

Sunday February 4th sermon: "The Comforter's Great Work -- The God of All Comforts (Pt 43)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,
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John 14; 1 Corinthians 2

Having suffered Himself without a man to comfort Him, Our Lord Jesus is bound and determined that we should never be without a comforter!

Christ promised us that He will pray that the Father give us "another Comforter," Who is the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth. Christ promises He will not leave us comfortless, and we will know the Comforter because He will dwell in us.

So the comfort we have in the Holy Ghost is, first, that He dwells in us, giving us life, and sustaining that life on account of the sacrifice of Christ for our sins.

But Christ provides to us additional reasons why we are comforted by the Holy Ghost. He compares His personal face to face teachings with the work of the Comforter, because He will teach us all things, and bring to remembrance the things that Christ said.

Christ had just told His disciples that He must ascend back to His Father in Heaven, and will not be present physically to continue to teach His people. But the Comforter will, as it were, take His place, and continue to teach and to bring to mind the things that Jesus had told them during His ministry.

It is so easy for us to forget what we have been told and have seen, especially after our friends have gone away.

But Jesus is guaranteeing that His disciples and His people will not forget what He has said and done for us!

This is particularly important to the writing of the Scriptures. It is the Comforter that called to the Apostles' minds what Jesus had said and done, so that they could record it accurately in God's Word!

Our Bible is the record of what God wants us to know about Christ, His Gospel, and His teachings. It was the Comforter that made sure that the men God called to record His words, did so accurately! That is why Paul describes them as "God breathed," inspired by the Holy Ghost, perfect and true in all matters.

Thus, the Comforter comforts us in knowing that God's Word is pure and true, because He made it so.

But Christ also indicated that the Comforter would teach things to the Apostles that God wanted them to know. Paul the Apostle had the gospel revealed to Him by the Spirit of Christ in more richness than the other disciples might have known previously. There is much teaching in Scripture that the Comforter conveyed to the writers for the first time.

Christ's promise regarding the Comforter bringing to mind the truth about Jesus applies to us today, and to all of the Lord's people.

In our case, the Comforter does not teach us "new things" that aren't in God's Word. Rather, the Spirit dwelling in us teaches us from God's Word things we didn't realize before were there. He brings to our minds the truths He knows we need to recall, when we need to know them.

Being knit together with us, God's Spirit and our spirit in sweet communion and companionship, the Comforter knows us better than we know ourselves, and He communicates with our spirit the things of God and from His word.

We don't have to live and struggle alone, for our Comforter is here with us, to work in our hearts, to learn and remember all the Gospel truth we need!

In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul expounds upon the work of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost dwelling within us. First he describes the Gospel as foolishness, and a stumbling block to the lost, but to those who are being saved, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Paul lays out the radical difference between the lost man of the flesh, that is, the natural man, versus the spirit-filled man.

The Spirit reveals to us the truth of the Gospel, and the things of God, which cannot be believed or trusted in without the work of the Spirit in us. Paul preached to the people, not with man's clever words, but with spiritual truths.

Paul then startles us by pointing out that the spiritual truths of God's grace and salvation cannot enter into the heart of the natural man. Only by the Spirit are these truths revealed to us and convict us.

This doesn't mean that lost men cannot technically understand the promises of God. What it means is, that without the power of the Spirit first changing our hearts and minds, we cannot believe and trust and rejoice in the Gospel promises. It takes the power of the Holy Ghost first working in us, for us to savingly believe God's word.

That's because only the Spirit knows and can convey God's mind and heart to us. The spirit of this world will not be able to communicate to us what it doesn't believe, in fact, what it rebels against.

We who believe have first received the Holy Ghost, so that we may know the things that are freely given to us by God.

The natural man, in his fallen estate, cannot accept God's truth of the Gospel, and considers it all foolishness, because it can only be discerned by the power of the Holy Ghost working in us.

If we know the Gospel, and believe it, and trust in Jesus for salvation, that is only because the Holy Ghost is in us teaching us, and showing us the things of God!

Indeed, Paul asserted categorically, that no one can proclaim that Jesus is Lord, except by the power of the Holy Ghost.

So if you understand the things of God, and embrace them, and rejoice in them, without rejection or scoffing, then you have evidence of the Comforter comforting you!

Many people can know what the Bible says, and yet reject it. That is man's natural condition -- dead in sins, hating God, and rejecting the truth.

To see the mighty miraculous work of the Comforter in you, look around at how many people reject the Gospel, and continue in their sin and rebellion, and refuse to believe.

To those who believe God, it all seems so obvious now, but that is because the Holy Ghost has been at work, teaching us, and calling to mind the things of Christ.

How many people even attend the Lord's Supper, not comprehending what it really means, what it actually points to!

But if you and I grasp it, and rejoice in it, then the Comforter has used it to remind us of the truth about Jesus!