

Sermon #106 — John's Gospel

Title: **THE COMFORTER**

Text: John 16:7-16

Date: Sunday Morning — January 2, 2011

Tape: *John #106*

Subject: *The Person and Work of
 God the Holy Spirit*

Reading: *John 16:1-33*

Introduction:

My subject this morning is **THE COMFORTER**. What a delightful subject with which to begin the New Year. Four times in His final discourse before leaving this world our blessed Savior promised His disciples that He would send the Holy Ghost to be our Comforter (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).

Proposition: God the Holy Spirit is the Divine Comforter who dwells in every heaven-born soul, teaching us, guiding us, and comforting us by showing us our Lord Jesus Christ and the things of Christ, ever glorifying our blessed Savior.

(John 14:16-17) “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 [Even] the Spirit of

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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.”

(John 14:26) “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

(John 15:26) “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”

In John 16:7-16 the Lord Jesus not only reiterates the promise of Spirit, assuring us again of His abiding comfort, but He also **shows us how the Holy Ghost ministers comfort to God’s chosen.**

(John 16:7-16) “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you;

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but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 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. 16 ¶ A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.”

I want to show you the things our Savior promised in these wonderful statements about God the Holy Ghost. Let me call your attention to seven things in these verses of Scripture about the work of God the

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Holy Spirit.

1. THE COMFORTER

The Holy Spirit is the gift of God to His church and people through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, our exalted Lord and King. In the passages we have read our Lord Jesus distinctly refers to the Spirit of God as “The Comforter.” That is the first thing I want you to see. Just as the Son of God, in his office capacity as our Mediator and Covenant Surety, is called our Savior, the Spirit of God is our Comforter. — Look at our Lord’s statement in chapter 14.

(John 14:16-17) “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 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.”

This title given to the Holy Ghost, “The

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Comforter,” is a very broad, meaningful title. It means “One who comforts, who pleads, who exhorts, One who calls us to His side as a father would call his child to his side when he has something personal to say to him.” Our Lord Jesus has given us His Spirit to dwell in us as our ever abiding Comforter. What a gift of grace!

2. ANOTHER COMFORTER

Second, our Savior calls the Holy Spirit “another Comforter.” — “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.” — That word “*another*” is also very significant. It means “another of the same kind, another just like me, one distinct from me but exactly like me.”

- Here are the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity (1 John 5:7).
- Here are the Three Persons of the Triune Jehovah, linked together and united in covenant solidarity for the salvation of our souls, constantly engaged in the work of saving chosen sinners (Ephesians 1:3-14).

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The Holy Ghost is “*another Comforter*” in addition to Christ, who is called “*the consolation of Israel*” (Luke 2:25). **The Lord Jesus tells us that He is...**

- **Another instead of Me.** — I am going, but He is coming. He will fill up my place; my place of fellowship, counsel, comfort, and love. He will be to you, for consolation, what I have been to you for consolation.
- **Another like Me.** — He will be another, and yet not another; one in mind and sympathy with Me toward you. In having Him you have Me.
- **Another in addition to Me.** — I am still with you, though I go away. And in addition to My presence, you shall have the presence of another like Me, another Who is God just as I am God.

3. FATHER’S GIFT

Third, this Gift of the Holy Ghost as our Comforter is the Father’s Gift to every chosen, redeemed sinner. — **“I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.”** It is He of whom the Lord Jesus spoke when he said to the woman at the well, **“If thou knewest the gift of God”** (John 4:10). — He

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said, “If ye, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.” — God the Holy Spirit, our Comforter is...

- The Gift promised to Abraham and his Seed (Galatians 3:13-14).
- The Gift by which the Lord God seals all covenant blessings to His chosen (Ephesians 1:13-14).

It is the Father’s good pleasure that we have the Holy Ghost. Having Him we live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and pray in the Spirit (Romans 8:1-17).

(Romans 8:1-17) “[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. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the

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righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, **who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.** 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 **So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.** 9 **But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.** Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

“10 ¶ And if Christ [be] in you, the body [is] dead because of sin; but **the Spirit [is] life** because of righteousness. 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. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if

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ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.** 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.”

4. **CHRIST’S INTERCESSION**

Fourth, God the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon all the redeemed by the merit and efficacy of Christ’s intercession on our behalf. He said, “**I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter.**”
—— **At the appointed time of love God the Father sends His Spirit to every chosen, redeemed sinner in almighty, irresistible grace, in regeneration, giving us life and faith in Christ** (Ezekiel 16:6-8; 36:27; 37:14; Zechariah 12:10).

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(Ezekiel 16:6-8) “And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee [when thou wast] in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee [when thou wast] in thy blood, Live. 7 I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: [thy] breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou [wast] naked and bare. 8 Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time [was] the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.”

(Ezekiel 36:27) “And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”

(Ezekiel 37:14) “And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the

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LORD.”

(Zechariah 12:10) “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

5. ABIDING COMFORTER

Now, watch this: — The Lord Jesus promised that he would give us this Comforter forever, “that he may abide with you forever!” The Comforter is ours forever, unconditionally ours forever! For as long as time shall last, for as long as we are in this world of woe, God the Holy Ghost shall be our abiding Comforter. As the Shekinah Glory filled the Temple, abiding on the Mercy-seat, so God the Holy Spirit abides in us as the Spirit of Life. We live in the sweet “communion of the Holy Ghost” all the time (2 Corinthians 13:14).

