

Friday, May 29, 2026

The Holy Spirit as Comforter

Acts 13:47-48

As you enter your time with God today, take a moment to quiet your mind. Breathe this prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, come. Fill me with your Spirit. Open my heart that you might share your words of life with me."

We read today from Acts 13:47-48. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit as Comforter?

When I was about 9 years old, our church Cadet group went to an area volleyball tournament for all the Cadet groups in our region. Cadets is a ministry that teaches young boys what it means to be a man of God. Boy Scouts with a focus on Christ.

The Cadet group from my church was small, about 10 boys and we were joining with some groups that brought many more boys than at our small church. When we arrived, all the names were put into a hat, and the teams were drawn one name after the other. The leaders wanted to mix up the boys so we could get to know each other better. But I got the short end of the stick.

Every boy from our church was on a team with at least two other boys from our church except me. I was the only one from our church on my team. Even worse, the rest of the team was made up of boys who were from different churches, but all went to the same school. I was the odd man out. I knew nobody on my team, and I felt like a terrified newborn puppy as our team took the court.

During the first several points, nothing really happened. I did not have to touch the ball. I quietly stood in my part of the court. All was well. Then, the worst happened. A serve came directly to me. I played only a little volleyball. Someone had taught me a little how to "bump" a ball into the air, but that was a while ago. I was about to be humiliated and there was no one around to help.

*bump. Right to our guy in the front row. He easily knocked it on the other side and we got the point.

I felt the eyes turn towards me. I saw the nods and smiles. One guy even gave me a high five.

Another serve. *bump. Not as good as the first one, but not bad either. More smiles.

As the day progressed, I made some good plays and some bad ones. So did everyone else. We started to laugh together during the games. Between matches I talked to the guys on my team, and they got to know me. By the end of the day, our team won the tournament, and I was right there in the group jumping up and down with our trophy. I was included, and that changed everything for me that day.

When we're included in God's family, everything changes.

"For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'" When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed."

We may not understand the experience of the Gentiles in this passage if we have always been a part of the church community, but for those who came to faith later in life, this experience will be all too familiar.

Gentiles were on the outside in so many conversations. Jewish/Gentile tension is very much a part of the history of the early church.

“You must be circumcised because of the Law.” “You must not eat food sacrificed to idols because of the Law.” “When you are having your period, here is what you must do because of the Law.” “You may not...You may...because of the Law.”

A history and tradition unfamiliar to the Gentiles. A series of tests and standards that were expected without a true understanding of why this was what a believer in Jesus Christ should do.

The words of Paul felt like chain cutters freeing them from the manacles of those standards. “This story is for you. This salvation is for you. This Savior is for you. Believe in him and you will be saved.”

It’s no wonder they were glad. A Jewish teacher and leader had just given them a high five and said, “You are on this team with us. You are part of the family. You belong.”

That’s comfort that the Spirit gives to all who are part of God’s family. Each of us belongs not because of the rules we keep or the standards we measure up to, but because Christ has opened the door and welcomed us into his family. We are part of something greater that he is building. Even when others use their ideas or agendas to draw lines about who is in and who is out, Christ crossed those lines to embrace his children and welcome us into his presence.

If you know Christ, you belong. That fact cannot nor will not ever be changed. In the Spirit, be reminded and comforted in your inclusion in God’s family now and always.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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