

Our Comforter

by James Smith

The Holy Spirit is a divine person who comforts, guides, and empowers believers, helping them to live a life pleasing to God.

Scripture: John 16:7, Acts 5:3, Romans 8:14, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Ephesians 5:18

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

James Smith preaches about the essential role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer, emphasizing the Spirit's work in convicting of sin, leading to Christ, and transforming the heart. The Holy Spirit is portrayed as the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, and the Spirit of grace, guiding believers into all truth, testifying of Christ, and bringing liberty, joy, and peace. Smith urges believers to seek the fullness of the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, and to live a life marked by the Spirit's presence, power, and influence.

Transcript

THE COMFORTER--A DIVINE PERSON

"Then Peter said: Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit...You have not lied to men--but to God." Acts 5:3-4

Everything that characterizes a person is ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. He is said to be sent, to come, to act. He teaches, leads, and guides. He speaks, reveals, and witnesses. He is vexed, grieved, and resisted. He is a divine person, equal with the Father and the Son--in power, majesty, and glory.

He is associated with the Father and the Son in the ordinance of baptism; for we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He is associated also with the Father and the Son in the apostolic benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." Is the Father a person? so is the Holy Spirit. Is the Father divine? So is the Holy Spirit.

All the attributes of Godhead are ascribed to him; and he is entitled to the worship, glory, and honor of the Church, equally with the Father and the Son. Every personal pronoun is used when speaking of him in the Word, and every personal act is ascribed to him. Distinct from the Father and the Son--he is one with the Father and the Son, and possesses in himself the fullness of the divine nature, being naturally, essentially,

and eternally God.

O Holy Spirit, give us clear views of your distinct personality, divine nature, and essential glory! Let us see you in your Word, feel you in our hearts, and enjoy sweet communion with you day by day! Breathe on us, we beseech you; abide with us, and work in us both to will and to do of your good pleasure. Pull down every stronghold of Satan, pull up every root of bitterness, and conform us in all things to our Divine Example.

"Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you?" 1 Corinthians 6:19

THE HOLY SPIRIT--A COMFORTER

"But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." John 16:7

The Lord's people need a Comforter; for, O how much have they to render them unhappy! What, with sin within them, the world without them, and Satan constantly trying to distress and cast them down--they have enough to dishearten and distress them!

Then, there are the cares of business, the trials of the family, the oppression of the great, the sufferings of the poor, and the poor state of the Church--all combining to fill them with grief and sorrow.

Under these circumstances, human comforters are feeble and inefficient. God alone can impart the consolation needed. In order to meet the case, the Holy Spirit has condescended to assume the office of Comforter. He is entrusted with all the fullness of Jesus; he knows all the thoughts of the Father; he has examined all the stores of grace, and is perfectly acquainted with all the riches of glory: and with these--he is to comfort the Lord's people.

He knows every saint and every circumstance; he knows every foe and every temptation. He can gain access to the heart, and he can impart just the comfort we require. He turns the eye to Jesus; he excites in us confidence in God; he begets lively hopes of glory; he applies the promises; he sprinkles the atoning blood; he whispers peace; he teaches our hands to war, and our fingers to fight! Yes, he comforts us in all our tribulations; and so comforts us as to embitter sin, endear the Savior, and produce greater love to holiness. O Holy Spirit, may we never quench your influences, grieve your love, or slight your intimations; but may we be led by you, be taught of you, and possess you as the pledge of our inheritance.

"As one whom his mother comforts--so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted." Isaiah 66:13

THE ABIDING OF THE COMFORTER

"I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16, 17

Jesus came to comfort his people for a time, and to lay a firm foundation for their everlasting consolation. Jesus is the great source of comfort--and all spiritual comfort is based on his perfect work. It was necessary for him to return to his Father, that in the presence of God he may ever make intercession for us. But he sent the Spirit, to abide with the Church forever. That Spirit, who came at Pentecost, has never

left the Church--and he never will. He represents Jesus in the Church. He acts for Jesus; he glorifies Jesus. Much has been done calculated to drive him away; but in faithful love, he still abides with us.

Just so, when he once takes possession of the believer in the name of Jesus, he transforms him into a temple, consecrates him to the Savior's praise, and retains possession of him forever.

He is often grieved by us. He often reproves us; he withholds his comforting influences from us; he refuses to shine on our evidences, or witness to our adoption; but he never leaves us--nor does he ever forsake us. He abides with us forever. Blessed, soul-comforting truth this!

