

The Comforter

by John Hames

The Comforter, or Holy Spirit, is sent by Jesus Christ to reveal Him, protect His divinity, and make Him more real to us, bringing numerous benefits and abiding with us forever.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:3

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Divine Comfort"

Description

John Hames preaches about the role of the Comforter, introduced by Christ before His departure, who reveals and protects the divinity of Jesus, making Him a living reality to believers. The Comforter dwells within believers, guiding, protecting, and bringing to remembrance the teachings of Christ. Through the Holy Ghost, believers are filled with hope for the future and empowered to live ahead of their time, like the sugar-maples exuding sweet water before the arrival of spring. The most comforting truth is that the heavenly Dove will abide with believers forever, through all circumstances and until the day of redemption.

Transcript

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."
-- St. John 14:16.

Before Christ departed, He introduced to us the Comforter who was to continue His work, whom the Father, He said, would send in His name. "He will partake of my divinity, and impart it unto you." The heart in which the Comforter dwells will have all the traits of the Christ life.

Let us notice the great mission of the Comforter:

First, He is to reveal Christ and make Him more real to us than He was to the Galilean followers, with His bodily presence while in their midst. It is the wonderful work of the Holy Ghost to take the virgin birth, the shed blood and the resurrection of Jesus and make those facts which occurred nearly two thousand years ago a living reality to our spiritual consciousness. The same Holy Ghost who made real the Bible and the Incarnation and Calvary is here today to make real and vital those same truths.

To the great majority, Christ is just a being who once lived and died and went away, they do not know where. But God wishes to make Him, through the Holy Ghost, as sweet and fresh as He was to Mary on the morning He came forth from Joseph's tomb.

The Holy Ghost not only reveals Christ to believers, but He protects His Divinity. Jesus was not only born of the Spirit, baptized with the Spirit, and wrought miracles through the Spirit, but we are told that it was through the eternal Spirit that He made the atonement, and offered His pure humanity upon the altar of His Deity. So the Holy Ghost is very jealous in protecting His Divinity.

The Apostle, in I Cor. 12:3, says: "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed." By this he means that no man can know anything about the Holy Ghost and deny the virgin birth and the efficacy of the shed blood.

The Holy Ghost is like an artist, portraying, as He does, Jesus in all His beauty upon the canvas, while He Himself is withdrawn from view. The Holy Ghost in the believer vitalizes all the fundamental truths, and makes them living realities.

Church history proves that no denomination remains orthodox very long after the Comforter is grieved away.

First, the ardor of the experience cools off; then is dropped out the vital truths of the Bible and of the church doctrine. If the Holy Ghost, Christ's successor on earth, had failed to follow up His life, Calvary, with its bleeding Lamb, would have been only a dim outline of God's love, which we would have failed to understand. But when the Comforter illuminates the cross, it becomes the most attractive thing on earth, and, like a heavenly loadstone, it draws our affections heavenward and spoils us for this old world.

The Comforter is to dwell within. "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

The Holy Ghost has always been in the world. When the earth was without form and void, and darkness brooded over the face of the deep, the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters, and out of that chaos of desolation He brought forth beauty, order and a blissful Paradise. He inspired the prophets; He gave Isaiah a vision of the coming Christ from the manger to the cross; He illuminated Joel and let him see the approaching Pentecost and outpoured Holy Ghost. His presence, however, in the Old Testament was external, rather than internal, demonstrating the gifts rather than the graces of the Spirit. But in the New Testament the Comforter unites and identifies Himself with the life of the believer, controlling his choices, affections and desires, and molding holy character.

It is possible for the image and personality of a loved one to enter into the very being until we think his thoughts and are moved by his influence. So the Comforter takes up His abode in our spirits and shines out through our minds and body like the blazing light of the Divine Shekinah in the holy of holies.

The Holy Ghost is to bring all things to our remembrance. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

It is wonderful how the Holy Ghost can quicken the intellect and illuminate the chambers of the understanding, making the mind, which once was dull and heavy, grasp with vigor the spiritual significance of the truths of the Bible. The mere, cold intellect cannot understand spiritual truths. It is not for lack of perception or education that men do not know and perceive spiritual mysteries; it is for want of spiritual intuition. He will bring to our memory forgotten truths in the moment of need.

