

5/27/12 Sermon | Ascension Batavia

Grace, mercy, and truth be to you from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

**John 15:26–27 (NKJV) — 26** “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. **27** And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.  
**John 16:4–15 (NKJV) — 4** But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. “And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. **5** “But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ **6** But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. **7** Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. **8** And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: **9** of sin, because they do not believe in Me; **10** of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; **11** of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. **12** “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. **13** However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. **14** He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. **15** All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

## **Help! ... from the Helper.**

Lord, Sanctify us by Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen.  
In Jesus Name, dear fellow sinners in need of help,

“Help! I need some one. Help! Not just any one. Help! You know I need someone. Help!” These were the words of the Beatles #1 hit in 1965. Yet these are also the words that we sinners cry today. We need someone ... not just anyone ... you know we need someone. Help! We need it. Jesus sends it. We get it.

### **1. We need it.**

If you've ever had children maybe you can recall the statement: “I can do it myself!” I've heard of other parents recalling how that attitude which showed itself at a young age, never really goes away. To this day, we as adults do the same thing. “I can do it myself.” Thus we find a sense of our spiritual dilemma – by nature in need of help, yet not ever willing to ask for it. As Jesus spoke concerning the religious leaders of His day, **Matthew 15:14 (NKJV) — 14** **Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.**” We need help.

It is often not until old age that we experience this need fully. Come down and see some of the folks at our local nursing home service and there you will see a cry for

help.. It is a humbling experience to be utterly dependent on someone else for all that you needs. There you will see dependency, not by choice, but by necessity. Indeed, if we had a choice, we would not choose dependency. I can do it myself, we say.

How many of you within a marriage can recall those moments where you knew you were wrong, yet refused to accept the help your spouse was offering. “I don’t need to stop and ask for directions – we’ll get there.” “Instructions? Who needs instructions?” “I know I told him or her about that appointment ... or did I?”

Think of all the ways we do the same sort of thing toward God. I can do it myself. If we have to rely on God, that means admitting we can’t do this whole righteous thing ourselves. Often we don’t ask for help because it means we will owe someone else a favor. Many of us really do not like the feeling of being indebted.

The reality of it is that by nature we don’t see how greatly indebted we already are. Reason is too rational to see it. After all, sin can’t be so bad when it comes so naturally.

### **(v.8-11)**

One common philosophy is “do your best.” This is the thinking that God’s final judgment will be based on whether or not you have done your best. Heaven is prepared, then, for those who have done their best. However notice how inconsistent we are when we hold to such a philosophy. How can anyone claim to have done their best? The idea of “best” always sets a standard higher than we can achieve.

Jesus refers to the Spirit as the Helper. He brings to us what we would have never figured out nor asked for on our own. He convicts the world of sin. Not with a random “do your best” standard, but with the standard of God’s best. Would you want anything less out of God? We cannot trust our rationale when it comes to sin. Our flesh will always try to make it seem less of a deal than it really is. God places the standard high, as high as His own righteousness, and He is consistent – **Romans 3:10–11 (NKJV) — 10 As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.**

Yes, we need help.

**John 6:44 (NKJV) — 44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Jesus responds to our need even when we don’t ask. He sends the Helper.

## **2. Jesus sends it.**

That word translated “Helper” in the Greek is the word “paraclete.” It is often used in a legal sense, meaning ‘one who is called to someone’s aid’ – an advocate, counselor, representative, go between. This is “one who appears in another’s behalf.” Hence we

see in our text also (v.26). He proceeds in behalf of the Father. He speaks not on His own authority.

Jesus promised not to leave us orphans. Think of how initially frightening this was for the disciples. As Jesus says in v.27, these disciples had been with Jesus from the beginning. What does He mean He is leaving them now, after He has risen from the dead, after He has proved right all He predicted. He is going to leave these humans here to try to reiterate the teachings of Jesus. Many of these men were uneducated. They were fishermen.

(v.6) How often we too are filled with sorrow over the supposed absence of Jesus in our lives? We wonder, where is He who is said to rule all things and to be with us to the end of the age, ... where is He who promised not to leave us orphans?

Well, we read of how Jesus kept His promise in our Scripture reading. **Acts 2:4 (NKJV) – 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ... so that those who stood by said, 11 .. we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.”**

Jesus ascended yet remained. That is the work of the Spirit: to unite earth and heaven . To create a pathway from so that God’s truths and gifts can come to us human beings. He has not left us. We just need to know where to find Him.

