

Imagine yourself on the beach of a deserted island. I don't think it'll be too hard, it seems like every generation has had its deserted island tale—Swiss Family Robinson, Gilligan's Island, Castaway, Lost. The survivors are stranded. They're in shock, the emotions are high! They are trying to cope with the traumatic plane crash or shipwreck that has just landed them on this island. They're just trying to make it through their first couple of hours, treat their wounds, and find some water. The drama builds, the opinions clash! Then comes that dramatic peak where people are at each other's throats, arguing about what to do. "Should we stay here, should we find shelter, should we use the flair?" The emotions are spilling over. Then finally, someone steps up to calm everyone down and try to assure them. "**HELP WILL COME!**" Someone will come looking for us. The search parties are already on their way. **Help will come.** Whether help actually does come is another story. It probably depends on how many seasons there are of the show.

On the deserted island, the promise of help is more of just a wish, optimistic thinking, something to latch on to after a terrible life-changing event. But no one knows whether help will actually come or not. For the disciples in our text, things hadn't crashed and burned yet. They hadn't even faced their traumatic event. Jesus would not be hung up on the cross until the following day. But in preparation for everything they were about to face, for all the emotion, Jesus made them a promise to prepare them. **HELP WILL COME!** And this is not some empty promise, not just some false hope to hang on to. This promise of help is a reality. This is Jesus, God himself, promising that God the Father will send the God the Holy Spirit to help. A promise backed up by the words and actions of the triune God is a promise we can trust. **HELP WILL COME!**

This promise takes place in an upper room, the night before Jesus was crucified. Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen the rest of that evening, and even though he had tried to tell the disciples over and over, they still didn't seem to know what was going to happen. Regardless of whether they knew what was about to happen or not, in that upper room Jesus is comforting them and bracing them for what life is going to be like without him. Soon he will be gone. They won't have him physically standing by their side anymore. They will need to be able to stand on their own two feet and carry on the work Jesus had given them to do. But Jesus doesn't prepare them like our fathers have sometimes done. "What are you gonna do when I'm gone. Someday, you'll have to do this on your own, you know!"

Jesus gives them a promise to hold onto, a promise of real help and support for the future... "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the

Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." I know you haven't understood it all, I know you don't know what it all means yet. But you won't be on your own. Help will come; the Holy Spirit will come to your aid. He will be your Advocate, sort of in the same way we think of a defense attorney. Somebody who understands what all the lingo means and can explain it to us so that we understand. Somebody to stand up for us, to comfort us, and to advise us. Jesus promised to send them this Advocate to be with them, when he no longer was.

On top if it, he gives them something else right on the spot, not something they have to wait for, but something to have at that very moment, and something to hold onto through the difficult days to come. In spite of every traumatic event that was about to occur—Jesus' arrest, his suffering, his death, his burial, and the ensuing persecution for the disciples—he gave them the most foreign thing to a chaotic time like that. **PEACE!** "Peace I leave with you." At a time like this Jesus, yeah right! "**My peace** I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives." Jesus' peace isn't a shallow "Good-bye! Safe travels! Peace out, bro!" The peace he gives doesn't depend on what's happening in the world, it depends on him and his promise. It's a peace so real and true that Jesus can look at everything the disciples are about to face and say, "I give you my peace. Don't let your heart be troubled. Don't be afraid."

What do you think? In the following days, were the disciples ever afraid, were they ever troubled? Just later that night, they all scattered in fear as Jesus was arrested. Then skip ahead to the first evening Jesus appeared to the disciples after he rose. They were gathered in a room with the doors locked for fear of the Jews. When Jesus appeared, they were even more frightened! What was Jesus' first question? "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? It was like Jesus was hinting back to his promise. "I gave you my peace. I told you not to be troubled. Why are you troubled?"

