

Title: The Person and work of God the Holy Spirit

Text: John 14: 16-17

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The Lord Jesus Christ told his disciples that he was about to go to the cross. His bodily presence had meant great blessing for them. So the thought of his departure filled their hearts with grief. All they saw in the cross was suffering for their Master and a loss of all hope for themselves. The Lord Jesus saw his disciples' hearts were filled with sorrow.

Therefore, Christ told them it was expedient for them that he should go away; but that when he did, he would pray the Father and the Father would send them another Comforter, who was to abide with them forever.

John 14:16: And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: 17: even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Proposition: The Comforter, the Spirit of truth is God the Holy Spirit who has the distinct work of comforting the believer with the truth of Christ.

This morning we will simply look at the person of God the Holy Spirit as distinct from God the Father and God the Son and his work as the Comforter and Spirit of truth.

I. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A DISTINCT PERSON IN THE GODHEAD PERFORMING A PARTICULAR WORK FOR HIS PEOPLE.

He is not an emanation or virtue flowing from the Father and the Son, but the third person of the Godhead. We worship one God, not three Gods. We worship one God in three persons—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. We worship one God in three persons, the triune God, co-eternal, co-equal. This is an unspeakable mystery, but a mystery of God's revealing, and, therefore, believed by all those born again of God the Holy Spirit.

John 5: 7: There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

We have various proofs that the Holy Spirit is a distinct person of the Godhead, first in our text: Each person is spoken of as performing a separate, particular work. "I will pray," says the Son. The Father will send. The Holy Spirit will comfort

Visible Form

Another evidence of the distinct person of the Holy Spirit is that he appeared in a visible form. The Holy Spirit descended upon Christ at his baptism in visible form as a dove—descending from heaven shows that he is God. On the day of Pentecost there came the sound as of a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues like the appearance of fire sat upon the disciples.

Acts and Deeds

Another proof that the Spirit is a distinct person in the Godhead are acts and deeds which God the Holy Spirit performs. The Holy Spirit moved men to speak and write the scriptures

2 Peter 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

Sinners are born dead in sin. It is the Holy Spirit which regenerates to spiritual life and sanctifies us in conversion.

John 3:6: That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Romans 15:16: That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up [conversion] of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit separates, calls and directs men for the work of the ministry

Acts 13:2: As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Acts 8:29: Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot....39: And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Personal Qualities

Another proof showing the Holy Spirit is a distinct person is that the Holy Spirit has personal qualities such as “knowing.”

1 Corinthians 2: 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit “wills.” He gives gifts as he will.

1 Corinthians 12:11: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

“Power” is ascribed to the Holy Ghost.

Romans 15:13: Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Point: So see how visible manifestations, how personal acts and deeds, along with qualities like understanding, will, and power proves the Holy Spirit is not an attribute of God, not a mere influence of God. He is God, a distinct person in the Godhead. We worship one God, in three persons.

II. THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT---v17: whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him;

“The world” is natural man: dead in sin and vain profession, destitute of spiritual life. No man in a carnal state as he is born in Adam is able to believe God the Holy Spirit for two reasons give here.

Because it seeth him not

Natural man only believes what he can see with carnal eyes but cannot receive the things which are invisible. Buildings with stained glass windows, giant choirs, robes, ceremony, activities: are things the natural eye can see. Natural men love a showy religion and multitudes flock to it.

Application: That is one reason the Lord instructs us not to do alms or pray or do any self-denying acts to be seen of men. Men who do—congregations that do—have their reward. Natural men admire them and join them, not because of Christ, because of them. That is the reward they seek. They have their reward. But true unseen, inward, experimental, religion has no form or comeliness to attract the outward eye.

The things God has freely given to his elect are spiritually discerned only after the regeneration of the Holy Spirit and by God the Holy Spirit revealing Christ in the heart. True revelation reveals the things of God which the natural eye cannot see. “The circumcision worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.”

Illustration: But natural man is so hypocritical! There are many things, in nature, which we cannot see, yet we believe. We cannot see the wind. But right now you look down the shore and you behold the effects of the wind. So you know the wind exists. Sinners receive the Spirit by the Spirit coming upon us irresistibly like the wind.

John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Application: If you ever find yourself believing Christ then you will no longer say God the Holy Spirit does not exist.

Neither knoweth him

Natural man has not been touched by the power of God the Holy Spirit in the heart.

