

TEXT – John 14:23-29

Introduction: “I love you, mom.” Does your mom really need anything more than that? Does she need anything more than to hear her children tell her that they love her?” Even more important than saying, “I love you,” would be showing it. How do you show your mom that you love her? You call her, talk to her for a while, or send her flowers. You take care of your family and show love to them. You stay out of trouble. You make her proud by the things you do. As those who love Jesus we want to do the same thing. We not only say that we love Jesus, we also show it. How do we show that we love Jesus? Our Savior himself tells us in our gospel reading, very simply – LOVE JESUS, OBEY HIS WORD. The Word of God is so vital to our faith. In our text we learn that 1) through the Word the Father lives in us, 2) through the Word the Spirit counsels us, and 3) through the Word Jesus gives us peace.

I. Through the Word the Father lives in us

- Jesus spoke these words to his disciples in the Upper Room on the night before he died. He pulled no punches. He spoke plainly and directly about very important matters in the Christian faith. I’m sure one of the concerns the disciples had was what they would do without Jesus. What would they do without Jesus right there to answer all their questions, to guide them, direct them, and even keep them safe?
- Don’t we have those same questions? How can Jesus answer our questions, guide us, direct us, and even keep us safe if he is not right here with us? All we need, all the disciples needed is what Jesus promised them there in the Upper Room. Even though Jesus would no longer be visibly present with them, he would still be with them in a very powerful and effective way through his Word.
- So, Jesus’ disciples can find what they need in the Word. In fact, that’s what reveals our love for Jesus – our very close attachment to his Word. Earlier in this gospel John records Jesus’ statement, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” In our text Jesus says, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.”
- Obeying Jesus’ teaching results in something very amazing taking place. Jesus says, “My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” Those who love Jesus and obey his teaching have the Father and the Son living in them. We also know from Scripture that we are a temple of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.
- Just think, through faith in Jesus as our Savior who lived and died for us we are not only members of God’s family, we have God dwelling in us. We call this the mystic union. In those who love Jesus and obey his teaching the Father actually lives. The divine Father, the creator of all things, lives in believers. It is a very real and intimate union. It expresses a friendship, a bond between believers and the holy God.
- When we are feeling alone or anxious we are comforted by God’s presence in us. Peter writes, “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.” That knowledge of all that God does for us to care for us in the most difficult times is revealed in his Word.
- We have friends, maybe even close friends. We have spouses with whom we are what the Bible calls one flesh. We might even say with these relationships that we stand by each other. That’s as close as we can get with a human friendship. Our gracious, loving Father doesn’t just stand by us, he lives in us. His blessing, his strength, his guidance is in us. That is a very comforting thought.

Transition: We love Jesus and we show that love by obeying his teaching, his Word. Through the Word the Father lives in us. Jesus also states that through the Word the Spirit counsels us.

II. Through the Word the Spirit counsels us

- If anyone needed counseling it was those disciples with Jesus in the Upper Room. Their Lord and Savior with whom they had spent about 3 ½ years was leaving them. Who better to counsel those confused and troubled disciples than the one Jesus promised to send, the Holy Spirit. He is the master counselor.
- What makes a good counselor? One answer I read said that a good counselor is someone who knows what we are trying to say not just what we are saying. A good counselor gets at what’s really troubling us. A good counselor is also a very good listener and is trustworthy. A good counselor likewise helps us fix whatever the problem is. Anything else you may consider that makes a good counselor the Holy Spirit is it.
- God the Holy Spirit knows you inside and out. He knows what you’re really thinking and feeling deep inside your spirit. Paul tells us in Romans 8, “In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.” The Holy Spirit listens. He even helps our prayers, clarifying them before the Father. He knows us and what we need.

