

The Holy Spirit as the Paraclete

by J. Sidlow Baxter

The Holy Spirit is our encourager, strengthener, and guide, who teaches us and abides with us forever, providing a solution to the problems of loneliness and unlearnedness.

Duration: 1:00:40

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 10:19-20, John 14:16, John 14:26

Topics: "Paraclete"

Description

The sermon transcript discusses the role of the Holy Spirit as the comforter and teacher. It emphasizes the importance of relying on the Holy Spirit for guidance and wisdom in difficult situations. The speaker shares a story from the Scottish covenanters to illustrate the power of the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry. The sermon also addresses the challenges faced by Christians in the modern world and the need for prayer and reliance on God to overcome them.

Transcript

I am bringing to you this evening a five-fold study from the New Testament. A study in a subject which, I am persuaded, will be of wonderful enrichment to every Christian heart. So then, first of all, to our five texts.

First of all, then, in the Gospel according to John, chapter 14 and verse 16. The Gospel according to John, chapter 14 and verse 16. In which our dear Master says, And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever.

Mark that well, that He may abide with you forever. Now my second text is in that same 14th chapter, verse 26. In which our Lord adds, But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you.

Oh, lay hold on that. He shall teach you. There are other things in the verse, but that's the thing I'm stressing.

He shall teach you. Now text number three is in the 15th chapter, right at the end of the 15th chapter, verses 26 and 27. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of me, and ye also.

Notice the order there, He first, ye next. He shall testify of me, and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. And now text number four, John chapter 16, verses 7 and 8. 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 to you. But if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, that is to you, when He is come He will reprove you.

Oh no, He doesn't say He will reprove you. When He is come to you, He will, by implication through you, He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. Now, beloved friends, before I turn you to my fifth and final text, may I at this point insert three explanatory remarks concerning the preceding four.

Comment number one, all of us will have immediately observed that these four verses are connected with each other by reason of the fact that they all treat of the self same subject. That is the third member of the ever adorable divine triunity of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. Comment number two, these four verses are the more closely interlocked in as much as they each refer to the Holy Spirit by that peculiarly beautiful designation, the Comforter.

Comment number three, though this possibly may be superfluous for some of you, that word Comforter in these four verses of our English version represents the compound Greek word parakletos. The prepositional prefix para means alongside of, just as it does in our English word parallel. While the main body of the word kletos is from the Greek verb kleo, transliterated into English k-l-e-o.

And it means, does kletos, one who is called alongside, that is to be our encourager, our strengthener, our adikon, our supporter, our guide, our sympathizer, and a great deal more. It is one of the most expressive words in the Greek vocabulary, parakletos, which we Englishize into paraklete. And blessed be his name, that dear heavenly paraklete is mine.

And he's yours if you are a blood-washed, spirit-born member of the true ecclesia, the church of God's dear son. And now for my fifth and final text. It does not come in the gospel according to John.

It does, however, flow to us from the pen of that same apostle. It comes to us in the first epistle of John, chapter two and verse one. First epistle of John, second chapter, verse one.

The apostle writes these words, My little children, these things am I writing unto you, that ye do not sin, that is, that ye do not knowingly, or willingly, and much less willfully, commit sin. My little children, he writes, conscious of his natural and spiritual seniority. My little children, these things I am writing unto you, that ye do not sin.

But, now here's the dread contingency. But, if any man sin, notice he doesn't say if any Christian sin or if any saint sin. This is a deft, delicate, always appropriate reminder that even the saintliest among the sanctified are still very human.

If any man sin, well, when that happens, what? Does that immediately disrupt the believer's union with God's dear son? Oh, thank God, no. There is an anticipated provision against that situation. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

And the hidden connection between that verse and the four which we have just consulted lies in that word advocate. Because in the Greek, it's that expressive word, paraklete, once again. If any man sin, we have

a paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Well now, beloved fellow students of the word, those are my five basal texts. And now let me reverently but enthusiastically proceed to build upon them the superstructure of my message to you. We Christian believers are the only people on this earth who have found the secret of true joy.

