

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God, our Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Our sermon will focus on John 14. Dear Christian friends:

[Introduction] **[1]** Do you watch HGTV, the Food Network, or PBS? These stations offer “How to” courses on gardening, cooking, building, and crafting.

Imagine watching a “How to” television program
With a famous vase sculptor at work.

[2] As you watched,
you saw him take a damp lump of clay in his hands,
[3] place it on a round wooden block that spun so he could work the clay.
[4] It wouldn’t take long for that ugly,
[5] gray mass to be shaped into a beautiful vase.

[6] He then would pour a glaze substance over it and
[7] place it in a heated furnace.
[8] Followed by a commercial break.

A few minutes later,
you would see him take the vase out, and
[9] it would be graceful and shiny and solid,
ready for use in one’s home.

You see,
the sculptor’s work brought forth a beautiful piece of art
to serve a useful purpose
to supply beauty to the eye and
to hold an array of flowers for enjoyment
truly a treasure.

[10] Today is Pentecost.
This is the day we celebrate the work of God’s Holy Spirit,
who comes into our lives like....
Well, like a master sculptor and fashions us...
He fashions us poor, lost sinners into the people of God—
people with a wonderful purpose to fulfill in this life!

[*Confused!*]

[11] But if you're like many Christians,
you're a bit fuzzy on a complete understanding of
who, exactly, the Holy Spirit is, and
what, exactly, it is that he does.

[12] In fact, a book on the person and work of the Holy Spirit
entitled *The Half-Known God* was published a number of years ago – 1963 in fact!
(*St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963*).

By its title, the author, Professor Wunderlich,
acknowledges the fact that many Christians
only partially understand this Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
And he says we are in good company,
as many of the Apostolic Church Fathers
scratched their heads.

Of this much we can be certain: the Spirit comes to do his work!

[13] Jesus said:

"These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.

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 that I have said to you.

[14] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. (Jn 14:25-27a)

[15] The Spirit Comes to Do His Work!

What is that work? Testify! Guide! And Convict!

[16] *He comes to testify about Jesus (vv 25–26).*

He is the bearer of the truth about Jesus.

The Good News about Jesus,
who he is and

what he has done for us,
always remains our central focus.

He brings this truth about Jesus
into our hearts,

so that by the Spirit's power
we trust in Jesus as our Savior.

The Holy Spirit aids us to bear witness to Jesus in our world.

[17] CHRIST SAYS...

[18] “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

CHRIST SAYS...

[19] Go into all the world and preach the Gospel.
So we respond... Here I am!

The Holy Spirit comes to *testify*.

[20] *AND He comes to guide Christ’s disciples (vv 4b–7).*

[21] Up to this point Jesus had been the counselor to his disciples.
Now he would be leaving them to return to the Father.
He would not leave them as orphans, but would send the Spirit.

[22] Pentecost is a reminder to Christians
that we have the Holy Spirit
to aid us in our Christian walk and life.

[23] The Spirit is given as a gift in our Baptism.
“Repent and be baptized, every one of you . . . for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:38–39).

[24] He comes not as he did on the first disciples and apostles,
but through the read, spoken, or preached Word,
and through the Sacraments (Rom 10:17; Titus 3:5).

He works through the means of grace to comfort us with the assurance that our sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake (Lk 24:47).

He works through the means of grace to increase our faith, our hope, and our love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and for all people in this world (Rom 10:17; 1 Thess 2:13).

He works so that we can be about
“EQUIPPING DISCIPLES, TO MAKE DISCIPLES, FOR CHRIST!”

[25] The Holy Spirit comes to *testify and guide*.

AND He comes to convict all people . . .
in regard to their sin and guilt.

[26] You see...

The Holy Spirit convicts us as the Law is preached.
Through the preaching of the Law
we come to know and are convicted by our sins (Rom 3:20).

All of man's righteousness is "as filthy rags" or a "rusty tin can" in God's sight.
To stand before our holy God, we need a perfect righteousness.

And that has been provided for us
Given to us by Christ.

God imputes the righteousness of Christ to all through the Gospel (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 4:5).
No longer is it my righteousness, but Christ's!
Christ's righteousness in me!

[27] The Holy Spirit comes to *testify and to guide and to convict*.

[*Conclusion*]

The Spirit is still very much at work in our world.
Sometimes we become discouraged because
we think we don't see sufficient evidence of
his witness to Jesus,
his encouragement to his present-day disciples, or
his convicting power.

Worry not! Hakuna matata! He is working even now.

He comes even now, not with the sound of a mighty rushing wind or
flashing tongues of fire,
but with the soft-spoken words of this liturgy,
in the words of a humble pastor,
in the sound of water poured out over the candidate for Baptism
in the blessed bestowal of the absolution following confession, and
in the bread and the wine of the Holy Supper.

Yes, he comes—the Holy Counselor, the Spirit of Truth—
and he will continue to come to us day-by-day in this same way.

You see, every day and every way, you are being sculpted by the Holy Spirit. Amen!

So we... Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among the people. AMEN! (Psalm 96:3)
