

Bearing Witness with the Spirit

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] John chapter 15, verses 26 through 27.

! If you would please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together.! But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about me, and you also will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning.

May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? In my senior year of high school and continuing into my freshman year of college, I had a job working at a distribution center for a company called CarQuest.

And along with a group of other guys, my job was to load semi-trucks with car parts. And we had about 12 semi-trucks that we had to fill every day, Monday through Friday, and it was hard work. We had to carry car batteries, boxes full of motor oil, and all other kinds of engine parts and car parts.

[1 : 34] And it was hard work. And our shift didn't end until every truck was loaded, which meant sometimes we wouldn't get out of work until after 11 o'clock.

And so it was a hard job, but I really enjoyed that job because I worked with a lot of my friends from high school. And one of those friends was a guy who just was freakishly strong, you know, those kinds of guys who it's like, he doesn't have to lift weights, he's just like chiseled out of marble. He looks like a sculpture. He's just so strong. And so we had a guy like that who just had this abnormal kind of strength. And he was a great co-worker because he would use that strength to get those trucks loaded quickly.

And he was always willing to join in whenever he saw that you had something specifically really heavy that you had to carry. He was always willing to come over and come alongside whoever that was.

And help them get that done. And also, he was just a positive guy. He always had a positive attitude, and that made him really fun to work with.

[2 : 50] But after my first summer of working there, he joined the Army. And we were sad to see him go because, you know, one, he was our friend, but also he bore more than his share of the workload, and we knew that he was going to be really hard to replace.

Some co-workers are just better than other co-workers. And so, as we've been in John chapter 15, we know that Jesus has gathered with his disciples the night before his death.

And he knew that they were sorrowful and they were fearful. He had informed them already that he would be betrayed by one of them, who would be Judas, and that he would soon die.

And the disciples could not envision a life without him. They loved Jesus. And the thought of losing him, the thought of living their life without him was so inconceivable that they told him that they'd rather die with him than continue on without him.

After Jesus stated that they would, in fact, abandon him, Peter responded confidently with these words. He said, And then the Bible says that that statement was then echoed by the rest of the disciples.

[4 : 30] We won't abandon you. If you're going to die, it's going to be over our dead bodies. However, Jesus knew the truth. And when the hour of his death did arrive, the bravado with which his disciples spoke would not be backed by courageous action.

They would leave him. But Jesus was prepared for that. He said as much in John 16, 32 through 33, Behold, the hour is coming.

Indeed, it has come when you will be scattered each to his own home and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have

peace.

In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world. And so in chapters 13 through 17, as we've been going through them, we're in 15, and as we continue on, I'll tell you, these chapters in John's gospel are some of my favorite chapters in all of Scripture.

Because in them we see how great our Lord loved and cared for and was concerned for His disciples.

[5 : 43] He was about to die. He was about to be crucified. He was about to be forsaken by the Father on the cross as He was crushed for our sins.

But instead of being concerned for Himself and for His needs, His concern was for them, for His disciples.

In chapter 13, He began His last moments with His disciples by getting down on His knees and washing their feet with His hands and reassuring them of how much He did love them and then expressing to them His desire that they love each other as He had demonstrated.

Then in chapter 14, He makes promises to them. He will go, but He's going to go and prepare a place for them, and He will come again and take them to that place.

And there we see again in that chapter the Lord talking about how He will provide provisions for them, that He will not leave them alone after He's been resurrected and ascends back to heaven, that He would supply them with everything they need to continue to carry on with His mission.

[7 : 06] And He knew that their continuing on with this mission would result with their being hated by the world. just as He was hated by the world.

And we saw that last week as He explained that truth to them in John chapter 15, verses 18 through 25. And so here in verses 26 and 27, Jesus once again seeks to strengthen His disciples by reassuring them.

Yes, they would face hostility from the world, but they would not face that hostility alone or in their own strength.

He was going to send them a co-worker greater than any human co-worker they had ever had or would ever know or any of us have ever had or have ever known.

And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is this. Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower His disciples to testify about Him.

[8 : 14] Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower His disciples to testify about Him. Earlier on that same evening, Jesus had promised His disciples in John 14, verses 16 through 17, and then in verse 26, this.

He said, And so here at the close of chapter 15, Jesus provides assurance to strengthen His disciples by informing them that in the work He will commission them to do, to go and to make disciples, to advance His kingdom, to be light in darkness by testifying to the reality of who Christ is and what He has done, they will be joined by the greatest co-worker anyone could ever want or need, God, the Holy Spirit.