We do not say that with any bravado, but with deep and sincere conviction. We do not deny for a minute that the God-forgetting worldling has a certain kind of happiness as he plunges through his round of worldly and sometimes voluptuous pleasures. But do I need to remind you there is a universe of difference between mere happiness and real joy.

Happiness, as the etymology of the word connotes, is purely circumstantial. When happenings happen to happen happily, you have happiness. And when happenings happen to happen unhappily, you have unhappiness.

So that happiness or unhappiness, either of them, is altogether dependent on circumstances. Whereas by magnificent contrast, joy is utterly independent of exteriorities. We Christians, we have found the joy no tongue can tell.

How its waves of glory roll. It is like a deep or flowing well springing up within the soul. We can truly sing that lovely old Sankhya stanza, I found a joy in sorrow.

A secret balm for pain. A beautiful tomorrow of sunshine after rain. I found a branch of healing near every bitter spring.

And a whispered promise stealing over every broken string. Dear Christians, we have, haven't we? Albeit, there is another side to the matter. Just because of our attachment to Christ, we Christian believers are up against certain problems and obstacles and discouragements of which the unconverted know little or nothing.

Now here is a quite arresting fact. If sometime when you are in a pensive mood, you sit down and quietly contemplate all those difficulties that we are up against, specifically because of our union with the Lord Jesus, I think you will find, as I myself seem to have found, that they seem to arrange themselves into five comprehensive categories, or under five comprehensive headings. And the remarkable thing is that those five all-inclusive problems that we are all up against as Christian believers, they are divinely anticipated and magnificently matched by the five-fold provision which we have in these five occurrences of that word, paraclete.

Now let's dip into that a little. What would you say is the first big problem that we Christian believers, most of us if not all of us, sooner or later, at one time or another, are all up against? Perhaps when I mention it some of you may be inclined to wonder why I put this one the first. But I have a suspicion that on second thoughts you will find yourselves concurring with me.

It is the difficulty of our unwantedness. Yes, face up to it, the difficulty of our unwantedness. Let me make my meaning utterly clear.

In the aggregate, we Christian believers are a vast multitude of millions and millions spread round the globe. But in nearly any particular area, we are a social minority. And going with that, one of the commonest, one of the most persistent and one of the most dragging problems for most of us after our

conversion to Christ is our unwantedness by the unconverted majority.

By the spiritually unconcerned and by the worldly-minded everywhere around us. There are many who respect us as persons who resent us as Christians. There are many people who are quite happy to have us as neighbours or workmen or business associates who very plainly do not want us as friends.

And that can create such a problem even in our family circles. Very often this unwantedness expresses itself very painfully. We are not only wanted, we are loved as members of the family.

But as the saying goes, we are expected to keep our religion to ourselves or else immediately there is a strained relationship if not some outward collision. Now at times this seems strangely incongruous to us by reason of the fact that Christianity is such a beneficent way of living. And yet when you think of it carefully, it isn't a bit surprising that we should be unwanted by the worldly crowd.

For the spiritually dead ones all around us, they simply cannot understand the born again. They simply cannot understand what it is for us to have found new life. The born again spiritually alive Christian is an utter enigma to the spiritually blind, spiritually dead person who has never been converted.

I wonder, are there some unconverted folk in this meeting and you wonder whatever is this preacher talking about? Well the reason you wonder is that you're spiritually dead. I don't say that unkindly because all of us who have found new life in Christ and are here in this happy meeting rejoicing in that glad fact, we were once just as spiritually blind, just as spiritually dead, dear friend, as you are. You may be physically fit, you may be mentally alert, but unless you have come into saving union with God's dear son, your spiritual condition is one of death.

