

Christ Our Hope, and the Holy Ghost, With Our Responsibility John 14

by John Nelson Darby

Christ offers the comfort of His presence and the promise of a place in the Father's house, and believers have the responsibility to walk as Christ walked and keep His commandments.

Scripture: John 14:1

Topics: "The Role of the Holy Spirit", "Hope in Christ"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the comfort found in Christ's promise of His return and the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, who were troubled by His impending departure. He reassures them that they belong to a heavenly home, where Christ prepares a place for them, and that their relationship with Him ensures their place in the Father's house. The sermon highlights the intimate connection between believers and Christ, who is the way to the Father, and the role of the Holy Spirit as a constant presence and source of strength. Darby stresses the responsibilities of believers to walk in obedience and maintain their relationship with God, which is nurtured through the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, he conveys that while believers await their eternal home, Christ dwells within them, guiding and empowering them.

Transcript

This chapter is an answer to the distress of the hearts of the disciples, and in it we get two things set before them: first, the glory of Christ's Person with His coming again; and, secondly, the coming of the Comforter.

The first great truth that He brings out is that they belong entirely to another place. This world is not good enough for them. He was going away from them, and this was something to trouble their hearts. Therefore He brings before them Himself, as the object of comfort, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." By believing in God, you get comfort; so it will be by believing in Me.

The occasion was a sorrowful one surely; for to know Christ and yet not to see Him, not to have Him with them, might well trouble the heart. They had taken Him for their portion, and left everything else. They had so entirely confided in Him, so rested on Him, that His going away might well trouble them.

The great broad principle set forth in answer to this is comprehended in what He is. And it is as though He said, Do not suppose I am going away to be alone in heaven. No, it is for you I am going. "In my Father's

house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." There is "room enough and to spare." This was another thing to comfort them - a place in the Father's house. The home of the Christian is there where Christ is. He was not going for Himself only, just to relieve Himself from the desolateness of the world. He was going to His home as the Firstborn among many brethren, and all the rest will have their place there too at His coming. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself." This is the language of affection. He does not say, I will send for you. No, that would not satisfy the heart - "I will come." He would not be content without having them where He is, and without coming to fetch them. He could not leave them down here in this polluted world. "Where I am, there shall my servant be." And there will be the word for them, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter," etc. He takes their hearts out of this world altogether - not their persons yet indeed, for they were to be left without Him for a season.

152 We see the absolute intimacy that existed between them from 1 John 1, "That which was from the beginning . . . which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled," etc. They knew Him well; so that, when they were to go, they would not be going to a strange place, because they knew Him there. If my father were gone away to a distant country, my heart would go after him there, and would be more at home in that place where he is, than here, although I knew not the place, for I have never seen it. Note that the Lord never supposes for a moment the slightest doubt of their being there. There is the most perfect certainty for them, because Christ would be there Himself. The question of fitness could not come in; for does not Christ know whether you are fit? There would be difficulties in the way - in the world "tribulation"; the road may be rough, but the home is certain. He has taken our sins and blotted them out, and therefore He can speak as one who knows the full value of His redemption.

"Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Suppose I were going to a strange place, I should want to know the way. He says, "I am the way," etc. I am going to the Father's house, and you shall be there too. And what makes the blessedness of the Father's house? The Father being there, and brothers and sisters there, it is not the place nor the state that we think about in connection with the Father's house (though there are these as well); but the great thing to our hearts is the Person there - the object in the house - the Father. None can go to the Father "but by me." If I know the Father, I know where I am going. It is He makes it a home to me. When the prodigal returned to his father's house, there was great rejoicing - the fatted calf killed, etc.; but it was the spring of joy in the father's heart that made them all so happy there, whether servants or sons.

Jesus says to them, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." As if He had said, You have got the thing you are looking for, if you have Myself. You have not to wait to get to heaven to know Him. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." If they knew where they were going, they also knew the way - "I am the way," etc. In seeing the way in Him, I find I have known the Father, before I get home to the Father's house. He has done that work which makes me fit to be there. He has come down and brought the Father to me through the efficacy of His work. Then I have got home in one sense. How can I get farther than to the Father Himself? You have the thing you are seeking after. You have found the Father in Me, and you have found the way to it.

153 When Christ is first revealed, it makes us feel our unfitness, but He purges the conscience. The work which has purged sin away is done. The believer is justified from all things. If a man believes in Christ, he has a new nature. Can the flesh believe in Christ? "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee," etc. The soul that believes has all the efficacy of Christ's work, blood-shedding and sprinkling. I have the

happiness Christ has. What is this? All that results from unhindered fellowship with Him. Another thing is the power by which we enjoy it - another Comforter, and this given to be down here. It is here the Father reveals the Son, and this would be a Comforter that would never leave them.

Every one who believes in Christ, resting on His work, shares the blessings of the Comforter now given and abiding. A person is not a Christian unless his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is not known as an object (though He distributes to every one severally as He will), but He is in us - living spiritual power in us. Christ did not dwell so in us. Christ was with them three years, and then went away from them; but the Holy Ghost never goes away, and is promised to be in them "a well of water," etc. The effect of the Holy Ghost's power is to bring Christ back to us; not in person, as an object, but Christ becoming, by the power of the Holy Ghost, life in me. "To me to live is Christ," etc. Christ Himself is He whom the Holy Ghost shews to me. There is a blessed living object in Christ which I do not find in the Holy Ghost. They could not say of Him, "We have handled him," as of Christ.

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." They were very muddy as to this before, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father" - in the Godhead is this blessed One who was down here as a servant - "and ye in me, and I in you." Is this home strange to me? No; I have been eating with Him since His resurrection Not only do I know Christ as an object, but the Holy Ghost makes me know I am united to Him. There is consciousness by the Holy Ghost of this union. And does the one who knows he has it think much of himself for that? No; there can only be wonder and astonishment at such grace; and there is nothing so humbling. The law may torture the conscience, but grace humbles. They could not know it while He was here; but they would know it in that day, when they are "members of his body," as Paul speaks.

154 Then there are responsibilities which belong to us as such. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." If God has loved us in sovereign grace and goodness when sinners, He has also gracious affections towards us when we are saints. There is the every-day government of the soul in His hands. He that loves Me shall be loved of My Father. This is not a question of whether they were to be saved, but the daily manifestation of Christ to the heart. A father might take care of his children, and love them when they are pleasant; but he cannot manifest his favour to them, if they do not please him. God will not fail to keep them according to the prayer of Jesus, "Holy Father, keep them whom thou hast given me." He will keep them, but this is the way He keeps - revealing Himself in happy intercourse according to their walking with Him in obedience.

Mark the position of believers: until we make our home in the Father's house, He makes His home in us.

Source:

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