

### 3. **Jesus Tells of His Resurrection:**

- a. <sup>19</sup> “Before long, the world will not see me anymore [after I die for all sins], but you will see me [when I am raised to life on the third day].” Jesus promised; *then He did it!* Stephen Ministers are also committed to keep their promises to be there – *present, caring, and praying* – for their care receivers (those in need)!

Text, not sermon: “Because I live, you also will live [Jesus is the source of both our physical and spiritual lives!]. <sup>20</sup> On that day [-- the Day of Pentecost] you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.”

- b. <sup>21</sup> “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me [God’s love creates faith and love in us, which shows itself in love for God and others!]. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”

**Conclusion:** Earlier in v. 12 Jesus said: “...**anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.**” *Do you believe that?* Here at Bethlehem ✦some serve a lot, ✦some serve a little, and ✦some even less! Membership is about attending, receiving, and giving, *but also about serving!*

Since 1975 congregations enrolled in Stephen Ministry have asked people to ✦attend 50 hours of training and ✦read three books and a training manual; then, *in each congregation*, people have stepped forward to serve! Please pray, *as we begin this ministry*, and for God’s leading in your life → how is He calling you ♥to serve, ♥to do what Jesus did, ♥to love your neighbor as yourself? *Amen!*

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## “With Us → To Bless Us!”

*The Holy Spirit and Stephen Ministers*

Based on John 14:12-21 NIV

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity – 2010

June 27 → 8:15 & 10:45

**Reminder: This is our Schedule for July & August**

Sundays → Worship at 9:00, BC & SS at 10:30

Mondays → Worship at 7:00 p.m.

**Introduction:** Dear Friends in Christ, ***two are better than one!*** The Bible says: <sup>10</sup> If one falls down, his friend can help him up.... <sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.” (Ecclesiastes 4:10, 12 NIV)

In this sermon, I want you to *understand* and *rejoice* in these two realities:

- **1** – We, *as believers in Jesus Christ*, are never alone *because the Holy Spirit is always with us to bless us!*
- **2** – We, *the congregation of Bethlehem*, are now officially members of the Stephen Ministry program! Therefore, *in the future*, trained members of Bethlehem will be ministering to people in need (✦hospitalization, ✦loss of a loved one, ✦loneliness, ✦divorce, ✦unemployment, ✦birth of a child, and ✦other times of need); *our trained Stephen Ministers will be with them to bless them!* Remember: ***Two are better than one!***

Now, *on the basis of John 14:12-21*, let’s ✦notice the blessings of the Holy Spirit and ✦imagine the blessings that

could come to ✦ the members of our congregation and ✦ others *through our trained Stephen Ministers!*

1. **Jesus Prepares His Followers for His Two Departures:**

For *His death*; then for *His ascension!*

- a. <sup>12</sup> **“I tell you the truth [literally Amen, amen or Yes, yes, you can be certain], anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing [A reference to miracles, both physical and spiritual (Luke 10:17-20). Also, even though Jesus is about to depart, good things will continue! A Stephen Minister can bring similar – Bible-based – encouragement to those who are hurting!].”**
- b. **“He [anyone who believes in me] will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father [on “even greater” Lenski comments: “The great works deal with the material, the greater with the spiritual.” (989) For example: Those who are healed will eventually die, but those who receive Jesus as Savior will spiritually live and never die (Jn. 11:25-26). Stephen Ministers will bring that good news to those who are hurting!].”**
- c. <sup>13</sup> **“And I will do whatever you ask in my name [so we should pray to the Father in Jesus’ name for help in doing what Jesus did], so that the Son [living in us (Galatians 2:20)] may bring glory to the Father. <sup>14</sup> You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it [-- great encouragement for us to pray according to God’s will].”**
- d. <sup>15</sup> **“If you love me, you will obey what I command [Notice the order: love first, command second. The idea is NOT: “Do this or that to earn something!” Instead: “I am telling you these things because I love you; your response will be the evidence of your love for me!”].”**

2. **Jesus Tells about His Replacement:**

- a. <sup>16</sup> **“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth.”** Jesus was the *first Counselor*; the Holy Spirit is *another Counselor* – **“the Spirit of truth.”** The Holy Spirit is with us today to:
  - i. Help us understand the Bible!
  - ii. Convict us of our sins!
  - iii. Unite us to Christ, our Savior!
  - iv. Enable us to serve Christ in our daily lives!

**Can you see those realities of the Spirit in your life?**

Years ago I THOUGHT I was a Christian, *thus had the Spirit*, but none of those realities were present *until the Spirit richly blessed me through the Word – in the very ways noted above!* Even today the Holy Spirit is within *all believers in Christ* to help them first love God; *then courageously love others!*

- b. **A Stephen Minister is not a counselor, but he or she will bring God’s love and caring presence to those who feel sad, lost, or abandoned!** A Stephen Minister will also be equipped to bring God’s Word *through which the Spirit will work to impart great blessings!*

Text, not sermon: **“The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him [-- as the world rejects the truth, it also rejects the Spirit of truth]. But you know him, for he lives with you [-- He has enabled you to know me] and will be in you [-- beginning on the Day of Pentecost]. <sup>18</sup> I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you [not as the Spirit, but like that of the Spirit and combined with Him (Lenski, 1002)].”**