And when you see our Christian enthusiasm, you wonder why it is that we Christians get so happily excited about these matters. And of course we wonder why on earth you can't understand it all. But it's the difference between being spiritually alive and being spiritually dead.

Of course there's one way in which all of us Christians are very much wanted. Christian employers want Christian employees because of their honesty and integrity and industry and those who want service in their homes. They want Christian servants for the same good, sound, ethical reason.

And so on. But we have to come back to this every time. The offense of the cross never ceases and it's still true that the followers of the Lamb will never be popular with the seed of the servant.

Now all that can lead to a nagging, dragging sense of loneliness. And what a problem loneliness can be. Have you ever noticed a way back in Genesis before ever the ugly shadow of man's first sin fell upon the fair loveliness of that pristine paradise, there was an anterior shadow.

We find God saying, we find it written and God beheld all that he had made and behold it was very good. And then right on the heels of that we find and God said, it is not good. Oh, so there's a shadow right away.

Something not good. And what was it? You all know without my telling you. It is not good that the man should be alone.

The first shadow that ever flitted across a human pathway was the shadow of loneliness. And do I need to remind any Bible taught Christian here that the first Adam, a way back in Eden, is a tupos or type of our

Lord Jesus as the second Adam, the new representative of the human race. And in this immortal fourth gospel, I find Jesus the incarnate Son of God saying, I am alone.

Of course he could always add, as indeed he did, yet not alone for the Father is with me. But there came an agonizing finale when from that pinioned figure on that awful cross amid that midday, mid-darkness, there came this awful requiem, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Oh, Jesus knew what it was to be betrayed by a Judas and denied by a Peter and forsaken by the twelve and disbelieved on by his townsmen and rejected by his nation and repudiated by the world and even forsaken by the Father. Oh, the loneliness of Jesus on Calvary! We shall never, never, never know to all eternity the utter depth of that anguish and loneliness into which the incarnate Son of God plunged in order to save us.

And why did Jesus go through that black, depthless darkness as our sin-bearer? He has told us why. He told us in the first of these five Paraclete passages what the first request would be that he would make of the Father on the basis of his shed blood. Listen to the music of it again.

I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Paraclete. Now in the Greek vocabulary there are two words for another. One Greek word is heteros from which we get our word heterodox.

It means another of a different sort. That is not the word that Jesus uses here. The word that our Master employs means one of similar or identical nature.

In fact, he so speaks about the Paraclete as to make it unmistakably clear that when the Paraclete comes even the Holy Spirit he is so one with our Blessed Master that our Savior comes to us in the Paraclete no longer merely to be with us but to be within us. I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Paraclete that he may abide with you forever unlike myself who now physically and corporeally must withdraw from you he will never leave you. He will always be with you and within you and in having him you will have me.

What a wonderful, wonderful doctrine that is I'm speaking. The very happy, unexaggerated truth when I say that when this wonderful doctrine of the indwelling ever abiding, never departing, heavenly Paraclete first flashed upon my understanding two or three years after my conversion when I was still a youth it was almost to me like an addendum conversion. And from that day till this over forty years ago I have never once been lonely.

Never. I've often been alone I've often had to stand alone for my evangelical convictions. I've often been in very lonely places and in awkward situations.

But although I've often been alone I have never, never once been lonely. This is our Savior's great answer to the problem of Christian loneliness another Paraclete that he may abide with you forever. Now beloved brother, sister let me affectionately challenge you again are you making the most of this exquisitely wonderful provision? Do you talk to the heavenly Paraclete from morning till night? Do you listen to him inwardly from morning till night? And if slumber departs from your eyelids and instead of sweetly reposing during the nocturnal darkness you toss about in bed do you ever think of talking to him from night till morning? Do you listen to him amid the darkness from night till morning? You see, oh forgive me if I'm speaking what is seemingly superfluous for many of you but you see the Holy Spirit is just as truly personal as is the ever-blessed Father and the glorious Son, our Savior.

