

Sermon John 14 15 21 6<sup>th</sup> S of Easter

Sermon: 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Text: John 14:15-21

Theme: Jesus and us

Goal: To show the close relationship between Jesus and us as a permanent source of comfort.

Dear Friends,

Introduction: The disciples were afraid. They could feel that something was about to happen, that Jesus would be taken from them, and that they would be alone for a while. Jesus Himself had talked about His suffering and death, and that He was to go back to the Father. This speech, and several other speeches, were addressed to the disciples on that very night when Jesus was betrayed by Judas.

Jesus comforts them and says: “I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you.” And He speaks about the work of the Holy Spirit and about the close relationship that Jesus Himself and the Father would have with His disciples after His departure.

As we are celebrating Ascension Day this week, on 2<sup>nd</sup> June; and Pentecost on 12<sup>th</sup> June, we need to be sure about Jesus’ connection with us and the work of the Holy Spirit, for our own comfort in good times and in times of distresses.

**I – “Because I live, you also will live.”**

In spite of the prediction of His suffering and death, Jesus goes further in His prophecies and speaks about His resurrection as well. His death on the cross would be the fulfillment of God's plan to redeem humankind and **“to take away the sins of the world”** through the Lamb of God; but this would not be the end. Furthermore this also implies that He, Jesus, would come again to life through His resurrection. And His resurrection would not be an isolated case; but

would assure and guarantee our resurrection as well. His life is our life; His victory is our victory! He assures us in this text: “Because I live, you also will live.”

The apostle Paul wrote: “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep.” (1 Corinthians 15:20). “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20). “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (Romans 6:4).

The new life in the resurrected Christ begins here by faith and enters eternity through the resurrection of our flesh, as we confess in the Creed: *“I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting”*.

## **II - “I am in you, you are in me.”**

Jesus was to go physically back to the Father. The disciples wouldn't see Him anymore. But He wouldn't leave them lonesome, He wouldn't leave them as orphans. He assured them that He would be with them always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20) and that he would send them His Holy Spirit, the “Counselor, to be with you forever”.

The unity of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit working on our behalf is something amazing. The Triune God is doing all efforts to keep and have us close to Him and to assure our salvation. For God “takes no pleasure in the death of anyone” (Ezekiel 18:32), but He sent His Son to save the lost and to give us life.

The presence of Jesus in our life is a source of daily comfort and peace. With Him we have everything. Without Him we have nothing. How can someone work, bring up children, enjoy the life, without Jesus? Is there any sense to such a life? I cannot imagine it. But with Jesus, everything makes sense, even the suffering. So, Jesus can say: “On that day you

will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.”

Jesus went back to the Father on Ascension Day “to prepare a place for us” as we heard last Sunday. He is not working like a carpenter or a mason, building rooms... but He is seated on the right hand of the Father interceding on behalf of us. The apostle John wrote: “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John :1-2). Someone said about that text: *“I imagine Jesus seated beside the Father; and when we sin and the Father wanted to punish us, He says: Daddy, don't punish him. He is my friend and he believes in me. I died for him as well. Forgive him.”*

Jesus was a permanent source of comfort and strength to His disciples. He answered all their doubts and gave them directions to life. He assured them about the love of the Father and the Kingdom of God. Now He promised them “another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth... He lives with you and will be in you”. The word “Counselor” can also be translated as “advocate and comforter”. This is the task of the Holy Spirit, sent by God on Pentecost Day. He gave strength to the disciples on Pentecost Day to proclaim Jesus and the hope He gives through His death and resurrection; and He gave strength to the disciples to “go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation” (Mark 16:15). And that good news reached us as well, bringing to our hearts the Holy Spirit to dwell in us.

The Holy Spirit has been with us and in us since our baptism. Maybe we don't feel Him in an emotional way, like some say that they feel Him. But He is in us and with us according to God's promise. We believe it and we cannot have doubts about this promise. One of the texts I like about the work of the Holy Spirit in us is what Paul wrote in Romans 8:26-27: “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 he 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."

### **III - "I love you; you love me."**

The relationship God has with us is a relationship of love. Jesus didn't only complete a task when He came to earth, and God doesn't handle us mechanically. He loves us and we love Him. John wrote: "We love because He first loved us... This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." (1 John 4:19,10-12).

Jesus says in our text: "Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

This kind of intimate relationship with our God Father, Son and Holy Spirit comforts us always. God doesn't want to hurt us. In His love He is always ready to take us in His arms, to protect us and to guide us along His paths.

**Conclusion:** Jesus lives – we live! Jesus is in us – we are in Jesus! Jesus loves us – we love Him! What a marvelous relationship, what a full communion. Whatever belongs to Jesus is ours, and whatever belongs to us is His. We give Him our sins, he gives us His forgiveness; we give Him our death, he gives us His Life; we give Him our sorrows, He gives us His hope and comfort! I repeat the words of the Apostle Paul:

"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20). Amen.