Oh, if it were possible for the Holy Spirit to abandon his temples, to give up his charge, or to discard his disobedient scholars, I would have been discarded long ago! But still he strives, still he works, still he conquers; and with weeping and with supplication we return to the Lord, from whom we have so deeply revolted. Oh, blessed Spirit, I praise you for the constancy and forbearance of your love! Still abide with me, reveal Jesus more clearly to me, and fill me with all joy and peace in believing on him!

"Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life!" John 4:14

THE COMFORTER, OMNIPRESENT

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you!" Psalm 139:7-12

The presence of a friend is always cheering; but to have a bosom friend, who feels the deepest interest in us, and in all that concerns us, and to have that friend always with us--what a comfort is that! The Holy Spirit is such a friend--and he is ever with us! As God, he can be everywhere present; and as a covenant God, he has promised to be everywhere present and always present with believers in Jesus.

Nor is he merely present; he is present to instruct our minds, correct our faults, reprove our follies, revive our graces, bring truth to our remembrance, brighten our evidences, sanctify our souls, and comfort us under all our trials! He will never leave us--nor ever forsake us!

Grieved by us, he may refuse to comfort us, witness to our adoption, or cry, "Abba, Father," within us; but he will still work, in producing conviction, awakening distress, filling us with sorrow, and piercing us with remorse, in order to recover and bring us back. He will never forsake the work of his own hands. He will never quite give us up.

Let us, therefore, endeavor to realize always and everywhere, "The Holy Spirit is with me! He observes my ways, marks my motives, listens to my words, and is either pleased or grieved by my conduct."

This would preserve us from sowing to the flesh, from which we can only reap corruption; and would lead us to sow to the Spirit, from which we shall reap life everlasting. O my soul, remember that the Holy Spirit is ever with you, ready to bless you, and to unfold the truth to you. He is your daily teacher, your constant monitor, and your faithful friend; therefore aim so to walk as always and in all things to please him.

"The Spirit searches all things--yes, the deep things of God." 1 Corinthians 2:10

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

"Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." Romans 15:19

All the wondrous miracles wrought by the apostles, and the glorious work of grace wrought in the hearts of primitive believers--are ascribed to the power of the Spirit of God. There can be no real religion without power, and no power is sufficient to produce real religion, but the power of the Spirit. The apostles were commanded to wait at Jerusalem, after they were commissioned to preach the gospel, until they were endued with power from on high.

The Spirit, to represent his power and manner of working, is compared to the three most powerful elements--wind, fire and water. His power subdues the sinner's corruptions; wins his heart for Christ; transforms him into the likeness of Christ; and makes him, though but a worm, victorious over all his foes. Through the indwelling of the Spirit, we have power with God, power over Satan, power with sinners, and power with saints. We can do all things required, and bear all sufferings, through the power of the Spirit of God.

This power is just what the Church of God needs, in order to her increase unity among her members, and deeper sanctification. And this is just what individual Christians need, to fill them with joy, separate them from the world, and enable them to adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things. But we do not realize our need of the power of the Spirit as we should, and therefore we do not seek it as we ought. Yet we must have it, if much good is to be done; and we have no right to expect it without earnest pleading for it. Spirit of God, as the Spirit of power, dwell in my heart, subduing my lusts, purifying my affections, and conforming me to the Lord Jesus in all things!

"God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SPIRIT

"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. 1 Corinthians 12:11

The gifts, operations, and communications of the Spirit in the primitive Church, were numerous and various--and they were sovereignly bestowed. No one had any claim, nor had any one cause to complain. Just so now. The Holy Spirit, being God, is invested with, and continually exercises, his divine sovereignty.

In the calling of the saints, he exercises sovereignty as to the time, the means, and the manner of calling them. So, as to the qualifications of the saints for usefulness, he gives just what kind and what number of gifts he pleases. In blessing the Word, too, the Holy Spirit works as he will: he convinces one, reproves another, and comforts a third. He always humbles the sinner, exalts the Savior, and magnifies the free grace of God. But in so doing, he exercises his adorable sovereignty.

Yet this sovereignty of the Spirit is so exercised as not to interfere with man's responsibility or accountability. Nor does it render the use of means unnecessary--but rather the more necessary, as it is by means, and by what means he pleases, that he works and makes his communications. He presides in the Church, he works in every part of the Church, he manages all the concerns of the Church; and he does all in the name of Jesus, and for his honor and glory.

As Divine, he can do all things; as Sovereign, he does whatever he desires; but being Love, whatever he does is for our present and everlasting good.