And the Holy Spirit I speak with prostrate reverence and deep thoughtfulness the Holy Spirit loves you just as much as does the Heavenly Father and just as much as does our Lord Jesus indeed the Scriptures tell us that our Lord offered Himself by the Eternal Spirit. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. It may seem rather unusual theology but out it comes unhesitatingly.

The Holy Spirit not only loves you are you listening? He likes you. Well you say that is a little bit unusual. Are you sure about it? Of course I'm sure.

How do you show whether you like people or not? Why the people for whom you have a natural affinity you seek the pleasure of their company whenever you can have it and the people for whom you have a dislike you avoid their company as often as you courteously can. Now the Holy Spirit must like you because He comes to be with you and within you from morning till night from Sunday till Saturday from January to December He knows the first and the last about you. He knows the best and He knows the worst.

He's the infallible psychologist. He knows you through and through and through. And when all others are misunderstanding you and perhaps blaming you because they only see the external and not the internal the Holy Spirit never misunderstands you.

He sees you through and through and... He sees the worst but He keeps loving you loving you wanting to be with you He loves you and He likes you. Are you making the most of Him? Isn't this a lovely message for you? Another paraclete that He may abide with you forever. What would you say is the second big difficulty we are all up against as Christian believers? First it's the difficulty of our unwantedness but now there is the difficulty of our unlearnedness.

I said our not your. The difficulty of our unlearnedness. Now thank God all down the Anno Domini centuries there have been scholarly and erudite men associated with the Christian faith and so it is in our 20th century.

Necessarily however the scholarly have always been the exception. And so it is today by far the greater number of us often feel frustrated by unlearnedness. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if there are not a few of us in this meeting who from time to time with much despondency have wrung our hands and said what can I do? I long to serve my Lord Jesus effectually but I sink back again and again frustrated by lack of intellectual apparatus.

I've never had the chance of going to a seminary or a theological college. I've never learned Greek. I've never done Hebrew.

I never even got a chance to do Latin. I've never waded through ponderous volumes of religious evidences and Christian apologetics. I've never studied through massive bodies of divinity and great swaggering tomes of systematic theology.

I don't even know my Bible as I ought and although I'm just longing and at times aching to do effective service for my heavenly King I'm thwarted and beaten again and again because I do not have the necessary academic training or the required knowledge. Are there some of us here like that? Oh, I have wonderful news for you. Look at the second of these paraclete verses that's John chapter 14 verse 26.

Jesus says, But the paraclete, even the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name he shall teach you. It's really there. Are you listening again? He shall teach you.

Every blood-purchased child of God in Christ has the privilege of a specially dispatched heavenly tutor who comes to teach you and me as God's children in Christ the vital precious truths of the word and of the spiritual realm. How much do you know dear friend about this supernatural teaching of the heavenly paraclete? I would be the last man ever to stand in an honored pulpit like this and address a crowd of Christians such as you are and say one derogatory word about scholarship. We can never have too much scholarship of a consecrated kind.

But if you do not know the teaching of the Holy Spirit you are not qualified for truly spiritual service for our dear Lord. On the other hand, even though you may never have the privilege of going to any outstanding institution of human learning, if you really know the teaching of the heavenly paraclete you are one of the intellectual aristocracy of heaven and God is waiting to use you. I mean every word of it when I say there's no theological college on this planet to be compared with that seminary which is at the pierced feet of the risen Christ where the student body is a praying consecrated Christian and where the curriculum is the Bible and where the chief tutor is the Holy Ghost, the heavenly paraclete.

That's the greatest theological college under the sun and we can all go to it without money and without price if we will. Was I shouting a bit then? Well wouldn't you if you were preaching something like this? It's wonderful! Now let me not give a wrong impression when I talk about this supernatural teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit I do not wish to be wrongly mistaken as implying that the Holy Spirit designs to make us Christian believers into a kind of walking society of religious encyclopedias able to answer every question and silence every critic able to plumb every prophecy and disentangle every enigma. No, I don't mean that.