- Through the Word, which the Holy Spirit himself wrote, he is able to help. He fixes the problem. He knows the real problem which is our sin. He fixes that problem by sending us through his Word again and again to Jesus our Savior. I don't know how anyone can handle life without the Spirit's counsel daily. If I fall behind in my daily Bible reading, I can tell. Sometimes I am more agitated and not as happy and content. It's because I have not spent time with my spiritual therapist, the Holy Spirit to draw me closer to Jesus.
- What does the Holy Spirit, the Counselor teach us? Jesus said, "He will teach you all things." Is it just the knowledge of Biblical truths so that we know who Lydia was or why Achan was stoned to death? There is the knowledge side of our faith rooted in God's Holy Word. We learn of real people in real situations teaching us real spiritual truths. But there is also the belief and trust side of faith. Our faith, our trust in God's promises, is strengthened as our spiritual Counselor teaches us God's Word.
- Our Counselor's main goal, his main work is to teach us everything there is to know and believe about Jesus. The purpose of this is so that we love Jesus even more. How much more can you love Jesus? How much more do you want to love Jesus? How much do you want to build your relationship with Jesus? The Holy Spirit is ready, willing and able through his Word to get you there and even beyond where you think you should be or could be.

Transition: We love Jesus and we show that by obeying his teaching, his Word. Through the Word the Father lives in us and through the Word the Spirit counsels us. Jesus also reminds us that through his Word he gives us peace.

III. Through the Word Jesus gives us peace

- It is clear that Jesus was ready to leave his little meeting with the disciples to carry out the sinner's salvation. He had more to say to his disciples, but Jesus knew his time was short. So our Savior went to the heart of the matter. He said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."
- Through the Spirit's counsel and teaching in the Word, he reveals the peace that Jesus came to bring. This is peace between condemned sinners and the holy God. Jesus came to give sinners a guilt-free life now and a sorrow-free, pain-free, worry-free life in heaven forever.
- True peace is a condition, a status we have with God through Jesus. It is not temporary in nature. It is not a partial peace that constantly needs more negotiating. Our peace with God is the absolute peace Jesus established, that he signed, sealed delivered through his own blood. This peace we have with God truly removes all our fears and anxieties. Jesus' peace is all we need.
- Now the hard part for Jesus – telling his disciples that he was going away. This would make them very sad, and it should. They were losing more than just a rabbi or teacher, more than an awesome mentor. They were losing the visible presence of the Savior himself. But Jesus said that they should actually rejoice that he was going away. Why in the world should they be happy about Jesus leaving?
- Jesus explains, "I am going away and I am coming back to you. If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I." Notice two things. Jesus has to leave in order to come back. He has to leave as he said earlier in this chapter to prepare a place for all his believers – the rooms in his Father's house. Jesus' going and preparing included his suffering and death on the cross to open the way for us to get to heaven. His going and preparing also included his resurrection announcing that our rooms were paid for and ready for the big move.
- The other reason Jesus gave for his going away was that the Father was greater than he. Jesus is speaking in his state of humiliation as he set aside his glory as God in order to suffer for our salvation. But that's the point. As long as he can say in his state of humiliation that the Father is greater than he, his work is not finished. When Jesus entered his state of exaltation he was once again in full use of his glory and power as God and man.
- Later in chapter 16, John recorded these words of our Savior as part of his prayer to his heavenly Father, "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." We should rejoice and be happy that Jesus ascended into glory. Not only is Jesus better off but we are better off to have our dear Brother, who knows what it's like here on earth because he lived it, at God's right hand governing all things for our spiritual good and our eternal benefit and blessing. That's why we love him as well as the peace he gives.

Conclusion: You can't tell your mom enough that you love her. Moms think about their kids all the time and pray for them. Moms love in a way that only God can beat, by quite a lot actually. How important it is on her special day to tell mom how much you love her and appreciate all she did and still does. If that's how we feel about our moms who carried us for nine months and then gave birth to us, imagine our love for Jesus who made it possible for the Father to live in us, the Spirit to counsel us and our Savior himself to give us his peace. How can we express our love and thanks to Jesus? Jesus tells us, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching." Show Jesus how much you love him by obeying, reading, studying, and taking to heart his teaching, his Word. Love Jesus by loving his Word. Amen.