

BELIEVE

The Holy Ghost

John 14:25-26 and 16:7-15

Alf Halvorson preaching

This is the 11th message in our Apostles' Creed series, after last week's brief break from the series to address coronavirus head-on together. We have now moved to the third and final section of the creed, and to the third person of the trinity. The Holy Ghost is God's presence in our midst, empowering us to be the church and to offer His forgiveness and grace and love to our family and world through Christ.

1. Lloyd Ogilvie once delivered a sermon on the Holy Ghost entitled, "Two Out of Three Is Not Enough." He shared that often Christians are comfortable talking about the Father and the Son, but the Holy Spirit confuses or scares them. And when you add the words "Pentecost" or "Pentecostal" to the conversation, it gets even more confusing. What did you hear growing up regarding the Holy Ghost? Was it positive or negative, comforting or confusing, faith-producing or fear-infusing?
2. Read John 14:25-26 & 16:7-15. What does Jesus say are the roles or functions of the Holy Spirit? List them. Which of those roles do you especially need in your life right now? Which have you received in the past? Can you share a story or two?
3. Dale Bruner, the New Testament Scholar, did his doctoral work on the Holy Spirit in the Reformed Tradition. He said the Spirit is the "shy member of the trinity." The Spirit does not draw us to itself; the focus in Scripture is never on the Spirit. The Spirit focuses our attention on Jesus; creates faith in Jesus; moves people to adore Jesus; transforms people to be more like Jesus; helps us follow Jesus; created faith in Jesus; gives us life through Jesus. Is that supported by John 14:25-26 & 16:7-15 above? How does that help you understand and appreciate the Spirit's work?
4. I shared in my sermon that the word "advocate" in English in John 14:25 and 16:7 from the Greek is *paracletos*, which literally means "the one who comes alongside us." Translators have said *helper, comforter, counselor, guide, friend, teacher, coach*, etc. Experts in language say this word was used in Jesus' day for "the person who exhorted troops about to go into battle *to fight* or in the midst of the battle *to persevere*." What battle are you in right now or about to enter?
5. I ended my sermon with some examples of people stepping out in faith because of the Spirit's prompting—some rather dramatic and others mundane. Where might the Spirit be calling you to courage or endurance right now?