In these verses, Jesus teaches His disciples more about the Holy Spirit and more about the work that He does through His disciples.

Now, there are a lot of misconceptions and there are a lot of misunderstandings out there about the Holy Spirit today, about who exactly He is and about what exactly He does.

I've seen those misconceptions and those understandings about the person and the work of the Holy Spirit lead people to be so uncertain of who He is that it's almost like He's become the forgotten member of the Trinity.

[10 : 14] Some people talk about Him as if He's some kind of mystical, impersonal force, like the Christian's version of the Force in Star Wars.

Some people roll on the Holy Spirit. Some people roll on the floor and they speak in gibberish and say that they've been slain in the Spirit. I think some of us who know that that isn't who the Holy Spirit is or how He operates, we know that, but it's almost like we become so guarded in the way that we talk about Him because we don't want to say the wrong thing or say something that's misunderstood that we get lumped in with those groups of people who we know have misunderstood who exactly the Holy Spirit is and what exactly it is that He does.

And so it's almost like we become so cautious in the way that we talk about the Holy Spirit that we pull back a little bit when it comes to talking about how the Holy Spirit leads us or moves us or prompts us or speaks to us and how He works in our lives.

A pet peeve of mine is, and I think it's a misconception about how the Holy Spirit operates when someone preaches God's Word.

Some people have the impression that whenever I step out from behind the pulpit and whenever I'm away from my notes, that this is when the Holy Spirit is at work.

[11 : 47] You know, like there's some kind of block right here. The Holy Spirit can't get into this place to speak to me, but He can when I'm over here. And that drives me nuts.

Well, it doesn't drive me nuts. It bothers me. Because every day that I go into the church in my office, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will prepare me for this day and for what I will preach, that He will speak to me, that He will convict me, that He will give me the words and the strength that I need to be able to preach to you.

And I don't like the thought that the Holy Spirit doesn't use our preparation, that He's not in the work of the preparation.

Yeah, He will give you the words to speak when you don't say, and sometimes that happens.

There's the prompting of the Spirit, and something I didn't write down is something that I feel like, you know, I need to be, I need to say.

But He works in the preparation, and isn't that what Jesus is doing here? He's preparing His disciples for what is about to happen, so they will be ready.

[13 : 00] And so my hope today is that in listening to this sermon and hearing these verses explained to you, you will understand who the Holy Spirit is better and be excited by the opportunity that the Lord has given to you to partner with Him in making disciples.

And so the first thing that Jesus does here is that Jesus explains who the Holy Spirit is and what He is sent to do. Jesus explains more about who the Holy Spirit is and more about what He is sent to do.

And so He begins in verse 26 by identifying who the Holy Spirit is, and He says there of Him, but when the Helper comes, when the Helper comes, the Greek word translated Helper in the ESV is *paraclete*.

In other translations of the Bible that you might have, that word *paraclete* is translated as counselor or comforter or maybe advocate.

And so we ask ourselves the question when we see that word translated in these different ways into our English translations of the Bible, what exactly is a *paraclete* and who has translated it best?

[14 : 31] So *paraclete* means one called to the side of another. The thought is of someone coming alongside another to counsel or support the one who needs it.

And so in the first century when this word was used, a *paraclete* then was used in reference to someone like today, like a modern-day attorney for us, someone who would come alongside to help someone through their trouble, to come alongside and maybe come to their defense to plead their case or to provide legal guidance and direction and wisdom for them as they proceeded on.

And so to this point, that's what Jesus has done for His disciples. He's guided them. He's guarded them. He's taught them. He's been their *paraclete* on the earth.

But now He's preparing them for His departure and His death and then His resurrection. And then when He ascends to heaven, He will no longer physically be with them.

So here in verse 26, Jesus continues to unpack His promise that He will send another helper, another counselor, another advocate, another *paraclete* in His place.

[16 : 07] And Jesus says of the Holy Spirit, as we continue on in verse 26, And so here what Jesus is doing is He's identifying the Spirit with Himself and with the Father.

Like them, the Holy Spirit is a personal being. He is a full member of the Godhead. He's a full member of the Trinity. Again, not some kind of force like Star Wars or some kind of strange feeling like indigestion.

In John 16, 13, Jesus described the Holy Spirit as a person. Look there at how He uses the personal pronoun, He, when He references Him.

When the Spirit of truth comes, not it, He will guide you in all the truth. For He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come.

So again, the Spirit is not a force or a feeling, but a person. And because He is a person, it is possible for us to enjoy a personal relationship with Him.

