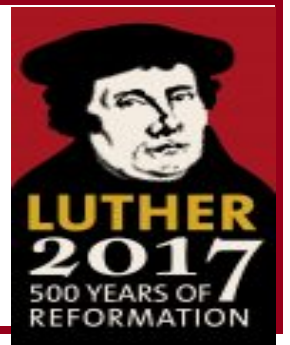


The Holy Spirit: Our Counselor

Psalm 139 Galatians 5:13-25 Luke 11:9-13

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This is certainly one of the greatest promises that Jesus gives us in all of Holy Scripture:

If you then, though you are evil, know how to GIVE GOOD GIFTS to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT to those who ask him! Luke 11:13

Jesus teaches us to **pray** for the Holy Spirit; He teaches that the Father in Heaven is **eager, willing, and ready** to send Him to you! **So pray regularly for the Holy Spirit!**

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity who lives within you and sanctifies you. He leads you each day as you battle the sinful nature at war within yourself. You are led by the Holy Spirit and walk in His ways when you hear and obey the Word of God. **He makes your entire life holy!**

One of the ways that the Holy Spirit is described is as our “**counselor**”. The New Testament word that is used has the idea of “companion, comforter, defender, advocate.” The word picture is that of someone who **COMES ALONG SIDE** of you to help you. Three times in three consecutive chapters in the Gospel of John Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit as our **counselor**.

JOHN 14:16-17 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Counselor** to help you and be with you forever— the **Spirit of Truth**

JOHN 15:26 "When the **Counselor** comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the **Spirit of Truth** who goes out from the Father—He will testify about Me.

JOHN 16:7, 13-14 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the **Counselor** will not come to you ... and when He, the **Spirit of Truth**, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.

Three times in three consecutive chapters Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit as your [Counselor](#); your *advocate*.

Jesus teaches us that the Holy Spirit is our “Counselor” because He is the “[Spirit of Truth](#)”; He always works through Holy Scriptures: the Word of Truth. That is how He “counsels” you: He teaches you and reminds you of the truths of Holy Scripture.

Just as people go to human “counselors” for advice, guidance, or help with issues or problems, so too Jesus teaches you to go to the Holy Spirit with your issues or problems.

The Holy Spirit is your “[Counselor](#)”; He will help you sort through your thoughts and form them around Holy Scripture. He will teach you and guide you in the right, holy, and godly way to go. He will encourage you when you are down; He will uplift you and strengthen you in difficult times. He will show you God’s Will and God’s ways when you are confused and perplexed. **The Holy Spirit “counsels” you as He teaches you and reminds you of the [truths of Holy Scripture](#).**

The Holy Spirit is the [Spirit of Truth](#): that means that He works through Holy Scripture. It is very important that you do not look for the Holy Spirit anywhere else: He is not in dreams, visions, “signs”, feelings, emotions, or unexplained circumstances that might happen in your life. There are so many false teachers who teach these kind of things. They separate the Holy Spirit from Holy Scriptures and lead countless Christians away from Christ and His Word.

As conservative Lutheran Christians, we are very careful to guard and defend the truth that the Holy Spirit works only through the Word and the Sacraments. In fact, the danger is so real that we confess this:

Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us *except through* His external Word and Sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Holy Spirit apart from such Word and Sacrament is of the devil. Smalcald Articles, III, viii, 9-10

As your [Counselor](#), the Holy Spirit speaks and directs and encourages you through Holy Scripture. ***If you want to hear the Holy Spirit, then study Holy Scripture! It is in Holy Scripture that the Holy Spirit comes alongside of you to “counsel” you.***

The Holy Spirit’s primary goal in your life is to keep you repentant. This means that He works through the Law of God to show you your sin. He is at work crucifying your sinful nature and humbling you as you turn from sin and confess it to God. **God’s kindness** in your life is seen as He works to lead you to repentance. That’s why it is so important to make sure your heart remains soft to God’s Holy Word --- even as it convicts you of sin.

Don't let your heart grow cold and hard towards God's Word. Don't become bitter, angry or disillusioned with God. The Holy Spirit works through the Word to turn you from sin and lead you to confession. **The Holy Spirit's primary goal in your life is to keep you repentant.**

Repentance not only means turning from sin, but it also means that you also trust that your sins are forgiven through faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit works through the Gospel to create and strengthen your faith. He counsels you about the Savior, teaching and reminding you that Jesus came into the world to take your sins away. Because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, there is now **NO CONDEMNATION** against you in God's presence. You have peace with God! You are forgiven! You are accepted. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to create faith in your heart: remember, "**no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit** (1 Cor 12:3)."

This is repentance. Turn from sin, confess it to God, and trust that Christ Jesus forgives you. **This is the Holy Spirit's primary work and goal throughout your life!**

Once you have faith in Christ, then the Holy Spirit counsels you about Holy Living. He continues to work through the Word of God to show you what life in the Kingdom of God is all about. He teaches you how to

- Understand the world around you so you have a biblical world view
- Understand and deal with yourself, and the inner conflict you have with your sinful nature
- Love and worship God through His Word and Sacraments
- Love and serve other people in your vocations and your gifts.

The Holy Spirit is your counselor; He comes along side of you and works in and through you with the Holy Word of God. His kindness leads you to repentance and holy living!

CATENA OF GOD'S CARE

Watch over your life (Psalm 121)

Defend you from all evil (Psalm 97:10)

Provide your daily bread (Matthew 6:11)

Make all things work for good in your life (Rom 8:28)

Listen to and answer your prayers (Psalm 5:3)

Strengthen you when you are weak (Isaiah 41:10)

Comfort you when you mourn (Psalm 34:18)

Guide and direct every step of your life (Prov 3:5-6)

Give you His Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13)

Empower you for godly living (Romans 8:11)

Assure you of His love and forgiveness (Hebrews 10:22)

Give you hope, peace and security each day (Ps 62:1-2)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in times of trouble! (Psalm 46:1)

The Holy Spirit "counsels" you

Through the Promises of Holy Scripture!

Finally, one other thing. (And this is fascinating!)

One way that the Holy Spirit is your **counselor** and helps you is by **praying** for you. He knows you so well, and cares about you so much, that He prays perfect prayers to God the Father on your behalf.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but **the Spirit himself intercedes for us** through wordless groans. And God the Father, who searches our hearts, knows the mind of the Spirit, because **the Spirit intercedes for God's people** in accordance with the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

The Holy Spirit prays for you! That's an amazing promise! There is a **peace and confidence** that comes from this promise. You don't ever have to worry that somehow you prayed wrong, or that you prayed for the wrong thing! **Your Counselor, the Holy Spirit comes alongside of you and prays perfect prayers on your behalf!** Prayers that the Father promises to listen to and respond! One way that the Holy Spirit is your counselor and helps you is by **praying** for you.

Jesus teaches us to pray for the Holy Spirit; and that the Father is eager, willing, and ready to give Him to you!

*If you then, though you are evil, know how to **GIVE GOOD GIFTS** to your children,
how much more will your Father in heaven **GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT** to those who ask him!
Luke 11:13*

The Holy Spirit is your Counselor, the Spirit of Truth, the One Who **comes alongside you** to help you and pray for you!

May you always be aware and sensitive to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in your life as He works in and through His Holy Word! Amen!