

John 14:25-27

From the moment of His birth to the moment of His death, Jesus lived in **humility** - not as a **king**, but as a lowly **servant**. Jesus **held back** the full use of His godly power, in order to allow Himself to be nailed to the **cross**, and to make the only **sacrifice** which would **save** us from our sins. But now Jesus has **risen** from the dead, and has **ascended** to His Father in heaven. His suffering is **over**, and He **lives** and **rules** over **everyone** and **everything** at God's right hand. Jesus has been **exalted** as the King who rules over the whole **world**. He's **everywhere** - He sees **everything** - and He uses His perfect **knowledge** and His almighty **power** to guide the events of the **universe**, as well as the events of our individual **lives** - all for our eternal **good**. But there's also **more** to His wonderful **ruling** in our lives - **much** more. Our text brings us words which were spoken by our Lord on the **night before** His death on the cross, and just a **few weeks** before His ascension into heaven. They are words which assure us of **Great Blessings From Our Ascended Lord**.

The blessings **begin** in the two verses which **precede** today's sermon text. There Jesus told His disciples, "*If anyone loves me, he will hold on to my word. My Father will **love** him, and we will **come** to him and **make our home with him**.*" Here Jesus reveals the first great blessing which He gives to all those people who **love** Him, and **hold on** to His Word. They would have a very **close** relationship with God the **Father** and God the **Son**. The Father and the Son would **love** them, **come** to them, and make Their **home** with them. The heavenly Father **loves** us as His dear **children**. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have literally **moved in** with us - God has made His **home** with us. **Jesus** is the unseen **guest** at every meal and conversation in our homes. The **Holy Spirit** has made our body His **dwelling** place, and He has made our heart the place where our spiritual **worship** takes place. When the stormy **winds** of life blow on us, God is our solid **foundation** and we will not fall. Even when our life here on the earth **ends**, Jesus says, "*In my Father's house are many **mansions** ... I am going to prepare **a place for you**. And if I go and prepare a **place** for you, I will **come again** and take you to be **with me**, so that you may also be **where I am**.*" Jesus lives on high in majesty, and when the time is **right**, we will live and reign **with Him**.

But Jesus **also** said, "*The one who does **not** love me does **not** hold on to my words.*" Those people would **not** share in the second **Great Blessing From Our Ascended Lord**, because **God's Word** is that second blessing.

As Christians, we **do** hold on to and obey God's Word, and Jesus daily **blesse**s us through that Word. We **love** Jesus because of the great love **He** has shown to us. We were born into this world as **slaves** to sin - **unable** to obey God - **rebelli**ng against His claim on our lives - and pursuing only the **evil** desires of our sinful **flesh**. Life had become a living **hell** filled with **guilt** and **despair**, and we were **doomed** by our sins to suffer the eternal anguish and tortures of **hell**. But God saw our **wretchedness**, and with a **loving** fatherly heart He turned to us and gave us His dearest **treasure** - His **Son**. Jesus obeyed His Father's will in **everything** - being **born** of a virgin Mother - becoming our holy and sinless **brother** - and dying the death on the cross of Calvary which **we deserved**. Even after He **rose** again from the dead, Jesus used His position as the Lord over sin and death, to lead us to **know** Him, to **trust** Him, to **love** Him, and to **follow** the guidance of His Word. God's Word holds the **top** priority in our **lives** and in our **teaching**, because in His Word we learn about **Jesus**, our **Savior** from sin - and Jesus calls us to **repent** of our sins, to believe in God's **forgiveness**, to **pray** for His help in our times of need, and to always **love** one another.

Jesus also spoke to His disciples about a third blessing that would follow His departure to heaven. He said, "*The **Counselor**, the **Holy Spirit**, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you **all things** and **remind** you of everything **I told you**.*" Perhaps the disciples were **worried** that when Jesus was **gone** they would **forget** His words, or maybe they thought that they would never completely **grasp** what He meant. But Jesus took those worries **away** when He promised to send the **Holy Spirit** to them. The blessing of the Holy Spirit was very **important**, because not only would He **remind** them of everything that **Jesus** had said, but He would also **teach** them **anything else** they needed to know.

That promise was fulfilled on the Day of **Pentecost**, when the Father **and** the Son poured out the **Holy Spirit** on the disciples who had gathered in Jerusalem. From that day on, the Spirit taught them the **full** meaning of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and He also inspired **several** of those disciples to **write down** the words of Jesus, in the gospels and letters of the New Testament.

God also sends **us** the blessing of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures, and He **reminds** us of the words and promises which our Lord Jesus spoke, and **teaches** us the way of **salvation** through Jesus. The words of the Bible **are** the words of Jesus Himself. They are words which were

written down for us by men, “*who spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*” The Holy Spirit **teaches** us through God’s Word. He **teaches** us **not** to trust in our **own** works to try and **cover up** our sins. He **teaches** us **not** to try to build a ladder to heaven out of our good works, because that ladder would only **collapse**. But rather, He **teaches** us to put **all** of our trust in **Jesus** for the forgiveness of sins, and to rest our hope for **eternal life** on **His** resurrection from the dead. Through the **Word of God** the Holy Spirit also **reminds** us of the promises of Jesus. The words which Jesus spoke some 2,000 years ago, still speak to our hearts **today**. **Remember** what He **said** - “*I am with you **always**, to the end of the age*” ... “*I am the **resurrection** and the **life**. Whoever believes in me will **live**, even if he **dies**. And whoever lives and believes in me will **never perish**” ... “*I will **never** leave you. I will **never** forsake you.*”*

And that leads us to the fourth blessing which we receive from our ascended Lord. Jesus said, “***Peace** I leave with you. **My** peace I give to you. Not as the **world** gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be **troubled**, and do not let it be **afraid**.*” Jesus **frequently** provided His disciples with **peace** - answering their **questions**, calming their **fears**, and forgiving their **sins**. And now that Jesus has returned to heaven, He also provides **us** with peace each and every day.

That **peace** is something we can’t obtain on our **own**, but it’s something which we desperately **need**. So often we get **scared** - even at times **overcome** with fears, worries, and anxiety. No matter how hard we **try**, we poor, wretched sinners can’t give ourselves **peace**. But Jesus **can** - and He **does**. And Jesus doesn’t give us the kind of peace which the **world** expects - like peace between **nations** - or getting **terrorists** to stop their attacks - or stopping random people from stirring up **trouble**. Jesus gives us peace with **God**. And that peace depends entirely on what **He** has done - coming to the earth as the Lamb of God, whose **sacrifice** paid for our sins - living on high and **ruling** the world for the sake of His Church - answering our **prayers**, and **caring** for us. The peace which **Jesus** brings is a **sure thing**, and it assures us that we are in **good standing** with God because of the **forgiveness** which He **won** for us.

The peace of **God** which surpasses all **understanding** quiets our conscience, and convinces us God is **always** working for our eternal **good**. Jesus is in heaven, and everything is **right** with the world, so even when things seem to be **falling apart** all around us, our hearts and minds can rest

at ease. We **believe Jesus** when He says, *“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am **coming back** to you.’ If you loved me, you would be **glad** that I am going to the Father for the Father is **greater** than I.”* We **believe** that He lives **on high** in glory and majesty, and that He **rules this world** with all authority in heaven and earth. And we **believe** that Jesus is coming **back** for us on the Last Day. So until that day comes, let’s remember that we have **Great Blessings From Our Ascended Lord.** Jesus **loves** us - He has made His **home** with us - He has sent the **Holy Spirit** to us - He speaks to us through His **Word** - and He gives us eternal **peace.** Amen.