Blessed Spirit, work in me to will and to do of your own good pleasure! Work in me, that I may work out my own salvation with fear and trembling; and work in the Lord's vineyard for the Lord's glory.

"God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will." Hebrews 2:4

THE SPIRIT, NEW-CREATING

"You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." John 3:7-8

Like begets its like. Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image. By nature we are all carnal, corrupt, and depraved, bearing the image of the fallen earthly Adam. In this state we cannot perceive the nature, or enter into the enjoyment of the privileges, of God's kingdom: "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This renders the Spirit's work absolutely necessary: "Except a man be born again--he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The Holy Spirit generates a new nature, and we become new creatures; in consequence of which we perceive the spirituality of God's law, our entirely fallen and totally depraved condition, the impossibility of salvation except it be of grace, the exact suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the great importance of a saving interest in him. From this new creation proceeds a thirsting, desiring, and longing for Christ; then the heart goes out after Christ; then the soul closes with Christ; and at length the man becomes one with Christ. Resting alone on Christ, and living in fellowship with Christ--the believer becomes conformed to Christ, and reflects the image of Christ, so that all around perceive the change. The man lives not henceforth to the lusts of the flesh--but to the will of God. The life that he lives in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God; and he is manifestly declared to be an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

"For those who live according to the flesh--set their minds on the things of the flesh; but those who live according to the Spirit--the things of the Spirit." Romans 8:5

THE SPIRIT CONVINCING OF SIN

"He will reprove the world of sin--because they believe not on me." John 16:8, 9

To "reprove" is to convince, and so to convince as to reprove and condemn. The law convinces of sin in general, and condemns for it. Here the Spirit is said to convince of sin in general--but more particularly of the sin of unbelief. You may convince a man that he is a sinner because he has broken the law; but can you convince him that he is a sinner because he does not believe in Christ? The Holy Spirit places before the mind the facts, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; that he is able and willing to save any sinner; that he wishes sinners to come to him and be saved: and then he convinces the man that he has not believed and acted on the word of Christ--and that this is his sin.

We ought to believe on Christ, for God commands it: "This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." To this end the New Testament was written: "These are written--that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through his name."

Salvation is promised to believing: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved." Damnation is the penalty of disbelieving: "He who believes not shall be damned." Every man either receives Christ--or rejects him; either believes on Christ--or treats him with contempt. Unbelief treats Christ with the greatest possible contempt, and is therefore the sin that seals our condemnation, and leaves us without hope. Oh, to see that disbelieving God's testimony is a great sin, that we may believe in Jesus to the saving of the soul! Spirit of faith, work faith in my heart, that I may not only believe to the saving of my soul--but to the glory and praise of God.

"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:19

THE SPIRIT CONVINCING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"He will reprove the world of righteousness, because I go to my Father." John 16:8, 10

He shall convince us that the claims of Jesus were just, that the character of Jesus was perfect, and that his obedience to the law was complete; so that under his teaching we shall believe that Jesus was innocent of every charge brought against him, that he was the Son of God, and that he wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness, by which every believer is justified before God.

He shows us that we have no righteousness of our own, that we must have one--or miserably perish, that Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes, and that whoever believes in him is justified from all things. We see that God must be righteous, and therefore he cannot justify any person without a perfect righteousness; that we have no righteousness of our own, and therefore we cannot be justified in the sight of God. Then he shows us that Jesus has wrought out a perfect righteousness; and that this is imputed to, or placed to the account of, and conferred on, every one that believes, and in this righteousness we are justified.

Now the sinner renounces himself and all his own works entirely, and is right glad to receive Jesus to be his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The Holy Spirit works faith in the heart, which faith embraces Christ as he is revealed in the gospel; and from that moment Christ becomes our all and in all. Thus, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

O Jesus, I adore you as the Just One, and rejoice in you as having wrought out and brought in a righteousness for the justification of my soul. Holy Spirit, exalt Christ before me more and more!

"To declare at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus." Romans 3:26

THE SPIRIT CONVINCING OF JUDGMENT

"When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment...in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned." John 16:8-11

The Spirit shows that God is just, and has prepared his throne for judgment; that he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, has appointed his own Son to be the Judge, and has decided to reward every one according to his works. The great proof produced is, that even the prince of this world has been judged and condemned in the death of Christ, and is now awaiting the full execution of the tremendous sentence passed on him.