[17 : 29] When we look at Paul's benediction to the Corinthian church, he makes that clear. He says there in 2 Corinthians 13, 14, And so we know to have fellowship with someone is to have a personal relationship with them.

In Ephesians chapter 4, verse 30, there the Apostle Paul gives warning to Christians whose actions and whose words are incompatible with their confession that they know Christ.

And there he says, Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. And so there we see that the Holy Spirit can be grieved.

Impersonal forces cannot be grieved. Only personal beings can be grieved. Additionally, the Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit performing tasks that only a person can do.

Guiding, comforting, instructing, encouraging, convicting. These are all actions that require intelligence and a will to perform that only a person has.

[18 : 43] The Holy Spirit isn't a force that we use to or that we manipulate to obey us. He is God who lives with us and who indwells us and who teaches us to obey God the Father as He, the Spirit, conforms us into the image of God the Son.

And so Jesus is telling the disciples that just as God the Father was present with the disciples in Him, so He will continue to be present with the disciples in the Holy Spirit.

He will continue to guide them. He will continue to comfort them. He will continue to strengthen them. He will continue to encourage them through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity.

And then look at what Jesus says about the Holy Spirit coming in John chapter 16 verse 7. We'll get there before too long. Look at what He says about the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth.

It is to your advantage. It is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Helper, and He's talking about the Holy Spirit, will not come to you.

[20 : 04] But if I go, I will send Him to you. It's to your advantage that I go and that the Holy Spirit come. That's what Jesus is clearly saying. Later this afternoon, the Chiefs are in the AFC Championship game.

And if they win, they'll go to the Super Bowl. And when they win, amen. I like that faith. And the Chiefs have one of the best quarterbacks in the NFL.

My personal opinion is that he is the best quarterback in the NFL and will be regarded as the best ever whenever his career is over. His name is Patrick Mahomes.

Many of you have probably heard that name. But say that, and I know Hannah's rolling her eyes because, you know, she's a Tom Brady fan, but whatever. Back to this. This is more important.

Say that in the pregame warm-up, Patrick Mahomes goes down. Something happens. He can't play. Do any of you know who the Chiefs' backup quarterback is? Besides Jack, my son, and me.

[21 : 08] His name is Chad Henney. His name is Chad Henney. Okay? And Chad Henney is a fine human being. Chad Henney was great when he played college.

If Chad Henney goes into the game as a substitute for Patrick Mahomes, it will be to the advantage of our opponents. Not to our advantage as Chiefs fans because Chad Henney is no substitute for Patrick Mahomes.

So here's my point. We can't look at the Holy Spirit as some kind of inferior substitute to Jesus. And I think we do that sometimes.

To have the Holy Spirit as our paraclete, Jesus says, is to have God himself not only with us, but living in us.

The Spirit has inspired God's Word and He continually guides us in its truth. Jesus says that the Spirit is the Spirit of truth.

[22 : 16] The Spirit reminds us of truthful things, the things that Jesus taught, which we depend on, especially during difficult times in life.

As Jesus said in John 14, 27, the Spirit gives us peace. In John 15, 9 through 10, Jesus says that He gives us His love.

In John 15, 11, that He gives us His joy. That He comforts our hearts and minds when they are troubled. The power of the indwelling paraclete empowers us to live our lives in ways that keep us from seeking to gratify our own sinful desires as He walks with us, convicting us of sin and encouraging us and reminding us of the hope and the grace that we've received in Christ.

Reminding us of what is good. Reminding us of what is true. Reminding us of what is righteous. And He produces fruit in our lives.

They're called fruits of the Spirit. Joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

[23 : 31] These are all fruits that He causes to work out in us and through us. He strengthens us when we are hated by the world for the faith that we have in Christ.

And He works in us and through us to continue to proclaim the truth of who Christ is without fear. He comforts us when we face such hatred. But the kind of comfort He provides is more than just merely a shoulder for us to cry on.

I once heard R.C. Sproul talk about how the Spirit comforts us. And He said that the word, the Latin roots of the word comfort is come and forte, which means with strength.

The disciples were going to need constant strengthening for the task that Jesus was preparing them for. And so by sending His Spirit, He ensured that they had all that they needed.

[24 : 29] And guess what? So do we still today. When our faith is shaken, His Spirit sustains it. When times are dark, when hope seems lost, He gives us courage and strength.

When we're ready to give up and we're tempted to quit, He renews our strength. When we don't know what to say, He gives us the words to speak.