But I do mean this. If you and I with daily prayerful regularity and with minds gratefully subjected to the blessed divine spirit if we will daily prayerfully browse in these pages then gradually but most decidedly and ever accumulatively the Holy Spirit will give to you and me a total grasp upon biblical revelation in addition to which he will give to you and me a more than human insight into the deepest treasures of divine revelation he will make the truths of the Bible lucid to the understanding and luminous to the mind and sanctifying in the heart and powerful in the life he will make the Bible come alive!

This is one of those points where perhaps one illustration will do away with the need for a multiplicity of extra words. A way back in those grim and yet glorious days of the Scottish Covenanters early one lovely sunny summer Sunday morning a Scottish lassie left her home in a highland village and was wending her way down the main street of the village on her way out to some sequestered vale among the Scottish hills where the Covenanters were to meet for the breaking of the covenant bread and the drinking of the memorial wine and the reading of the scriptures she had not gone far however before she heard the sound of horses hooves and suddenly swinging round a bend in the road there came to view a party of the dreaded clabberhouse dragoons led on by a young officer who seeing this damsel out at a suspiciously early hour of the sabbath morn pulled up his steed and his men and he said How now!

Whither ye be a-going at this early hour of the sabbath morn? if she had confessed that she was going to a meeting of the Covenanters she would have been immediately hauled up into the saddle and carried off to prison and may be to death on the other hand if she had lied she would have seared her conscience and grieved her lord what was she to do? what would you have done? well I'll tell you what she actually did in my own words I don't say these would have been hers there was a swift telegraphic S.O.S. to the Holy Spirit the paraclete and in the words of scripture before she called he answered and while she was yet speaking he heard so that with perfect equanimity she replied oh sir I am on my way to my father's

house our elder brother died sir some long while ago now but his will and testament is to be read this morning sir and I go to hear it read for I have a vital interest in it ladies and gentlemen of the jury I submit to you it was the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth if the young officer had pressed for more detailed data she would have supplied it frankly but no that was enough and he said all right away you go then and may they treat you liberally so away she went and away they went I'm not propounding any novel doctrine dear friends and to show you that I'm not I will quote our blessed Lord himself speaking about the trying situations which he knew his people would often find themselves in he said this it shall be given you in that hour what you shall say for it is not just you who speak but the spirit of my father speaking in you very well dear friend let me ask again how much do you know about this wonderful teaching ministry of the parape he shall teach you what would you say is the third big difficulty we are all up against first of all unwantedness then unlearnedness and now alas unfittedness do you know long observation convinces me that there are more Christians gradually drop out of soul winning service because of feeling an unfittedness for it than from any other reason I'm thinking just now of a very delightful middle-aged Christian woman who came to me after I had been preaching on the subject of one by one evangelism and she said oh Dr.

Baxter I entered into all you were saying but I'm afraid I'm a very discouraged woman you know I used to have a Sunday school class but I never saw one of that class converted I used to give out tracts at the street corners I've seen dozens of them thrown away or trampled underfoot but I've never known of one person who came to Christ through any tract I gave out and so she went on until she said somehow I came to the conclusion that I'm unfitted for Christian service and I've started leaving it to others now you know friends that's a spiritual tragedy and yet I wouldn't be a bit surprised if there are those in this meeting who have felt the same kind of discouragement again and again you found yourself saying oh I long to be a witness for my master I long to win other souls to him but I

seem so utterly ineffectual my most earnest words are like the proverbial water on the duck's back my most impassioned pleadings are treated with scorn my most cleverly prepared arguments are immediately torn to shreds and even my tears are mocked at and I come away with disconsolate heart saying with the prophet Isaiah who hath believed our report unto whom is the arm of Jehovah revealed has that been your experience? discouraged believer let me peel a lovely bell from heaven in your hearing let me turn you to the third of my five texts it comes in John 15 verses 26 and 27 the third occurrence of this word paraclete but when the paraclete 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 or testify of me and