In addition to this, a bar of equity is erected in the sinner's conscience. Before this he is obliged to appear: his sins are placed in array before him; his mouth is stopped; he is brought in guilty, and sentence of death is recorded against him. He gives himself up for lost, for he sees that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified. Then the gospel is unfolded to his mind, the way of escape is pointed out, and he flees for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before him. He betakes himself to Jesus, receives the Scripture testimony concerning Christ, and ventures on him alone for salvation. He pleads his blood for pardon, his obedience for justification, and his Word--that the Spirit of grace may sanctify his nature and make him fit for heaven. He is convinced of judgment, for he has experienced it on a small scale in his own soul; and he has no doubt but all must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. He commits his soul to Jesus, and, from a personal knowledge of him, is persuaded that he is able to keep that which he has entrusted to his care. He walks wisely in the world, cautiously in the family, and prudently in the Church; knowing that every one of us must give account of himself to God.

"He has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he has ordained." Acts 17:31

THE TEACHING OF THE SPIRIT

"As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit--just as it has taught you, remain in him." 1 John 2:27

This anointing is the communication of the Holy Spirit to the believer. Jesus gives the Comforter; the Comforter consecrates the believer, and he becomes a king and a priest unto God. The Holy Spirit becomes his teacher; and with the Word of God in his hand, and the Holy Spirit in his heart--he needs no new revelation. He has the truth, the whole truth; which truth the Holy Spirit will gradually unfold to his understanding and apply to his heart--so that it will become in him the ingrafted Word, which is able to save the soul.

For all that we know of ourselves, for all that we know of Jesus, and for all that we know of God as our heavenly Father--we are indebted to the Holy Spirit. He is the great teacher of God's family; he takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us.

The teaching of the Holy Spirit runs through the whole of a man's life; and by the dispensations of Divine Providence, especially by our various afflictions and trials, as well as by the inspired Word, he teaches us more and more of our own sinfulness, of the suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus, of the infinite love of our heavenly Father, of the emptiness of the present world, and of the superiority of the glory that is to be revealed in us.

O infinitely blessed Spirit of God, be our teacher. May we find that, as the holy anointing, you abide in us, revealing Christ more and more unto us, and opening up daily the blessed Word of your grace unto us. O to know more of Jesus, in his glorious person, perfect work, infinite merits, tender love, and constant care!

O to confide in Jesus more, to love Jesus more, and to imitate Jesus more! O may Jesus be our all in all!

"But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth." 1 John 2:20

THE LEADING OF THE SPIRIT

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God--they are the sons of God." Romans 8:14

Man, when left to himself, wanders into sin, disgrace, and danger; therefore the Lord gives his Holy Spirit to lead and guide all his children. The Spirit always leads us out of ourselves--to Christ; away from our own works--to the work of Christ. He leads us to the cross for pardon, to the open fountain for cleansing, to the ordinances for food and refreshment, and to the throne of grace for fellowship, and for help in time of need.

He never allows a man to admire his own works or supposed excellences, nor even to rest on His own work in the heart; but leads him to admire the beauties of Christ, and to rest on the finished work of Jesus alone for life and peace. The Spirit always humbles the sinner, exalts the Savior, and magnifies the free grace of God! If we have much of his presence and grace, Jesus will be exalted, extolled, and set on high by us.

The Spirit leads from sin--to holiness, from the world--to the Church, from temporal things--to spiritual things. He leads to self-examination and self-communion, and thus saves from self-deception and many mistakes. He leads from the law--to the gospel; from Moses--to Christ. He leads us rationally, as men; lovingly, as children; and constantly, as his care and charge.

Holy and ever blessed Spirit, lead us evermore by your counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory. Lead us into a deeper knowledge of Jesus, into closer communion with God; and especially lead us to have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings. Lead, O lead us in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that we may inherit substance, adorn our profession, and scatter blessings all around us. Lead us to Jesus on his cross, and also to Jesus on his throne.

"If you be led of the Spirit--you are not under the law." Galatians 5:18

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT

"God has chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit." 2 Thessalonians 2:13

To sanctify, is to separate and set apart for holy purposes and holy uses. The Lord has separated his people, by first choosing them in Christ to be holy. And he sanctifies them now for himself, by the power, operation, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In sanctification we are taken possession of for Christ, we are new-created in Christ, and a work is commenced which is to make us exactly like Christ. A sanctified person has his heart changed, his will renewed, his understanding enlightened, his conscience purified, and his affections spiritualized. Sanctification is commenced in regeneration; but it is not completed then. It is the good work which God begins in us, and which will be completed in the day of Christ.