And so as Jesus continues in verse 26, He talks about how the Spirit gives us those words to speak, how the Spirit will bear witness about me.

The Holy Spirit joins with believers in testifying about Christ to the world. As Jesus says in John 16, 8, and when He comes, again talking about the Holy Spirit, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

So that's more about who the Holy Spirit is and what He does. But now we ask, well, what does that mean for me? And we've kind of hit on that, but what more specifically does that mean for me?

[25 : 37] Well, let's look at verse 27. There we see that Jesus expects His disciples to work in conjunction with the Holy Spirit to testify about Him. Jesus expects His disciples to work in conjunction with the Holy Spirit to testify about Him.

Verse 27, He says, And you will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning. He will bear witness, and now He says you will bear witness. And that's exactly what we see playing out in the rest of the New Testament.

In Acts, we see the apostles going and proclaiming the gospel. We see them standing before opponents, and we see them not backing down for the faith that they've proclaimed in Christ. Going throughout then the world, we see them continuing to testify to the truth concerning Jesus Christ. And as a result of that, we see that many are saved.

Now, unlike them, we haven't been with Jesus from the beginning. But we know that it is through their witness, through their testimony, that the gospel has come to us.

[26 : 50] The Holy Spirit inspired them to write the New Testament as He inspired the Old Testament, and we have the completed revelation of God's Word. We have the truth, and we testify to the truth we've been given.

And the Holy Spirit uses our testimony to open the eyes of the blind and to soften hardened hearts as He saves them.

I read this quote recently from Thomas Watson. I think it's awesome. He said, And that's what He does.

And this was the purpose for which John, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to write the gospel. This was His purpose, to give His testimony, to bear witness with the Spirit concerning who Christ is.

In John 20, 31, He writes His purpose statement for the whole book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in His name.

[28 : 05] And then later on in His first letter, He states a very similar purpose. He writes there, He says, The Holy Spirit is bearing witness through John, but John, we see, is also bearing witness.

And like John, it is only because of the Holy Spirit's witness that our witness has the ability to succeed. You and I do not save anyone.

That is what God does. But He does give us the privilege, and He does give us the responsibility to share the good news that He has caused us to know.

And it comes to my, I guess, my philosophy of ministry. Matthew 25, 14 through 30 is where I go to explain that. It's the parable of the talents.

And there that parable illustrates the tragedy of wasted opportunity and faithlessness. The tragedy of taking what the Master has placed in your hands and deciding to do nothing with it.

[29 : 47] If you've received salvation from God, that He expects you to share the good news of what He has done with others in the hopes that they will know the grace and the love of God that you have experienced.

And as a church, we do that together. It's not my job to witness for you. It's not the job of anyone else to do that for you.

We're all, every single one of us, going to stand one day before our Lord. And you and I will give an account for how we either used those opportunities He gave to us or how we did not use them.

I do think it's the church's job to equip its members to be more effective witnesses. But ultimately, we are all called to testify to Christ.

And He's given you His Spirit. And He's given to you all the resources that you need to do that effectively. So now the question might be asked by you, well, how can I do that more effectively?

[31 : 06] I like what James Montgomery Boyce had to say. He gave three elements of an effective witness. The first element, he said, is that there must be assurance. There must be assurance that the gospel is indeed true.

You must be assured yourself that the gospel is in fact true. That calls to mind Jesus saying that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. When you were saved, it was through the Holy Spirit's bearing witness through His Word and the witness of someone else that convicted you of your sin and caused you to see Christ as the only hope, as the only solution for that.

And so an effective witness is a witness that is assured, has the same attitude like the Apostle Paul regarding the gospel, as we see in Romans 1.16.

For I am not ashamed. I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

So no matter who they are, no matter what their race, no matter what their gender, no matter what their socioeconomic situation, the gospel has the ability to save people. And you must be assured of that.

[32 : 22] Second, there must be a personal experience of that truth in your own life. In other words, it's not enough to merely be intellectually convinced that God exists.

Many people believe that God exists. Many people believe in intelligent design or a higher power that has created all things. But that doesn't save anyone. You must know.

You must confess. You must believe. You must have faith in Jesus Christ. And know that it is in Him that you are saved because of His life, His death, His resurrection.

And what He's done to save you from your sins. That your salvation is all of His doing. That it was never based upon your being a good enough person and doing good enough things.

Ephesians 2.8-10 says, An effective witness will be one who has truly undergone that transformation.

