

The Coming of the Spirit

by G. Campbell Morgan

G. Campbell Morgan's sermon emphasizes the promise and significance of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter sent by the Father through the Son to guide believers after Jesus' departure.

Scripture: John 14:16

Topics: "The Holy Spirit", "Comfort and Guidance"

Description

G. Campbell Morgan emphasizes the significance of the Holy Spirit's coming as a comfort and guide for the disciples after Jesus' departure. He explains that the Spirit is a gift from the Father through the Son, highlighting the unique relationship and fellowship between them. Morgan elaborates on the Spirit's role as a teacher and messenger, sent to continue the work of Christ and to bear witness to His ministry. The sermon underscores the transition from the old dispensation to the new, where the Holy Spirit is given to all believers, marking a profound change in how God interacts with humanity. Ultimately, the message reassures believers that they are not left orphaned but are empowered by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

THE little group of men who had followed the Lord during the years of His public ministry gathered about Him at the Paschal board. Judas had left the company. The others were filled with sadness. It is not necessary to attempt an analysis of their sorrow. Probably there was a great deal of selfishness mixed with it; but there if selfishness in all sorrow, save that which is under the constraint of the Holy Spirit. The shadow of approaching separation fell upon them. The Master administered comfort to their hearts. He told them that He was going away, but they were not to be left comfortless, or, as the word really is, orphans. This statement He explained by unfolding for them the great principles of the new dispensation of the Holy Spirit. He gave them a system of teaching on the coming, character, and mission of the Spirit, with the results following--a system which is clear, concise, and sufficient. His first statement concerning the coming of the Spirit is contained in the words: And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever. The Holy Spirit is to be the gift of the Father through the Son.

The marginal reading in the Revised Version is, will make request of the Father; but neither rendering perfectly conveys the thought that underlies the word that Jesus used. The conversation of Martha with Jesus, when Lazarus lay dead, throws light on this word: And even now I know that, whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give Thee. Martha used a word for prayer, the word translated ask, which Jesus constantly used when speaking of the prayers of other persons, but never of His own prayers. It is a word

that conveys the idea of asking as a beggar, as a pauper; and that is how men always pray. The word translated pray here is a special one, never used about prayer except in the Gospel of John, and always in that Gospel concerning the prayers of Jesus Christ. This reveals the fact that the prayers of Christ differed from those of other persons. The word suggests not the petition of some one that asks for something as a favour, but the petition of one who is on a perfect equality with the person to whom it is presented. The thought has within it the idea of perfect fellowship. Perhaps that is better conveyed by the translation: I will enquire of the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter. This is by no means a perfect translation, but it approximates more closely to the intention of the original word than either of the other phrases. Christ declared that He was going to the Father, and that He would enquire of, in the sense of holding converse or having fellowship with the Father, and, as the direct result, the Father would send them the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, had said to His disciples: /f ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him? That was a purely dispensational and Jewish statement; and the men never asked and never received. Now that the Master was leaving them, He said to them: I will ask, I will enquire of, I will pray the Father, and He shall give you.

Immediately these great discourses were ended, Christ moved into a higher realm, that of intercession; and John records His words in the presence of God for His people. In that prayer the Lord did not mention the Holy Spirit. The reason for this is to be found in the fact that the prayer for the Holy Spirit could not be offered until His Passion was an accomplished fact. He could not ask for the Spirit save upon the basis of a perfect fellowship, based upon a finished work, until-- no longer straitened--He should stand in the presence of God. Then, in response to the presence in the highest place of the One Who had accomplished the work, God would give.

The teaching then, of this first statement of Christ, concerning the coming of the Spirit, is that the Spirit is the gift of the Father, through the Son, upon the basis of His finished work. In that lies one point of difference between this dispensation and all that have preceded it. The Spirit came upon men in the past for specific purposes, at special seasons; but the Son of His love passed into the presence of God, having accomplished the Divine purpose, and upon the basis of that finished work the Spirit was poured out.

Concerning the Spirit's coming, the Master also said: These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you. But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things. This reveals that the Spirit is to be the Messenger of the Father in the name of the Son.

If His own coming Jesus said, I am come in My Father's name, and, I told you, and ye believe not - the works that I do in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. Upon two occasions He distinctly stated that He came and worked in His Father's name, that the name of God was the sphere of His work. Now He declared: The Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things. As the Son came in the name of the Father and as the name of the Father was the sphere of the work of the Son, so the Spirit was to come in the name of the Son, and the name of the Son was to be the sphere of the Spirit's work. This is perfect continuity.

A third statement on this subject is contained in the words: But when the Com'forter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father. This declares the Spirit to be the Messenger of the Son, from the Father.

This reference can only be understood by looking at its context: He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin: but now have they both' seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause. 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 bear witness of Me." Jesus had lived among men, unknown, misunderstood--men had hated Him; and now the Spirit was to be sent by the Son, as from the Father, in vindication of the character, ministry, and mission of the Son.

Yet one other declaration follows: 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; but if I go, I will send Him unto you. Thus the Spirit is directly the Messenger and Gift of the Son. He will Himself send the Spirit to His disciples upon the basis of His union with the Father, a union consummated as God and Man. He will send the Spirit, in virtue of His ascended Manhood, and the perpetual reception of that Manhood into the Godhead.

To sum up. Jesus enquired of the Father, and in answer to the enquiry of the Christ, God gave the Spirit. The Spirit became the Messenger of the Father; and His sphere of work was to be the name of the Son. This Spirit became God's Messenger concerning the Son, vindicating His work and His teaching. By virtue of the perfect union of the Son with the Father, the Spirit is the gift of the Son.

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