It extends to the whole man, soul and body; and is carried on through the Word, ordinances, and providence of God. Indeed, all things are rendered subservient to it. At first there is the blade, then the ear, and at length the full corn in the ear. We are first babes, then children, then young men, and at length fathers, in Christ. United to Christ, we receive from Christ, are influenced by the Spirit of Christ, and bring

forth fruit like Christ.

Holiness has its seat in the heart; but it regulates the whole man, and appears in his conduct in every-day life. If a man experiences the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit--sin grieves him, Satan tries him, the world troubles him, and heaven attracts him.

Spirit of Jesus, sanctify us deeply, thoroughly, that we may be just like Jesus! Sanctify us by every trial, by every ordinance, by every privilege, by every comfort! Sanctify us as you did Jesus, that we may resemble him!

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit--that we are the children of God." Romans 8:16

The Spirit knows all God's children. He witnessed the registering of their names in the book of life; he created them anew in Christ Jesus; he dwells in their hearts; and he bears witness to the glorious fact that they are the children of God. This witness he bears in us when he produces the filial nature, sheds abroad the Father's love, and generates filial and holy confidence in God's paternal character.

Sometimes he shines on a promise, brings it home, applies it with power, and gives the inward persuasion that it is ours. Sometimes he enables us so to trace out his own blessed work within us, that we can no more doubt our adoption--than we can doubt our creation! Sometimes he softens the heart, fires the affections, soothes the conscience, and whispers "Abba, Father" within the soul; so that we feel impelled to look up and cry, "Doubtless you are our Father." At other times, he so shines upon the representations given of the Lord's people in the Word, and then upon his own work in our hearts, that we see clearly that we have all one Father, and compose but one family. And at other times, under an experimental ministry, he enables his servants so to describe character, and point out the marks of the children of God, that they see and recognize their own likeness; and this is accompanied with a sweet persuasive influence, so that to doubt our sonship at such times seems all but impossible.

Sacred Spirit, teach my own spirit to trace out and prove its adoption, and then bear your witness with my spirit that I am a child of God! O scatter doubts, dissipate fears, and fill me with holy confidence! Let the knowledge of my adoption, and the enjoyment of my sonship, be my daily privilege!

"He who believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself." 1 John 5:10

THE SEALING OF THE SPIRIT

"After you believed--you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Ephesians 1:13

The gift of the Spirit sealed or confirmed the claims, promises, and perfection of the work of Christ. It proved that Jesus was the Messiah, that his work was completed, and that his atonement was sufficient. The gift of the Spirit to us, as a witness, indwelling comforter, and abiding intercessor, is a seal which confirms our adoption, our acceptance with God, and our right to all the privileges of the gospel. The Spirit is the Father's seal, which he gives to assure us of his favor, approbation, and love to us. It is also the Son's seal, assuring us that his blood has availed for our pardon, his righteousness for our justification,

and his intercession for our final salvation. But the Spirit himself does seal us. His seal is the truth--the Word of the truth of the gospel. He makes the impression upon our hearts, which he softens with his love, and then brings down the seal upon them with his own invincible power, and the impression is made. The truth reveals Jesus to us; and when applied to us, it leaves the likeness of Jesus stamped upon our hearts; and when the likeness of Jesus is stamped upon our hearts, it is revealed by deep hatred to sin, powerful longings for holiness, and an all-controlling desire to honor Christ, to be like Christ, and at length to be forever with Christ. The sealing of the Spirit produces a sense of our acceptance in Christ, our union to Christ, and the lively hope of being perfectly like Christ.

Spirit of Jesus, seal my heart, and be yourself the seal within me that grace and glory are mine! O my soul, I charge you that you grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption; but sow to the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and live in the Spirit!

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us--because he has given us his Spirit." 1 John 4:13

THE EARNEST (deposit) OF THE SPIRIT

"God anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

God has promised us, as believers in Jesus, a great and glorious inheritance: but we have to wait for it; and while waiting, we are liable to be exercised with many temptations, doubts, and fears. Therefore, as he gives us his Spirit as a seal, to assure us of his approbation, so also he gives us the Spirit as an earnest of our inheritance. The Holy Spirit within us--is God's pledge which ratifies his promise, and assures us of a full possession. It is a part of the inheritance itself. If we have the Spirit--we must have the kingdom. He has come to prepare us for it, assure us of it, and give us some sweet foretastes of its pleasures and joys.

