

“The Orphans and the Advocate”

Scripture: John 14:15-21

Graphic: spirit, dove, advocate,

Key Verse: 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- 17 the Spirit of truth.

Ask them to: Appeal to the Advocate (the Holy Spirit) and be set free to live a life worthy in Christ.

PRAYER: O God, the Holy Spirit,
come to us, and among us;
come as the wind, and cleanse us;
come as the fire, and burn;
come as the dew, and refresh;
convict, convert, and consecrate many hearts and lives
to our great good and to thy greater glory;
and this we ask for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.

1) Introduction

- a) When Hilda Pacheco got married recently, she made sure to invite a special group of guests: the orphan children of La Mision. They held a treasured place in her heart, these lonely souls from a small town between Tijuana and Ensenada. She had worked with them for the past eight years, persuading her Irvine employer and other donors to help refurbish their crumbling orphanage, La Puerta de Fe, which means door of faith.
- b) Pacheco can honestly say she knows what it's like to be in their shoes. For eight years of her own childhood, she lived at the Door of Faith (La Puerta de Fe). She entered as a young girl and left a young woman, passing through adolescence without her parents. They had not died, but marital problems and poverty had left Pacheco and her siblings without a home.
- c) Yes, she knows the sorrow of growing up without a family, just like the children she has watched grow up at the orphanage over these past few years. Those children are teenagers now, around the age Pacheco was when she left La Mision to rejoin her mother in Santa Ana.
- d) What future lies ahead for them? What hope do they have to make something of themselves, these castaways scarred by the hurt of being abandoned or unwanted?
- e) Pacheco invited them to her wedding so they could imagine new possibilities. So they could see that love and commitment between a man

and a woman are possible. That having a family is possible, even for children who have never known one. The children gathered for the wedding, along with Mexican peasants and prosperous Americans representing both sides of this new union ... “That was my dream,” she said, “to be able to unite my two worlds and have harmony.”

-Agustin Gurza, A lifetime putting a family back together, Los Angeles Times, November 25, 2000.

- f) In many ways, Hilda Pacheco is the best advocate these orphans can have. Not just because she gave them large sums of money, or that she gave them medicine or food, but that she spent time with them, loving them, caring for them, and making a way for their lives to be more abundant and full of meaning. And because she was an orphan herself, she completely understood how they felt, their struggles, and their dreams for more. In many ways, her acts of kindness saved these kids by giving them hope.

2) Scripture

- a) Each one of us is like an orphaned child...
- b) In many ways we are left alone to our own devices, to fend for ourselves, try to make good decisions, to be good people...and sometimes we even feel pretty good about our progress...
- c) Yet we find that even though there is freedom and happiness, at times, in our lives, and even though we have solid friendships and loving families, there are also times when we feel something is missing...like we're alone.
- d) We do feel orphaned...we do feel like we've been stripped of our sense of purpose...we fall down...we say the wrong things...we are unkind...
- e) To be more direct, here, we are people who sin, by commission or omission...
- f) And that's precisely why we need an advocate...someone like Hilda Pacheco...someone to guide us, lift us up, tell us the truth, and someone who is willing to be with us...
- g) Advocate - 1: one that pleads the cause of another; specifically : one that pleads the cause of another before a tribunal or judicial court 2: one that defends or maintains a cause or proposal 3: one that supports or promotes the interests of another
- h) Orphan - 1 : a child deprived by death of one or usually both parents 2 : a young animal that has lost its mother 3 : one deprived of some protection or advantage

i) In our reading this morning, we find a great sense of hope because even though we sometimes feel like God is absent from us...that we have to figure this thing out for ourselves...we're never left as orphans without an advocate.

j) READ JOHN 14:15-21

k) Jesus wants us to love him...

l) We can't truly love him without obeying his commands

m) His commands are God's commands (since he said, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me")

n) Those commands are the 10 commandments (the basis for all of the Law) and Jesus simpler summary, "Love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself."

o) If we desire to love and serve God, we must first be convicted of the fact that we have broken the Law, according to the 10 commandments and Jesus' summary.

p) 10 commandments in Exodus 20...

q) Lied...stolen...committed adultery...blasphemed...

r) And b/c we have broken the law, we deserve punishment...

s) And so God gave us a Savior, to whom we can run for safety when we stand in Judgment on the day of Judgment. And that causes us to love Jesus b/c he first loved us.

t) And from there...we try again...we strive to live a holy life...we do better...we do more...

u) Our Christian beliefs must translate into our Christian actions, or we are not truly following Jesus...what's the fruit???

v) And Jesus knows that we can't do this on our own...just like Hilda Pacheco knew that those orphans could not find hope all on their own...

w) And so we have the Holy Spirit...the Advocate...the Spirit of Truth...

x) We are NOT left as orphans...

y) (Although, sometimes we really want to be left as orphans...because we want to sin, even though we know God doesn't want us to. Sin feels good at the time...)

z) But we CAN obey the commands of God

- aa) We CAN be more holy...be more righteous
- bb) And by doing that, we show our love and gratitude for Jesus for saving us from eternity in Hell...we don't like to think that...but without Jesus, because we have all broken God's Law, our good Judge has no choice but to send us to Hell. Thank God for Jesus!
- cc) And because Jesus is our Savior, and because we have the Holy Spirit to guide us, the abundant life can be ours. God leaps for joy!
- dd) verse 14:21

3) Conclusion

- a) *If you love me, Jesus said, you will keep my commandments.* (John 14:15, 21) There is a connection between our *relationship with Christ* and *behavior*. Not a list of do's and don'ts, but an authentic relationship with Jesus, the Savior, and a desire to keep the commands of Jesus in order to be more holy and righteous in God's eyes...
- b) After the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, the disciples would not be alone. The Advocate (Spirit of Truth) would be with them forever (John 14:16-18).
- c) The orphans at La Mision and any other orphanage don't have a chance, unless those around them advocate for development of a sense of HOPE.
- d) Jesus is our only hope through the power of the Holy Spirit and a gracious God...
- e) For that, we can be eternally thankful...but more importantly, because we have an advocate before God, and because Jesus has the power to save us, we can strive to live out our call to be Christian men and women and youth and children for the glory of God alone!
- f) Let's pray...