What do you think? Have you held on to the peace Jesus gives? Have you been troubled? Have you run and hid in fear? Maybe a better question is, "Have you gone a day without your heart being troubled or afraid?" We act as if Jesus never made any promise at all, as if we've crashed on some deserted island, and there is no one coming to help us. "I just feel like the burden is getting too much to bear. My life is in turmoil! My job isn't going well and the bills are stacking up. My family doesn't get along; every conversation ends in an argument. My loved one just got this terrible diagnosis, and I can't help but feel like God isn't taking care of me. I don't want to be troubled. I don't want to be afraid. But I just want it all to go

away!” Those thoughts aren’t just some meager lack of being optimistic. They are failure to trust in Jesus, his promise of help and his gift of peace.

Jesus didn’t promise to make all the difficult stuff, all the stuff we don’t understand, just go away. What he did promise was to send his Advocate to teach us and remind us of all that he said. He promised that the Father would send his Holy Spirit to encourage us and set our hearts at rest, knowing that everything happens according to God’s purpose. That is really what we celebrate on this day of Pentecost—the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise! The Holy Spirit comes to the disciples in a visible and powerful way. He proves to them that they are not alone and he reveals to them what the Scriptures actually said about Jesus.

Before, the disciples hadn’t even been able to grasp that Jesus had to die, and now on this day of Pentecost, they are preaching with confidence about Jesus the Messiah’s death and resurrection. They are pointing to how God’s promise was being fulfilled, that the Holy Spirit was being poured out on them at that very moment. And from that day on, these disciples, who had abandoned Jesus in fear, who had met in a locked room in fear, now preached boldly and constantly about their Savior Jesus in the face of whatever hardship. Their help had come! The promised Advocate appeared on Pentecost, to drive away fear, to calm their hearts, to reveal the Gospel, and to empower them to preach it! The Holy Spirit enabled them to live in the peace Jesus had given them all along.

Jesus hadn’t promised sunshine and rainbows and a life in candy land. He had promised the Holy Spirit, and he had given them his peace. This is the peace that Jesus brought for everyone as a result of his work. This is peace that he gives to you! Not some temporary and inconsistent state of happiness. This is peace with God. This is peace that flows from sins forgiven, purchased when Jesus reconciled us with God. By pouring out his life on the cross, Jesus removed the massive mountain of our sin that separated us from God. He makes us one with him again, with nothing to divide us, and nothing to punish us for.

When things are at peace with the question of our eternity, then everything else can be at peace here on earth. When we know the answer to the most basic question. “Are you sure you’re going to be in heaven?” “Yes! Because Jesus lived a perfect life in my place! Because Jesus took away my sin on the cross! Because Jesus rose from the dead! Then we have true peace with God, and peace of mind. Then the only way that peace comes is by the Holy Spirit revealing those truths in our heart. The Advocate that Jesus sent us teaches us how those truths apply to us and works faith in our hearts to believe them.

When the peace Jesus gives dwells firmly in our hearts by the Spirit’s work, then we have peace in all our relationships, and peace here on this earth. With the most important questions answered about eternal life in heaven, we can face all the rest of life’s questions with peace and confidence. We don’t have to feel like we are all alone, like our life is in turmoil. The Holy Spirit is with us, by our side every step of the way, teaching us the word, and comforting us with his presence. The rift in our family doesn’t have to keep us awake at night. Jesus gives us peace and calls us to live at peace with each other. That terrible diagnosis doesn’t have to be the knockout punch that keeps us down forever. Sickness is temporary, part of our earthly lives. We have Jesus’ peace, which lasts forever, which surpasses all understanding, and sets our hearts at rest in a whirlwind of chaos and trouble. With this peace, we are neither troubled nor afraid. We are right with God; our eternal life has been secured by Jesus, and our Advocate has come, just as promised. Don’t be troubled. Don’t be afraid. Your Helper has come! He teaches you and reminds you of all that your Savior has done for you! Amen!

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. This peace guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord until the day of life everlasting. Amen.