Some theologians wrongly teach that the Spirit is to be found immediately within us. – that you can find what you are looking for by looking inside yourself. – that He comes directly through prayer – that He will speak to directly your heart and tell you of God’s will. **John 14:26 (NKJV) – 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.**

God did promise to send His Spirit directly. He did to so the Old Testament prophets, and He does so also to the Apostles. He caused them to remember all things. **2 Peter 1:21 (NKJV) – 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**

But the same is not promised for us – not directly. Rather the Spirit’s work was to testify of the truth through the Apostles. When the Apostles performed signs, when they spoke in foreign languages, it never centered on them. As Mark says, **Mark 16:20 (NKJV) – 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.** The goal of Pentecost was to confirm the word. That is what God wanted to glorify: not the signs, but the message. This is where Jesus remains living and active among us. ... in the Word. This is where He brings the help we so desperately need. In the Hebrew Old Testament, and in the Greek New Testament, He has caused to be written the thoughts and will of God. As Jesus says v.14,15. We don’t have to wonder about who God is, which religion or philosophy is right – The Spirit is in the written words of the Apostles

and Prophets, guiding us into all truth, taking of what belongs to the hidden God and uncovering it for you. The Father in the Son revealed, the Spirit in the Word concealed. As Paul says to Timothy “**All Scripture is God-breathed.**” (2 Tim. 3:16). Jesus sends the help we need.

### **3. We get it.**

Oh! Now I get it. Have you ever had that experience? Either saying it as a student or hearing it as a teacher? I have been meeting with an individual at the nursing home for about four weeks now. His name is Richard. We have been studying Romans.

Trust me when I say, this has been a learning process for us both. Seeing that He was an intelligent guy, here was I in all my self reliance, having thought out this logical argument for why the Christian faith is to be accepted as true. It wasn't too long before he said that he couldn't wrap his mind around what I was saying. I realized this wasn't going to be up to me and my great theological arguments to lead him to deduce the truths of Scripture. I quickly realized it would be up to Spirit to lead him. I then began going through Romans beginning at chapter one and in simple terms explaining the truth of sin and salvation.

(**v.13**) Richard got it. That word, “guide,” pictures you being assisted to reach a desired destination. It is the same word Jesus uses when He speaks of the blind leading the blind. But unlike the blind human opinions of the world, now the Spirit leads us with open eyes to know the truths of God. He guides us to His desired destination: heaven.

Now that Richard saw the full extent of sin, he could also see the full extent of Christ's payment. In fact he even said, wow, that is what all the discouragement was about. You wouldn't really know what the gospel is, if you didn't first know the discouragement of the law and the vanity of our works.

**Colossians 1:13–14 (NKJV) — 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.**

Notice in v.9 what convicts the world. It is not sin in and of itself, rather it is a rejection of Jesus. We have gotten the help we so desperately need. At those moments when we just aren't asking – help comes. This faith the Spirit has put in your heart is what has delivered you from the power or darkness. Dear Christians, your sins are all forgiven. Jesus has promised this truth. We who once were so in-debt are now freed. Everything in this world comes at a price. Well, salvation was no different. Your sins were not just swept under the rug. However the price was not yours to pay. It was laid on Jesus' account. (**v.14**)

But this is no help like the world gives. The hidden things that God has revealed are totally unexpected. You can hardly ask your neighbor to help you re-shingle your roof without expecting him at some time to ask you to help him move something heavy out of

his basement. This world always thinks in such terms. But God does not. When He helps, it is not to get something in return from you. He does it simply out free love – with no strings attached. We do not do good because we are repaying God or earning anything from Him. Rather we are set free from the demands of the law to love Him as freely as He loves us.

Only the Spirit can move us to such freedom. **Romans 8:2 (NKJV) – 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.**

And so the work of the Spirit is like a chain reaction. The Helper guide the Apostles who guide you in the truth of God's Word. Who is the next link? Your neighbor? A family member? A friend? Pentecost is all about connecting the next link as we bear witness to the truth of God's Word. Recall how a great mind like Richard's was not convinced on the basis of philosophical arguments. Rather it was the simple message of sin and grace – a message which each of you possess and know.

Yes, Help! We need somebody. Help! Not just anybody! Help! You know we need someone. Thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ that the Helper has come. Help! We need it. Jesus sent it. We've got it. Amen.