The peace that the Holy Spirit produces within us, the joy he imparts to us, and the liberty he confers upon us, are the same in kind as the peace, joy, and liberty which form so prominent a part of the inheritance of the saints in light. They only differ in degree. The Spirit does not now waft us up to heaven--but he often brings down some sweet foretastes of heaven into our hearts. He is God's earnest; and so sure as God has given the earnest--he will give possession of the kingdom. Therefore said Jesus, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And Paul has added, speaking of the Comforter, "He is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." O for more of those sweet foretastes, divine and pure joys, which the blessed Spirit at times confers upon us! O for those ravishing views of Jesus, those sweet pleasures, and holy foretastes of heaven, which raise us above the present world!

"Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." 2 Corinthians 5:5

THE INTERCESSION OF THE SPIRIT

"And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." Romans 8:27

The believer does not, cannot, utter all that he feels within. He has such sorrow for sin, such desires for holiness, such longings for Christ, and such pantings for glory--that he cannot express them. These are

produced by the Spirit, and prove his presence and his power. They are his intercessions within us, and are an echo of the intercession of Christ for us. Jesus intercedes for us in heaven that we may be kept, sanctified, and at length glorified; and the Spirit sets our hearts upon the same things, and draws out our whole souls in desires and prayers for them.

And then, God knows what our secret, unuttered prayers mean, for he searches our hearts. Our sighs, groans, perplexities, distresses, and strong desires, are full of meaning; and the Searcher of Hearts takes the meaning of them, and accepts them as prayers. God knows what is the mind of the Spirit--what he wills, what he dictates to our hearts, what he inspires us to aim at and seek.

The Spirit's intercession is according to the will of God; he never helps us when we seek what is wrong in itself, or what would be injurious to us. He knows what God wills, what we need, and what we ought to set our hearts upon and seek; and when we do so--we follow his dictation, we yield to his influence, and we secure his assistance.

O Holy Spirit, intercede in my heart! Be my advocate within, as Jesus is my advocate above. Help, O help my infirmities, and teach me for what, and how to pray as I ought! Daily show me my needs, my Savior's fullness, my Father's loving heart, and my free welcome to all the blessings of grace and glory; and then stir me up to seek them.

"You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry!" Psalm 10:17

THE SPIRIT HELPING US

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." Romans 8:26

We are compassed with infirmities. Our weakness and ignorance are great. Sometimes we feel that we have no power to pray, and sometimes we know not what to say--when we attempt to pray. We are dependent on the Holy Spirit both for power and wisdom. He teaches us our need of divine things; he unfolds to us the fullness of Jesus; he puts the divine promises into the hand of faith as our warrant to expect; he excites stronger desires; he produces most powerful emotions--we sigh deeply and groan inwardly.

At times, he furnishes us with suitable words, and we wonder at our own fluency; always, when he thus helps us, we feel deeply our need of the blessing, and cannot give over seeking--until we obtain it. All real prayer is produced in the soul by the blessed Spirit.

All our help in prayer we receive from him. And our success in prayer depends on his presence and assistance; for we never pray in faith but when, as a Spirit of faith, he secretly assists us. Sometimes he opens to us the loving heart of God; sometimes he unfolds some precious, precious promise; sometimes he directs the eye to the ever-prevailing intercession of Jesus, and then prompts us to go alone, fall on our knees before God, and sweetly assists us in pouring out our hearts before him. O how blessed the privilege of prayer when the Spirit helps our infirmities! but how dull and dry we are--when his sacred influence is withheld!

Lord Jesus, daily send the Comforter into my soul, that he may help me to do your will, bow to your sovereignty, seek the advancement of your cause, and the glory of your thrice blessed name. Help, Lord,

help daily!

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Corinthians 12:9

THE SPIRIT QUICKENING

"It is the Spirit who quickens; the flesh profits nothing." John 6:63

That man by nature, is dead in trespasses and sins--the Scriptures constantly affirm; that, being dead, he has no moral power; and having no moral power, without the Holy Spirit he can do nothing morally or spiritually good.

It is therefore the office and work of the Holy Spirit to quicken and raise the dead in sin. All real religion begins with the quickening of the Spirit. When we experience this, we begin to breathe after spiritual things; we open our eyes in a new world; we hunger and thirst after righteousness; and at length taste that the Lord is gracious. We have new thoughts, new desires, new hopes, new fears, new joys, and new sorrows. The eye fixes on Christ, the heart goes out to Christ, and the chief desire of the soul is to be like Christ.