[33 : 40] They are self-assured. And then thirdly, there must be a verbalized testimony. There must be a verbalized testimony. You share the gospel with your mouth.

Now, you've probably heard a saying that, you know, it sounds nice. And it goes like this. Share the gospel and if necessary, use words.

And that sounds nice. And, you know, if you have that sign somewhere hanging up in your office or at home, I'm not saying, you know, take it down and throw it away. But I ask you this question.

How can we not share the gospel if we're not using our words? Am I supposed to act it out? I mean, you could do that. You really could do that. But we are called to use our mouths to proclaim what God has done through speech, through words.

We verbalize our testimony. We say, this is who I was. When I didn't know Christ. When I was going my own way.

[34 : 46] When I was living in sin. This is who I was. This is what I thought. This was the direction that my life was going on. And then, as we verbalize our testimony, we say, but, then I was saved.

I came to know Christ. And this is who I am now. And always, as we verbalize that testimony, guess who is the hero of the testimony? It's not you. It's not even the person who shared the gospel with you.

The hero. The primary hero. The one who gets all the glory in your testimony is Jesus Christ. It's him. He's the Son of God. He is the one who has come to save.

He is always the hero. And you, as you use your words, you're always trying to point lost people to Jesus. It's Jesus. He is the one. He is the one that you must trust.

And he is the one whom you must place your faith in. He is the only one who can reconcile you to the Father. 2 Corinthians 5, 18 through 20 says, All of this is from God.

[35 : 52] God. Who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us, us, the message of reconciliation.

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ. God making his appeal through us. God making his appeal through our mouths as we testify to who he is and what he's done for us.

We implore you on behalf of Christ. Be reconciled to God. That's what Christians do. God has chosen his people as a means to reach the elect among the lost.

We don't know who God will save, but we know that God saves. There's no greater privilege.

There's no greater feeling than being used by God to share his gospel and see that person you're sharing it with be transformed before your very eyes as they are being transferred by his spirit from death to life.

And God expects you to testify to the great salvation that you have graciously received from him.

But here's the deal.

[37 : 12] Now, as I was finishing this sermon this week and thinking about this weekend, you know, I thought we're always beating each other up for the fact that we don't seem to be sharing the gospel enough.

And it becomes like a guilt trip for us. And I don't want to put you on a guilt trip because when I'm reading God's word, when I'm reading John 15, I don't see Jesus giving his disciples a guilt trip. I see him encouraging. I see him comforting. I see him strengthening them. And so that's what I hope that when you understand that Jesus expects you to share the gospel, that this isn't some kind of a guilt trip, but this is his encouragement to say, don't waste your life and your time.

Don't waste the precious opportunities. You could be a part of something that has eternal implications. Don't lose out on the chance to share me with lost people who are desperate to hear some good news in the midst of a dark, dark world.

For me, I think of my family. I think of a man I've shared about him before. His name was Gail Milhoff.

[38 : 34] When my brother was dying in the hospital, Gail was there visiting a member of his church. And he saw my father and my oldest sister in the waiting room. His wife was there and visiting with them.

And he asked questions. Why are you here? My dad told him. My son is not well. He's dying. And Gail said, can I get your phone number?

I want to be praying for you. And every week he would call and check on my parents to see how they were doing. And when my brother died, Gail Milhoff invited them to church. For they heard the gospel.

And when my parents came forward one Sunday, Gail Milhoff, who sat in the second pew, hopped over the first pew to go put his arms around them and pray for them.

He died when I was a little boy. And he gave me a Bible. I don't know who he is. But I thank God for his life and for his testimony. And even as I was thinking today, goodness gracious, he had no idea.

[39 : 36] He just loved hurting people. And he shared the good news of who Jesus Christ was with them. He didn't know that one day God would call me to the ministry.

He didn't know how that would impact the lives of my parents and my sisters and our families and our children. I mean, it's just going and it's going and it's going. All because he opened his mouth and he cared and he knew that Jesus Christ saves people.

And he wasn't ashamed. I'm sorry I pounded on the pulpit. I don't normally do that. But I want to encourage you. I want to be a Gail Milhoff in somebody else's life.

Not for my own glory, but I want to be amazed to see what God does by me just simply opening my mouth and saying, Hey, there's good news for a sin-cursed world.

God has sent his son to die on the cross for your sins. And if you believe in him and you trust in him and what he's done for you, and you know that he rose from the dead on the third day and he's ascended to heaven and he's coming back, guess what?