ye also shall bear witness I have already pointed out the order there and we must never presume to break the sequence it is he first ye after he shall bear witness and by obvious implication in his power ye shall bear witness now either knowingly or unknowingly many of us seem to persist in transposing the order we will keep putting the ye before the he you know what I mean almost desperately we decide that we must do something about it and we choose some kind of Christian service and then we say Lord this is for thy dear sake please grant thy blessing the motive is good but the method is defective who are you and I that we should choose what we do and where we go one of the most prominent features about the church of the New Testament is its spirit guidedness it seemed good to the Holy

Ghost and to us all the way through there's the priority of the guiding spirit now this is one of the things that we are needing to relearn in the modern Christian church he first ye after look I think this is a case where another illustration would save time have you never had an experience like this you go into your prayer room one day for your usual time of secret converse with the Lord and when you have gone through the

list of the matters about which you purposed to pray you find that you have time to linger longer and you say something like this dear master I will not be in bondage to the clock I pray that by thy spirit thou wilt impress upon my heart and mind those persons or matters for whom or for which thou wouldest have me specially pray that is not making your mind a dangerous

vacuum it is simply giving our Lord a very important chance to guide you and is your experience not somewhat similar to mine forgive me if I refer to my own experience by way of illustration as often as not indeed far more often than not quite unexpectedly and sometimes with powerful suddenness something or someone will be laid upon my mind and I find the whole of my being caught up in one concentrated concern for instance for illustration let's say it's some unconverted man that we've been trying to win for a long time but the more we have besieged him the more unresponsive and apathetic he seems to have become until you feel even God couldn't convert that hard-hearted man but that man is laid upon your heart with unmistakable power and you find that your whole being is pouring itself

out that that dupe of the devil shall be set free and sometimes after prayer of that kind there is a temporary lassitude you feel so to speak that energy has gone out of you but offsetting that there is a wonderful spiritual exhilaration and best of all there is a deep down God-given pledge that you have really prayed through and so you have two or three days after that either you or some other Christian will go to that man carrying the water of life in the golden chalice of the gospel and now instead of seeing it dashed to the ground you find the Holy Spirit has preceded you and created soul thirst in the man and now when you come with the life-giving draft there's the thirst and he eagerly receives the triumphs of Christianity in the Roman Empire long ago they were not just won by

preachers there were no churches in those days in the sense of the wonderful big buildings we have nowadays the gods of ancient Rome went down before a multitude of spirit anointed individual Christian witnesses we are needing to learn the priority of the spirit in vital Christian service I believe if a nucleus of you made godly resolve entered into a compact to hold on to God until the answer comes I believe there could be a divine visitation in this city we are not praying enough what would you say is the fourth big problem we are all up against as Christian believers oh it's the difficulty of unequalness or seeming unequalness to the task that the Lord has set before us are you following these un's first unwantedness next unlearnedness next unfittedness and now unequalness by which I

mean how are we Christians of the present day to break through the encrusted apathy and hostility of this modern world of ours with its hyper commercialization with its industrialization its mechanization its urbanization its trade unionism how are we to break through the encrusted apathy of today we've got many quacks in the church there are those who tell us we've got to socialize the church so that instead of the prayer meeting you have an operetta etc there are those who tell us we must intellectualize the church give us men with degrees in the pulpit again I say I would be the last man ever to decry godly scholarship but I think that this craving for degrees can be carried too far we've never had so many men in the church with degrees and in some places they're emptying the church by

degrees and there are those who tell us we've got to organize until that word organize becomes terrifying to most ministers no that's not the word of our lord this is the cure that our lord offers right from the beginning of the Christian era right to the end of it it's in the fourth of these paraclete verses nevertheless I tell you the truth it is expedient for you that I go away for if I go not away the paraclete will not come to you but if I depart I will send him unto you and when he is come that is to you he will by implication through you convict the world why when you pause and reflect on it friends that's how the whole dramatic epic of the

