

Orphans no more!

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An Orphan; Comfort / John 14:15–21

- › Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed.

Our text is John 14:15-21 most notably these two verses!

English Standard Version Chapter 14

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

English Standard Version Chapter 14

18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Introduction

You and I we need help all the time. We need help making decisions about our education or careers, we need help with relationships, we need help with our kids or our parents, we need help in our lives in the church. When we need help we might even feel as if no one is there. No one is listening to our cry for help. As we cry out to other people for help and it falls on deaf ears we begin to feel as if we are orphans.

Our text continues where we left last week. The disciples are still in the upper room. They need help. Jesus is soon going to die and leave them. They needed lots of help!

Orphans!

Frankly so do we. As mentioned, we oftentimes feel like orphans. Let’s think about this for a moment.

An orphan is defined by the Concise Oxford English Dictionary as “a child whose parents are dead.” To say that we feel like orphans points to the fact that we feel as our Father is dead. That we are wandering around looking for someone or something to provide us help, comfort and love.

Many times we cry out “why God? Why?” And we get no answer or it seems that we get no answer. Martin Luther talks about this original group of disciples in his commentary and describes them much as we might see ourselves:

Luther’s Works, Volume 24 18. I Will Not Leave You Desolate; I Will Come to You.

In the estimation of the world and according to our own feelings, this small group of Christians appears to be poor orphans forsaken and forgotten both by God and by Christ, since He permits them to be reviled and mocked, condemned, persecuted, and murdered, and to be everybody’s door mat. Furthermore, their hearts are constantly frightened, saddened, and tormented by the devil.

Luther’s analogy for them as a door mat we could for ourselves as well. Sure we may not be murdered for our faith, but Christ does permit us to be mocked and persecuted and to be walked all over. This is troubling to even the strongest of Christians. Who likes to be walked all over by other people? I know I don’t and I am sure you don’t either. It doesn’t feel good, it hurts. It’s in this regard that we feel forsaken and forgotten by Christ.

We feel as though our God is dead and we are left fatherless and are orphans. Not only does God allow this suffering for our faith, but our hearts are also constantly frightened, saddened, and tormented by the devil.

The devil is constantly attacking us and our relationships. He’s constantly putting fears, sadness, and torments in our life. He’s constantly telling you that you can never be good enough for God. When God allows you to suffer and you are weak that devil puts doubts in your mind and heart about your faith and if God is truly there. He not only does that, but adds to those doubts by tempting you and luring you with other idols that can become like the “father” that you so desperately think you need. He causes you to forget that you have a Father, a Father who does love you.

Many times through these doubts that at times leads to banking on false gods in our lives, we begin to feel, experience, become knowledgeable to the fact that we are lonely, we are sad, we are fearful about what the person you life with might say to you or the person that you worship might do or the person that you work with might act. We might even become alienated from other people and even alienated from the God who loves us no matter what. We are the one that does the alienating...never God. We alienate ourselves from the God who loves us by buying into the lies from the “father of lies” the devil. It’s when we sin and go after idols that we are becoming orphans not because God has left us, but that we have left him. It’s basically saying to God, “We’d be better off if you were dead. You already are dead to me.”

And the thing is, you and I we were once orphans, completely lost and utterly hopeless. You were once lost in your sins with no way out. You were once completely separated from the Father! You were once a child of the Father of lies. You were once an orphan! Today, you may even feel like an orphan and utterly helpless.

The Promise of the Helper

But Jesus Christ, God in flesh, promised you a Helper. A Helper who is not the Father who is identified as the Helper in the Old Testament. A Helper who is not the Son, who helped many physically and spiritually in his three years of ministry and helped all of us...really saved all of us by dying for for us.

He hasn't just promised you a Helper, He has given you a Helped in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was sent to you by the Father and the Son. His full coming to the Church was on Pentecost that we are quickly moving to. Yes, this Helper is invisible to the world, but he is visible to us, by means of the Word and Sacraments.

This helper is with you forever...for you will live also. This Helper through the Father and the Son provides you with great help. And what is that Help that the Helper brings?

He brings the truth for He is the Spirit of Truth. He brings us the truth through the Word and Sacrament that Jesus Christ is our eternal Savior. He brings the truth that as Christ Suffered, died, was buried, and was raised in glory, He healed the division between man and God. As Christ suffered on the cross He became an orphan for us as He was forsaken and abandoned by His Father. On That cross He declared that we are no longer orphans. We are orphans no more. For we have a God who is a Father to the fatherless. That's the truth that the Holy Spirit brings to us. That's the Help that the Holy Spirit provides.

There's even more Help that the Helper provides. He provides us with comfort that we are not orphans when we face all the challenges of life, no matter what they are. Whether it be being walked all over for our faith, being ridiculed and persecuted for the faith. There's even the other life challenges of loneliness, anxiety, depression, worry, damaged relationships, and the many sins that you and I commit daily. The Holy Spirit, provides you with the comfort that comes from God the Father and God the Son. Comfort to know that Jesus Christ on the cross declared you orphans no more.

This Helper provides us even more Help. He provides us the ability to see our sins and confess them before God and one another. He provides us the ability to receive Christ's forgiveness. He provides us the ability to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven you.

The Helper provides you the Help to live as God's dearly loved children. He provides you the help to honor, respect, and obey your true Father as He commands us to in the Commandments. He provides you the Help to say "no" to sin.

Ultimately the helper gives us the Help to know that we are eternally loved by Christ and the Father and that we truly are Orphans no more!

Even though we feel as though we are still orphans because physically Christ is no longer present walking and talking with us in his body on Earth...we have the promise that we are

Orphans no more. We are orphans no more because we have been adopted by God in Holy Baptism. We are orphans no more as we continue to receive the forgiveness of sins in Holy Absolution and in the Holy Supper of Christ's Body and Blood. We have a Father who loves and cares for and provides us a Helper today - the Holy Spirit who Himself is God.

Since we are Orphans no more, the Holy Spirit testifies to this as we here in Romans 8

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. ¹

My dear family of God, Jesus Christ even promises that I will come to you. He first fulfilled that promise when He rose from the dead and showed Himself to them. He fulfilled it again when He sent to them the Holy Spirit and continues to fulfill it to today when you receive the Holy Spirit in all power. And He will fully and forever fulfill the promise of Coming to you on the Last Day when He comes back and we will forever be with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit who is even now present among us as our Helper.

The Holy Spirit is indeed our eternal Helper. He enables us to receive the confess our sins and confess our faith and believe that Jesus Christ is indeed our Redeemer our Lord, the one who enables us to come into the family of God through His death on the Cross and His resurrection from the grave. By this we walk into death and the watery grave in Baptism and are raised to new life and declared son of God or daughter of God...ultimately, we are declared to be orphans no more and we await the day where we will fully and forever be without the challenges of this world that cause us to doubt that we have a True Heavenly Father.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Now may the peace of God which passes all human understanding, guard your hearts and your minds and keep them focused in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. Amen.

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 8:16–17). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.