crucifixion, by giving them hope. He promised that they will be with Him for eternity at the end of this life. He continues with that discourse today, giving them a **PROMISE** that will help them see life through to its end.

## What Is the Promise?

What does He **promise**? He's going to send **Someone** else, Someone to act in His stead, Someone to be **with** and **in** the disciples. Jesus calls Him the **Helper**.

## Paraclete

The word "helper" is a translation of the Greek word *paraclete*. The word literally means "one called alongside" and, like many Greek words, has more than one possible interpretation. Different translations of Scripture have translated it in different ways throughout history. While "helper" is a good, broad translation, these others work together to define what the Helper does for us.

## Counselor

The first word is **COUNSELOR**. A counselor is one who gives **advice**, who helps you through times of confusion. We lean on a counselor when we can't figure out what to do. The Helper guides us to make the **right decisions**.

## Advocate

The next is **ADVOCATE**. This is a legal term. An advocate stands beside you in a court of law. He is your **attorney**, your **lawyer**, your **defender**. The Helper stands with us when the world is against us and He **defends us from evil**.

## Comforter

The last is **COMFORTER**. This is one who gives you a shoulder to cry on. He gives you a **hug** when you're beaten down. You remember what those are, don't you? The thing about this Comforter is that He doesn't just try to cheer us up. He lets us pour our cares out upon Him and **draw strength** from Him to get through those difficult times.

## Who Is the Helper?

Jesus is talking about the **HOLY SPIRIT**. This **Helper** that Jesus promises is a **Person**, for Jesus refers to Him in the third person masculine. I cringe when I hear people refer to the Spirit using the term "it". There are some denominations that call themselves "Christian" who teach that the Godhead is the Father and the Son. And where the Bible talks about the Spirit of God, it's merely His presence on earth. We'll get into this deeper in three weeks, on **TRINITY SUNDAY**.

## The Spirit of Truth

Jesus identifies the Holy Spirit here as the **SPIRIT OF TRUTH**. The fathers taught that this is because the Spirit **glorifies** the Son, the Son is the **truth** and we can only say, “**Jesus is Lord**” by the **Holy Spirit**. The Spirit opens us up to the truth, helps us to see the truth and helps us to confess the truth, for God cannot stand lies. This informs how He guides us, in the way of **truth**.

## God

The Spirit is God. Jesus says that the Father will send **another** Helper. The word “another” shows that the Spirit is like Jesus, for you don’t call something another if it’s not the same as something else. If you get **another** car, it’s because you have a car **already**. If you have a truck and buy a car, you don’t say it’s another car. So, the Spirit is **like** Jesus and will do the **same work** as Jesus, by being a Helper the way Jesus was their Helper.

## Why a Helper?

It should be obvious **why** Christ promises this Helper. We need Him to **get through this life**. We’re not promised a rose garden. Life is full of times of **confusion**, **attack**, and **sorrow**. The Spirit is there to help us through them. This should speak to us in this day when the key word is **safety**. We’ve become obsessed with being safe. Life isn’t about being safe. It’s full of risks and it’s about choosing which **risks** are **worth** the taking. God promises **help**. We are promised the Holy Spirit to **guide** us into making the right decisions, **defend** us when we’re under attack, and give us His **strength** to get through the difficult times.

## How Do We Receive the Helper?

### The Father and Son Send

Jesus says that Father will send the **HELPER**. After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples in the upper room and said (read **John 20:21-23**), Jesus has a **mission** for them and prepares them for this mission by giving the **Holy Spirit**. Although they already possessed the Spirit, on **PENTECOST**, He came upon them in **fullness** and **power**. Since Pentecost, **every believer** has the Holy Spirit living within us to **guide** us in the truth, **defend**, **comfort**, and **strengthen** us.

### Means of Grace

We receive the Spirit in **WORD** and **SACRAMENT**. As the disciples received Him through the **breath** of Jesus, we receive Him by the **Word** of Christ through the **MEANS OF GRACE**. He dwells within us to **guide**, **defend**, **comfort**, and **strengthen** us for this life. He is our **PROMISED HELPER**.

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*May the peace of God,  
Which passes all understanding,  
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

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