organized church on this earth began Christ went up the spirit came down and the spirit anointed witnesses went out think of it twelve men

twelve men without any college tie without any university brogue without any academic degrees twelve men without any financial resources without any social prestige without any state backing twelve men without any of the supposed intellectual accoutrements which are necessary for any kind of world conquest these twelve Jesus men and their compeers laden so it would seem with disadvantages they went out to preach the new religion of one who in the estimate of his own countrymen was a blaspheming false messiah and who in the understanding of the pagan world was a publicly disgraced and executed felon and these twelve Jesus men and their little band of helpers they went out to preach that new religion of a murdered man and they went out against all the imperial might of ancient Rome and

against all the myriad minded intellectual sophistries of the brilliant Greeks and against all the unbending stiff necked religious bigotry of the old time Jew their tasks seemed ludicrously impossible and yet they hadn't been on the job for more than four decades before there was a hue and a cry rang round these men that have turned the world upside down how did they do it? by organized by wonderful academic prowess? no they did it in the envelopment of the Holy Spirit the heavenly paraclete and what we are needing to learn today is our need of the Holy Spirit to do anything vital at all for our dear Lord oh it's time that we got our people together got our people together and down on their faces before God and pleading with God to send another visitation of the Holy Spirit what would

you say is the fifth of these five big inclusive problems first unwantedness next unlearnedness next unfittedness next unequalness the last one is perhaps the most comprehensive of all it's the problem of our unworthiness our unworthiness after I had started preaching I began to get many an invitation but again and again I have politely declined and the underneath reason for my doing so was a devastating sense of unworthiness to represent such a master but I learned a lovely secret it's this if you and I are truly washed from our damning guilt in the wonderful blood of God's Lamb and if we are born of the Heavenly Spirit into new spiritual life and may I be permitted the reverent colloquialism if we are head over heels in love with Jesus then all our unworthiness is no disqualification

for Christian service I say that on the basis of the fifth occurrence of that word paraclete listen to these wonderful words as we close my little children I write these things to you that ye do not sin but if any man sin now there is my unworthiness in its deepest darkest blackest ugliest guise if any man sin well what about it why this over against all my unworthiness if any man sin we have a paraclete with the Father Jesus Christ the risen no Jesus Christ the ascended no Jesus Christ the glorified no do you see with what preciseness the Apostle John selects his contrastive adjective here if any man sin there's all my black unworthiness we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous and all my demerit and disqualification and unworthiness and imperfection they're all

swallowed up and infinitely covered in the all prevailing substitutionary righteousness of my sinless sin bearer there he stands before the throne and the Father sees me in him and in him the beloved I become accepted we Christians have indeed found the secret of the joy that never fails but we're up against these great difficulties and over against these five all-inclusive difficulties is this wonderful five-fold provision over against our unwantedness and loneliness the paraclete who abides with us forever over against our unlearnedness the paraclete of whom Jesus says he shall teach you over against our unfittedness for service the paraclete of whom Jesus says he shall bear witness and in his power ye shall bear witness and over against the unequalness of the task to convert the world

to him the paraclete of whom Jesus says when he is come to you he will convict the world and over against all our persisting and discouraging unworthiness the wonderful paraclete before the throne of the heavenly majesty on our behalf you see you and I have two great obligations one to that wonderful God above us and two to this world around us all my obligation to that all-holy God is fulfilled by that spotless paraclete on high and if I am living the spirit-filled spirit-guided life all my obligation to this unholy world is fulfilled in his imparted strength ask the dear master to make all this become irresistibly attractive to you ask him to create a longing for this spirit-filled life ask him to enable you to yield so that he can possess and if he really gets you and me then what we

have been preaching tonight will no longer remain mere theory it will become radiant radiant experience

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