[40 : 47] If you confess that, if you believe that in your heart, you're saved forever. I want to be a Gail Milhoff in the life of somebody else.

Not seeking the glory or the honor, just happy to see the Lord use me to testify to how great he is. And so I don't want to shame you.

Jesus isn't shaming his disciples for maybe their lack of faith. He's encouraging them.

And that's what he's doing for you and me today. He's encouraging us. The gospel is meant to be shared. You know, we teach our kids that song, This Little Light of Mine, I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, no. Right under it under a basket, no. Something happens to us when we get older. We get jaded by the world. We get hurt. And we sometimes get confused by what the world says.

[41 : 56] And we get drawn to it instead of staying close to the Lord and his word. And our light diminishes. Don't let that happen to you.

Let your light shine for Jesus Christ. Be encouraged that when you do, great things will happen. The gospel is good news meant to be shared.

And people are desperate for good news in this world and in our country. And you'd be surprised by how receptive they will be to what you have to share about the hope we have in Jesus.

Romans 10, 14 through 17. We see the responsibility here. We have it. We have it. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?

And how are they to believe in him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching, without someone proclaiming, without someone testifying, without someone bearing witness?

[42 : 59] And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news. But they have not all obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah says, Lord who has believed what he has heard from us.

So faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. So here's the main application for this morning's sermon. And I added the end.

It's not in your notes, so you add it too. Share the gospel with courage and compassion and joy. Share the gospel with courage and compassion and joy.

This is joyful news. And as we talk about Jesus, our faces should shine because of the hope that we have in him and the joy that he has given to us.

Share the gospel with courage, with compassion, and with joy. Four questions of application for us to discuss tonight. If you want to come, I encourage you to be a part of that at 630.

[44 : 06] Question number one. What fears or concerns do you have about witnessing to lost people? Let's talk about...we're going to talk about those things tonight. What fears or concerns do you have about witnessing to lost people?

And then the follow-up question. How should knowing that you have been...that you have the Holy Spirit as your helper help you overcome those concerns and those fears?

How should knowing that God is with you and in you help you overcome those fears and concerns?

Question two. What encouragement does John 15, our passage today, verses 26 through 27, give you about testifying to the truth of Jesus Christ?

What encouragement is there that the Lord wants you to know and have and apply in your life as you testify to the truth of him? Question three.

Read Acts 5, 30 through 32. What does Peter say there about bearing witness with the Spirit? What do we see there? We see it in action. What does Peter say about bearing witness with the Spirit?

[45 : 09] And then question four. Read 1 Corinthians 2, 1 through 5. What does Paul say about his method of witnessing to the Corinthians? What does Paul say there about his method of witnessing to the Holy Spirit?

And as you see his method, I encourage you to follow that example as well. I'm going to pray, and then as I pray, I know our praise team will come up here.

And what I encourage you to do during that time of invitation is to be in prayer. You can pray while you sing.

It's possible to do that. But be in prayer. You can pray in your pew. You can come up here. But be in prayer that God would use you and encourage you to testify to him.

And be thinking about as you pray. Who is that person this week that you can reach out to and share the gospel with? With courage, compassion, and with joy.

[46 : 17] Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for just how great you are and how merciful you are to sinners.

Lord, we have received a great salvation. And it costs a great price. But Lord, you willingly came. You lived the sinless life that we were incapable of living. You died willingly on the cross. You bore our sin and the wrath of God for what we've done.

Lord, you died in our place. On the third day you arose from death. Proving that you are the Son of God.

Proving that there is hope in you of experiencing the same kind of resurrection. God, we thank you for the salvation that you have authored and the salvation that you have given to us.

[47 : 33] And Lord, we're thankful for your promise that has been fulfilled. As you ascended, the Holy Spirit descended. And is God with us and God indwelling us?

Not an inferior substitute, but a member of the Trinity. Fully God as you are fully God. Lord, forgive us that so often we grieve the Spirit by the sins in our lives or even just forgetting who exactly he is and what exactly he does.

Lord, I pray that each of us would be encouraged by your word today. And that each of us, Lord, would take this encouragement. And that we would go and do and be obedient to what you've commanded us to do.

To make much of who you are. To share the gospel. To testify about the salvation that we have been given by you, Lord. And the hopes that you will use us as you've used so many others.

Using our lives and our testimony and our words. As we bear witness with your Spirit to see someone transformed before our very eyes. Lord, this is a dark world in need of hope.

[48 : 43] And you offer that hope. And you offer that hope through us, your people. May we be obedient to what you've asked us to do. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.