Illustration: Did you ever see electricity? But if you are ever touched by electricity you will know it exists. If God touches you then there will be Light and you will know God.

The Lord promises “**but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.**” When Christ prayed, “That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us, I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one;” he asked that all his redeemed might be united to him by the Holy Spirit. This union is necessary before a sinner will believe on Christ. When the Spirit gives this union, it as real and unbreakable as the union between Jesus Christ and the Father.

All whom Christ purged with his own blood shall know this union, Christ prays, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;” **So when Christ promises “he shall be in you” you can mark it down, the Holy Spirit shall enter into all the redeemed of Christ and abide.**

1 Corinthians 2: 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

III. Let's See a Few Things Concerning How God the Holy Spirit, is the Comforter, the Spirit of truth.

The Spirit of Truth

He comforts us through the truth so look at this title first. The Truth the Spirit teaches his people is Christ the Truth.

John 16: 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

God is True. God the Father saves in a way to show forth his righteousness in truth. God gave his only Son and Christ bore the cross to declare the truth in righteousness of how God can be just and the Justifier of all who believe. So God the Holy Spirit guides God's elect into all truth—not error, not using lies—he is the Spirit of Truth.

1 John 2: 20: But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

Truth is how the Spirit is our Comforter.

After regenerating us, at conversion, at first, the Spirit of truth convinces us of the truth of our sin and depravity: it's a painful, humbling, and heart-breaking. But then the Spirit comforts us with the good news of atonement accomplished by Christ, of judgment satisfied for us by Christ's work on the cross. The Spirit of Truth turns the sinner from our flesh, our will, our wisdom, our works, drawing us to Christ our All.

Truth of election draws us to Christ the Elect in whom we were chosen unto salvation.

Truth of predestination shows us our conformity to Christ was certain because God pre-destinated us before he made the worlds. All who are Christ's shall be conformed to Christ's image in the new birth—recreated after the image of him that created us.

Truth of Christ successfully accomplishing the redemption of all for whom he died makes us cease from attempting to find acceptance by our law-keeping and makes us rest in Christ our Righteousness—"For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Ro 10:4)

Truth of Christ being our Sanctification purges our conscience from dead works to serve the true and living God. God the Spirit sets our purified hearts on Christ so that we now serve him in holiness. We are made partakers of the divine nature.

Truth that the Spirit is doing this same work in our fellow brethren makes us declare the truth of Christ and to trust Christ to make them stand, knowing it is God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Application: No sinner is ever taught in spirit and truth unless he is taught of the Spirit of truth and all the redeemed shall be. God the Holy Spirit never fails! None of Christ's sheep shall be carried away with the craftiness of men, because the Holy Ghost will not allow it.

And what Comfort the Spirit gives! When our conscience is burdened with guilt the Holy Spirit applies the blood of Christ giving us the peace of full atonement accomplished.

Romans 8: 1: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

In painful, inexplicable trials, the Holy Spirit brings our hearts into submission to God's sovereign, wise hand giving us rest in his unchanging sovereign love for us.

Romans 5: 3:...we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

When we become anxious about our daily necessities only the Holy Spirit can stop our murmurings, reminding us Christ was "a Man of sorrows" and knows the feelings of our infirmities, drawing us to his throne of grace for help.

When we need dying grace—only the Holy Spirit can make us behold Christ has removed the sting of death and given us the victory over the grave. Death is but a shadow for the believer in Christ.

Comforter Also Means Advocate

All this comfort from the Holy Spirit is because "Comforter" also means intercessor, advocate. Christ is our Advocate in heaven with the Father. The Holy Spirit is our Advocate applying grace in our hearts.

Romans 8: 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us....26: Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27: And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

True prayer is this: Christ prays the Father to give us the Spirit. God the Father gives the Spirit who comforts us giving us grace to come to the Father in Christ's name. Then Christ prays the Father and God the Father gives the Spirit with more comfort with more grace. What security! God in three Persons keeping us stayed on Jehovah!

Luke 11:13: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Go home remembering this Believer

As long as we live in this earth this is the sure promise we have through Christ our Advocate. God the Holy Comforter, the Spirit of Truth dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. We shall always have the faithful, unwearied, wise, trustworthy, active, ever-present comfort of God the Holy Spirit. And by the Spirit one day we shall be with Christ.

Romans 8: 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Amen!