

The Character of the Spirit

by G. Campbell Morgan

The character of the Spirit is revealed as one of love, truth, holiness, and revelation, emphasizing the Spirit's role as a helper, intercessor, and teacher.

Scripture: John 14:16

Topics: "The Holy Spirit", "Comforter and Advocate"

Description

G. Campbell Morgan emphasizes the multifaceted character of the Holy Spirit as described by Christ, highlighting the term 'Comforter' or 'Paraclete' which signifies both companionship and active intercession. The Spirit is portrayed as one who alleviates feelings of orphanage and desolation, embodying love and support for believers. Additionally, the Spirit is characterized as the 'Spirit of truth,' revealing and teaching the essence of truth, and as the 'Spirit of holiness,' guiding moral conduct. Morgan underscores the Spirit's role in advocating for believers and illuminating their understanding of God's truth. Ultimately, the sermon presents the Holy Spirit as a vital presence that continues the work of Christ in the lives of His followers.

Transcript

THE teaching of Christ concerning the character of the Spirit is set forth first in the words: And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter. This word Comforter conveys the first thought concerning the character of the Spirit. It is indeed impossible to find a translation that will reveal everything contained within the great word Paraclete. It is conceded that originally the word had what may be spoken of as a passive meaning. It indicated one called to the side of another, and therefore one who, by his coming, annulled the condition of orphanage or desolateness. But then, in its use, both in Classic and New Testament Greek, the word passed into another realm, becoming active, and suggesting the thought of intercession, advocacy, pleading. The word is peculiar to the writings of John. It occurs four times in his Gospel, once in his Epistle. In the Gospel it is translated Comforter; in the Epistle, Advocate. In the Gospel it is used of the Spirit; in the Epistle it is used of Christ. The use of it, in the Epistle, is that of Christ standing in the presence of God, as the Advocate of the believer, the Representative, the Intercessor, the Pleader. That is the word and idea used of the Spirit in these discourses of Christ. It is, first, one called to the side of another. That surely was the first thought in the mind of the Lord. He had ever been accessible to these men. They had been able to approach Him with their questionings and perplexities. He was about to leave them, but they were not to be deserted. Another was to take His place, and annul the condition of orphanage. The Spirit is therefore the Spirit of love, banishing the sense of despair and desolateness.

The word Paraclete also suggests the thought of an active friendship. He will come, not to plead with God for men--that is the work of Jesus--but to plead with men for God, to intercede with men for Christ, and to win, by His intercession, the whole territory of man's being for the dominance of the living Lord Whom He represents. In this great word there are infinite stretches of meaning. To the waiting people of God the character of the Spirit is love; He will come to fill the gap, to take the place of the tender Christ, to be to the orphaned disciples a Comforter nigh at hand--to comfort them, and to do it by pleading within them the cause of their absent Lord and Master.

Another fact concerning the character of the Spirit is contained in the words the Spirit of truth. He is the inner life of truth, the fact of truth, and therefore will give the exposition of truth. These subjects necessarily overlap each other. This phrase the Spirit of truth has its most wonderful explanation in the mission of the Spirit; but it is used here only as revealing His character. How fitting and beautiful this wonderful economy, that the Spirit, Who is Himself the Spirit of truth, should come to be Intercessor for, and Administrator of the affairs of the One Who said, I am the . . . truth.

Another fact is declared concerning the character of the Spirit: the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit The Spirit of holiness--this reveals the moral character of the Spirit, and so declares the proper use and ultimate issue of truth.

And yet again: He shall teach you all things.--He shall bear -witness. He is the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of illumination.

These sayings of the Master record His teaching concerning the character of the Spirit. He is the Spirit of love, the Comforter; the Spirit of truth, thrice repeated; the Spirit of holiness, the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of revelation, the One Who witnesses and teaches.

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