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- Though often we may grieve Him, we shall never be deprived of Him.
- Though we may quench Him, we cannot lose Him!

6. SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Sixth, in John 14:17 our Savior describes the Comforter as “the Spirit of Truth.” He is the Spirit who communicates the Truth to the soul.

- Christ is the Truth He gives and communicates to us, the Truth revealed in us by the Holy Spirit.
- The Gospel of Christ is the Truth into which he guides us.
- The Word of Christ, Holy Scripture, is the Truth by which he directs our paths.

The world cannot receive Him. To the world God sends a strong delusion that they should believe a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12); but we know Him and by Him dwelling in us we know our election of God. The seed of the serpent cannot receive the Spirit of Truth. Jude describes the ruin of the world like this. He says they are “sensual, having not the

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Spirit” (Jude 19). What a sad picture of lost men and women!

- Without God!
- Without Christ!
- Without Life!
- Without Hope!
- Having not the Spirit!

7. DIVINE TEACHER

Seventh, I want us to look briefly at what our Savior tells us about the Holy Spirit as our Comforter in John 14:26.

(John 14:26) “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

This Divine Comforter, God the Holy Ghost is our Teacher. It is God the Holy Spirit and God the Holy Spirit alone Who teaches spiritual truth. He takes the things of Christ, the things that Christ

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taught and did, brings them to our remembrance, and causes us to see and understand them. — “**He shall testify of Me**” (John 15:26; 1 John 5:1-13).

(1 John 5:1-13) “**Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God**: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, [even] our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

“6 ¶ This is he that came by water and blood, [even] Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And **it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth**. 7 For there are **three that bear record in heaven**, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and

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these three are one. 8 And **there are three that bear witness in earth**, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

- **The Witness of the Spirit** — “*Crying, Abba Father!*”
- **The Witness of the Word** — “*Water*” — “*The Washing of Water by the Word*” (Ephesians 5:26)
- **The Witness of the Blood** — Sprinkled on the Conscience

“9 **If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater**: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.”

“10 ¶ **He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself**: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. 11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the

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Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Sealing the Word of God to our hearts, causing us to hear the Gospel of our own salvation by Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14), **giving us faith in Christ, the Spirit of God bears witness in our spirits that we are born of God.**

But what is it that the Holy Spirit teaches poor, needy sinners, by which He causes the chosen to know they are chosen, by which He causes the redeemed to know they are redeemed, by which He causes the called to know they are called? What is it that God the Holy Spirit teaches us and brings to our remembrance that gives us the sweet comfort of assured mercy, love, and grace in Christ?

REDEMPTION ACCOMPLISHED — He convinces the sinner that redemption is accomplished by Christ (John 16:7-11).

(John 16:7-11) “Nevertheless I tell you the truth;

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It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”

THINGS TO COME — He convinces us of “*things to come*,” that is to say of things that must come as the result of Christ’s obedience unto death as our Substitute and Surety (John 16:12-13). What comfort the Spirit gives, when he convinces a poor sinner of all that Christ has obtained and secured for him by his obedience and death as his Substitute!

(John 16:12-13) “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

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to come.”

- Eternal Redemption!
- Forgiveness!
- Justification!
- Righteousness!
- Sanctification!
- Eternal Life!
- Real Sonship!
- Certain Glory!

(1 John 3:1-9) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 **Beloved, now are we the sons of God**, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

“4 ¶ Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth

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also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and **in him is no sin**. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 **Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin**; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

(1 John 4:17) “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because **as he is, so are we in this world**.”

CHRIST GLORIFIED — And God the Holy Ghost comforts the hearts of chosen, redeemed sinners by convincing us that Christ is glorified (John 16:14-16).

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(John 16:14-16) “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. 16 ¶ A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.”

He glorifies Christ by showing us the things of Christ. God the Holy Spirit always points men to Christ. By the preaching of the Gospel He shows the things of Christ, effectually revealing Christ in the called, and thereby glorifies him. The Gospel we preach is the good news of the Glory of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).

(2 Corinthians 4:6) “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Not only does he glorify Christ by showing us His glory as our Redeemer, he shows us that Christ is

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glorified by the Triune Jehovah as our Redeemer
(John 16:5, Philippians 2:9-11).

(John 16:16) “A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.”

(Philippians 2:9-11) “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth; 11 And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Illustration: Surry Music Hall — Sunday evening, October 19, 1856 — C. H. Spurgeon 21 Years Old — 7 People Trampled to Death — 27 Hospitalized

This is our comfort:

- Redemption is accomplished!
- Salvation is sure!

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- Christ is glorified! — All things are in the hands of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us! Christ is on His Throne: all is well. — Christ is glorified: all is well!

“O spread the tidings ‘round, wherever man is found,
Wherever human hearts and human woes abound;
Let every Christian tongue proclaim the joyful sound:
The Comforter has come!

The long, long night is past, the morning breaks at last,
And hushed the dreadful wail and fury of the blast,
As o’er the golden hills the day advances fast!
The Comforter has come!

Lo, the great King of kings, with healing in His wings,
To every captive soul a full deliverance brings;
And through the vacant cells the song of triumph rings;
The Comforter has come!

O boundless love divine! How shall this tongue of mine
To wond’ring mortals tell the matchless grace divine
That I, a child of hell, should in His image shine!
The Comforter has come!

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The Comforter has come, the Comforter has come!
The Holy Ghost from Heav'n, the Father's promise giv'n;
O spread the tidings 'round, wherever man is found
The Comforter has come!"

Amen.