The Spirit not only quickens us at first, so that we pass from death unto life--but all through life we need and are dependent on the Spirit's quickening. He quickens us to pray, and he quickens us in prayer. His quickening it is that puts life into our graces, energy into our prayers, confidence into our expectations, and enables us to resist Satan, steadfast in the faith.

If his quickening power is withheld--we soon grow dull, cold, lifeless, and inactive. We have no power in prayer, no enjoyment in ordinances, no liberty in speaking to the saints, nor profit in reading God's Word. Every duty becomes a task, every privilege a burden, and every cross appears insupportable.

While under the quickening operation of the Spirit--we can do all things; but without his quickening--we can do nothing. Often, very often, have we to cry out from bitter experience, "My soul cleaves unto the dust; quicken me according unto your word!"

Quicken Spirit, daily quicken my soul!

"The letter kills--but the Spirit gives life." 2 Corinthians 3:6

THE SPIRIT TRANSFORMING US

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit!" 2 Corinthians 3:18

The gospel is the mirror that reflects the likeness of Christ--and Jesus is the mirror that reflects the likeness and glory of the Father. He stands before us--not as Moses did before the Jews, with a veil on his face--but unveiled; and in his unveiled face we behold the glory of God.

The Holy Spirit enlightens the mind, directs the eye to Jesus, points out the excellences of Jesus, and keeps the eye fixed on Jesus. And as the face of Moses caught and reflected some rays of the glory of God on the Mount, so we are changed into the likeness of God in Christ. We are changed into the image of his holiness, love, truthfulness, mercy, justice, and compassion. We become spiritual and God-like, and

all who observe us perceive that there is a great and growing change in us. Our humility deepens, our patience strengthens, and our benevolence becomes more pure and expansive.

Every man is more or less assimilated to the likeness of his god; and the Christian, the more he has to do with God, the more communion he holds with God, the more the eye of his mind is fixed on God--the more he resembles God. Man by nature is altogether unlike God; man by grace is being gradually conformed to the image of God; but man in glory will exactly resemble God. We shall then be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The sight of Christ makes us like him.

O Holy Spirit, fix my eye on God in Jesus; daily may I behold his glory; and may all who know me bear witness about me--that I am changed into the image of God! O change me from glory to glory, until I am all glorious within and without, for Jesus' sake!

"And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven." 1 Corinthians 15:49

ACCESS TO GOD BY THE SPIRIT

"Through him, we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Ephesians 2:18

Jesus opened a way for sinners to the Father--by his death; he pointed out that way--by his teaching; and he emboldens us to approach in that way--by his intercession. This way is intended for both Jews and Gentiles. By this way we can have access to God, come into his presence, and draw near to him.

But it is the Spirit, who now unfolds the way to us, excites the desire to approach God through it, and enables us to come to God by it. He gently leads us. He kindly teaches us. He secretly enables us. Without the Spirit, we would stop short of God, rest in mere religious forms, and be strangers to heart-affecting fellowship with the Most High God. But the Comforter will not allow the Lord's people to be satisfied without nearness to God, fellowship with God, and frequent communications from God.

Real religion is having to do with God, having to do with God through Jesus, and under the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit. We come to God as a Father, we plead with God as a Father, we confide in God as a Father, we confess our sins to God as a Father, we obtain pardon from God as a Father, and we receive gifts and grace from God as a Father. The Holy Spirit reveals the relationship, testifies to our adoption, and gives us boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Jesus.

Blessed Comforter! let us enjoy access to God, fellowship with God, and joy in God--through your gracious influence, teaching, and work. Never, never let us rest in mere religious forms, services, or even our highest privileges; but let us be able daily to say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Nearer to God, nearer to God! we cry!

"These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life." Jude 1:19-21

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

"If we live in the Spirit--let us also walk in the Spirit." Galatians 5:25

The Spirit of God lives in us, as the source of our sanctification. We are to live in the Spirit, as if he were: the atmosphere we breathed, the temple in which we worshiped, or the habitation in which we dwelt. To LIVE in the Spirit, is to live under his influence, according to his Word, recognizing his presence with us always. So, to WALK in the Spirit, is to walk as influenced, directed, and assisted by him; looking to him for wisdom to guide us, grace to help us, and power to preserve us.

