

“Still He Comes Within Us”

(John 14:15-21 – Midweek Advent 2 – December 10, 2025)

John 14:15-21 – ¹⁵“If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – ¹⁷the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. ²⁰At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

Dear Redeemed, Members of the Body of Christ by faith:

In these weeks of Advent, we are using the hymn we just sang as our theme. Last week, we focused on Jesus’ first Advent in the world, as the first verse says: “Once He came in blessing, All our ills redressing.” We spoke of Jesus’ lowly birth, life and death, and His glorious resurrection, to give us healing from sin and His gift of eternal life.

Today, we focus on the words of the second verse: “Still He comes within us Still His voice would win us.” For our living Savior still comes among sinners, winning hearts into His Kingdom by His voice in the Gospel. As Jesus says in our text, though unseen to the world, He comes to show Himself to us and to live within each believer.

How important was this promise, as Jesus told His disciples: “*I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me*” (vs. 18-19). How comforting these words would be. For soon, the disciples would see Jesus condemned and crucified by His enemies. They would see His body laid in a grave with a heavy stone sealing it shut, and guards posted to keep the disciples out. What then would those years of following Jesus come to – nothing? If they never saw Jesus again, all they would be able to think of was His dead body, His dead promises, and their dead hopes in Him as the Savior.

“*But you will see Me,*” Jesus reassured them. And He continued: “*Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you*” (vs. 19-20). That glorious day of Easter would change everything. The disciples would again see Jesus alive, risen in triumph over sin and death. In seeing

Him alive, now they would always be able to think of His living body, and the living hope He had given through His resurrection from the dead.

Then, even when Jesus ascended into heaven forty days later, and they could no longer see Him, yet they would still know His promise remained true: “*Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*” (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus promises: “*I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you*” (vs. 18). How important these words are for us today, too. For sometimes, there are situations in life that may lead us to think Jesus is no longer with us. Maybe it is troubles we face in life with sickness, pain, sorrow, frustration. We may feel like the apostle Paul, when he wrote in 2 Corinthians 7:5: “*Our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.*” At times we are tempted to think, “Why do I have so much stress and turmoil in my life? Is it because Jesus has abandoned me?”

Or maybe we feel that our sin has separated from God as orphans. After all, doesn't Jesus say: “*He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him*” (vs. 21). But we have not always kept His commandments. We have not always loved Him and put Him first in our lives. It shows when we get bored with His Word and keep forgetting to pray. There are times when we have been ashamed of Jesus. It shows when we fail to share our faith with others, to avoid the cross of ridicule. Should we expect to be loved by God the Father when we have treated His Son this way? Should we expect God the Son still to come within us?

At times, our troubles and trials, as well as our sins and failures, overwhelm us. It can all seem like evidence that we might be abandoned as orphans.

But no trial can ever separate us from the love of God in Christ (Romans 8:39). Listen again to Jesus' promise: “*I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you*” (vs. 18). Why hasn't He abandoned us in our sin and misery? Just remember why God sent His Son to us in the first place. It was not to condemn us, but to save us (John 12:47). He knew how we would fail to love Him and obey His commandments. He knew all the troubles and heartaches sin would bring into our lives. But rather than abandon us as orphans in our sin and misery, God the Father's love led Him to send His Son to our rescue.

Jesus once came in blessing to redress all our ills, through His suffering and death on the cross. He paid for all our self-serving ways, all our loveless breaking of His

commandments. As His body was laid in the grave, so was all our sin and guilt. That is forever laid to rest, out of God's sight. When God raised His Son from the dead, it meant that He had forgiven all our sins. It means that God is smiling on us today.

Therefore Jesus' words ring true for us today, just as they did for the disciples who saw Him alive: "*Because I live, you will live also*" (vs. 19). Now, we can think of Jesus in His living body, and the living hope He gives us through His resurrection from the dead – the hope of eternal life with Him!

Even though our living Savior has ascended to His Father, and we cannot see Him with our eyes, yet we can take to heart His words: "*I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you*" (vs. 18). Far from abandoning us, Jesus remains with us. In fact, He is much closer than we might imagine, even in our times of trouble and distress.

Listen again to Jesus' amazing words, as He tells us how close He is: "*At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you*" (vs. 20). A relationship cannot get closer than that! Jesus is in His Father; we are in Jesus, who is in His Father; and Jesus is in us. How did it come about that we have such a close relationship with God the Son and God the Father? Our hymn verse tells us how:

Still He comes within us, Still His voice would win us
From the sins that hurt us; Would to truth convert us
From our foolish errors Ere He comes in terrors.

Our risen and ascended Savior has come to us, winning us our hearts by His voice of truth. He has converted us from being orphans, lost and hurt in our sins. He has found us and healed us and made us God's children through forgiveness and faith.

This gift of faith and salvation involved the work of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus has given us. As He says: "*I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you*" (vs. 16-17).

We have such a close relationship with God as His children, first because the Father sent His Son into the world to redeem us from our sin. Now the Son asks the Father to send the Spirit into our hearts to give us faith. And Jesus Himself, who is in the Father, is in us. Doesn't this impress on us the fact that we are well taken care of, no matter what trials and tribulation we may face? If the Triune God is for us, even dwelling in us and we in Him, then who can be against us (Romans 8:31)?

Where do we meet our Savior today? Where do we receive His faith and life-giving Spirit? Where do we go for Jesus' strength and comfort in our troubles? It is in His Word and Sacraments.

“Still He comes within us” in His Word. When we feel troubled by sins, Jesus comes to us and says: “*Your sins are forgiven you*” (Luke 5:20). When we feel distressed and abandoned, He says again: “*I will never leave you nor forsake you*” (Hebrews 13:5). As Jesus speaks His Word of truth, our faith is strengthened, and our hearts are given His rest and peace.

“Still He comes within us” in Baptism. By the power of His Word in the water, Jesus cleanses our hearts of all sin and pours out the Spirit on us (Acts 2:38). He unites us with Himself in death to sin, and He raises us with Himself in spiritual and eternal life.

“Still He comes within us” in His Holy Supper. At His Table, Jesus gives us His Body and Blood, once sacrificed on the cross. He comes within us in a most intimate way, to forgive our sins and strengthen our faith (Matthew 26:26-28).

“Once He came in blessing” to give His life for us. “Still He comes within us” to give His life to us. As we see all that He has done for us, and still does for us, doesn't it move us to respond with thanks and praise? As we see Jesus' saving love for us, don't we want to love Him back and honor Him in our lives? One of the best ways we can return His love is by sharing His Gospel with others. Then by the power of His Word and the work of the Holy Spirit, His voice would win them. Then they too can see Jesus by faith and rejoice as He comes to live within them.

Thanks be to our God and Savior, who brings sinners by grace into His Kingdom! He has given us the most intimate relationship to Himself as His eternal children! It is all because of what Jesus did the first time He came to win our salvation, and because of what He is still doing by bringing His salvation to us today. This Advent, let us rejoice in our Savior: “Once He came in blessing... Still He comes within us.”

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.