



How Our Advocate Works

John 16:1-11

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you (John 16:7—KJV).

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you (John 16:7—NASB).

Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you (John 16:7—NRSV).

The Holy Spirit bestows many gifts on believers, and of major importance the Holy Spirit serves as their Advocate. He works as an indwelling Defense Attorney. When those of this world attack Christians, their Defense Attorney can give them the words to speak. When spiritually attacked, their Defense Attorney can remind them of Jesus' words, so they do not lose confidence in their Savior and Lord. Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit could only come after He went away. Jesus went away when He died on the cross and later ascended into heaven, which He and the Father planned because they wanted to forgive repentant sinners and uphold the just laws and kingdom of God at the same time. Together, they planned for Jesus to shed His blood so repentant sinners could be cleansed from all unrighteousness and become spiritually prepared to receive the indwelling Holy Spirit, who would guide them to live for God in a hostile world. In addition, the Holy Spirit works as a Prosecuting Attorney in the lives of believers and in the Church. Through the church, He proves the world wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment. He convinces some that sin has consequences, living right is important to God, God has condemned the ruler of this world, and God will execute judgment. In the world, the Holy Spirit works through believers to help those He has proved wrong to repent and by grace receive the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

Thinking Further

1. What can keep us from stumbling?
2. What might you say to someone who said that they became a Christian because they wanted security and all of their daily needs and requests to be met by Jesus?
3. Why do some people ridicule and persecute Christians?
4. Why was it an advantage or benefit for Jesus to go away?
5. What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do in the world?