Fourth, the Comforter is a guide.

The Holy Ghost not Only woos and wins us to Christ, but, like Eleazer, the servant who conducted Rebecca to Isaac, He proposes to journey with us, protecting us from the evil of the world, and to present us spotless to our Heavenly bridegroom. Divine guidance is one of the outstanding promises of the Bible.

The record of the Christian life would make a volume, chronicling, as it could, the intervention of God's providences between us and danger, of the impress of the Spirit that prevents our taking certain steps, at the same time. Opening other doors hitherto closed to us, and of the hundreds of like experiences in the life where the soul's ears are attentive to the Spirit's voice.

In Paul's missionary journey he was restrained from preaching in Bithynia and Ephesus by the Spirit, and sent, instead, to Macedonia, giving the Gospel thus to our ancestors. The indwelling Comforter makes the special providences of God to us an absolute certainty, so that we are confident that He is working all things in earth and Heaven for our good.

There is a beautiful Scripture found in 2 Chron. 16:9 which says, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect toward him." "The eyes of the Lord" express His omnipotent vision. Even the hairs on our head are numbered. The word run shows how quickly He can fly to our rescue in emergencies. He is never late; as in the case of Daniel, the angel reached the lions' den before he arrived. The words whole earth show God's unlimited care. The expression to show himself reveals His Divine personality in our behalf, while the word strong shows His wonderful power to deliver. But notice, this special providence is to those whose hearts are perfect toward Him.

One of the joys of Heaven will be the rehearsing of God's providences and of His Divine guidance in our lives.

Fifth, He will show you things to come.

The words "things to come" have to do with the future life. Too many live in the gloomy past; their little world dips so near to where they live that all they see in life is a struggle for a living. But the Holy Ghost deals with ages to come. He puts a star of hope in the heart and a rainbow of promise beneath every dark cloud and coming tomorrow. The heart in which He dwells is filled with a buoyant, cheerful hope. If men can be lured by an earthly vision until they go after their ideal, how much more should they be inspired by the heavenly vision.

The Apostle in Hebrews 6 speaks of tasting of the heavenly gift, the good Word of God, partaking of the Holy Ghost and of the powers of the world to come. The more spiritual saints all down the ages have caught the vision and have lived ahead of their age.

When in the North, in the latter part of March, as the cold winter was breaking and a hint of springtime was in the air, the contrast was noted between the sugar-maple and the other trees. These splendid maples were not only budding, but the larger trees, which had been tapped, were exuding sweet water. They were so full of sap that long before the other trees showed any indications of life, the sugar-maples gave full evidence that the spring was drawing near. It is just so with the Spirit-filled believer who has tasted of the heavenly gift and has been made a partaker of the heavenly world to come. Long before the cold winter (which is typical of the reign of sin and Satan) begins to break and the eternal spring morning of His second coming draweth nigh, the bridehood saints will begin to feel the holy sap of Divine life rising within them, and causing the heart to sing:

"O lovely land of Beulah, the summer-land of love,
Land of the heavenly Bridegroom, land of the heavenly Dove!
My Winter has departed, my summer-time has come,
The air is full of singing, the earth is bright with bloom.
O blessed land of Beulah, sweet summer-land of love,
O ever-blessed Bridegroom, O gentle Holy Dove!
O Savior, keep us ever, all earth-born things above,
In the blessed land of Beulah, the summer-land of love."

Sixth, and finally, He is to abide with us forever. Oh, blessed thought - most wondrous truth - that all through the trying hours of the day the heavenly Dove abides!

When we are popular or persecuted, when friends praise or foes abuse, at the wedding, or at the funeral, no matter what the change, the Comforter will ever abide.

The time is coming when the heavens will be shaken and roll together as a scroll; the earth will reel, mountains flee away, seas roar, suns be darkened, moons turn to blood, stars fall, raves open, the Judge with flaming eyes descend; but amidst revolving worlds, falling stars, blown-out sun, bleeding moon, wailing sinners and shouting angels, the heavenly Dove will abide. If we grieve Him not, He will seal our hearts unto the day of redemption.

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