To walk in the Spirit, is to live as a man delivered from the law, rescued from the present evil world, freed from the dominion of sin, and set apart for God's glory and praise. The Spirit is our teacher, leader, and comforter. We walk in Him-as we yield ourselves to him, and seek to please and honor him. We are careful not to grieve him, or resist him, or quench his holy influences. To walk in the Spirit, is to breathe the spirit of Christ, and exhibit the temper and disposition of Christ in the midst of opposition, persecution, irritation, and many self-mortifying duties. It is to walk as Jesus walked, taking him for our pattern, and seeking grace from the Comforter, to think, feel, and act, as Jesus thought, felt, and acted.

Blessed Comforter! teach us to live in the Spirit in the present day, and to walk in the Spirit as we walk through the wilderness of this world. Oh! to walk as Jesus walked, to live as Jesus lived, constantly presenting ourselves to God, for his service and praise! May we render our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service; and not be conformed to this world--but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. O to be unearthly! O to be deeply spiritual!

"Walk in the Spirit--and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh!" Galatians 5:16

THE SPIRIT TESTIFYING OF CHRIST

"When the Comforter comes, the One I will send to you from the Father--the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father--He will testify about Me!" John 15:26

A principal part of the Spirit's work--is to testify of Christ. He has done this in the Word, every part of which has direct or indirect reference to Christ. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit, or soul, of prophecy; prophecies without Christ, are like a body without a soul. The spirit of prophecy--is the testimony of Jesus. The types and shadows of the law, the predictions of the prophetic page, the psalms and songs of the Bible--are all impregnated with Christ. But in the New Testament especially, has the Spirit testified of Christ; there he bears witness to his birth, baptism, miracles, claims, sufferings, death, resurrection, and triumphant ascension to glory. He testifies still in the Word and ordinances, by the voice of the preacher, and by his power in the conscience.

He bears witness for Christ, and testifies of Christ, in the believer's heart. He testifies to his divinity, and to the glory of his person as God and man, the one all-glorious Mediator. He testifies of the merit of his blood, the perfection of his righteousness, the love of his heart, and his readiness to save sinners--even the very chief! He testifies of the exact suitability of Christ to meet every case, suit every tried saint and troubled sinner, and to be the eternal Savior of all those who obey him.

Let us then recognize, realize, and reverence the Holy Spirit--as the almighty testifier to the glory, worth, and excellency of the Lord Jesus. Spirit of God, testify in our hearts, and to our consciences, of the glorious person and perfect work of Jesus! O for the testimony within, corresponding to, and confirming the testimony of the written Word!

"For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified. The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this." Hebrews 10:14-15

THE SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST

"When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will glorify Me, because He will take from what is Mine and declare it to you." John 16:13-14

If Christ is exalted--the sinner must be abased. If Jesus is set on high--the creature must be laid in the dust. We therefore find that in proportion as a man is taught by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit--he has very low and humbling views of himself; and the more abasing views he has of himself, the more honorable and exalted views he has of Christ!

The Spirit always glorifies Christ--in his person, work, word, offices, relations, and love. When we have much of the Spirit--we think much of Christ, we commune much with Christ, we speak much of Christ, and we sing the praises of Christ. We feel that we cannot honor Christ enough. When the Spirit shows us his infinite and unchanging love, his spotless and glorious righteousness, his perfect and all-sufficient atonement, his deep and tender sympathy, his constant and prevalent intercession; or leads our minds forward to his final manifestation, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all those who believe--then our hearts overflow with love to him, we exercise strong confidence in him, we praise and bless him, we consecrate ourselves and all we have to him, and we long to be with him and see him as he is!

Then His glory eclipses all other, he is to us the altogether lovely, and we take him for our all in all. No words can represent our view of his worth, nor do we conceive it possible to speak in exaggerated terms of his dignity, glory, and beauty. We long for a seraph's fire, for an angel's harp--that we may exalt him, extol him, and set him on high! Eternity appears most glorious--because it is to be spent in praising, blessing, and glorifying his name.

"Unto you therefore who believe--He is precious!" 1 Peter 2:7

THE SPIRIT OF GRACE

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. Zechariah 12:10

The Holy Spirit is gracious in his nature; and his office in the economy of redemption is to convey grace from the Father, through the Son--into the sinner's heart. Our heavenly Father is the God of all grace. This grace flows into Jesus--who is full of grace and truth; and this grace is directed into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, so that out of his fullness we receive, and grace upon grace. The grace we receive from Jesus--conforms us to Jesus; for grace is that which purifies and elevates our nature, and sanctifies us to the Lord's glory and praise.

Grace is the spring of all real prayer, the source of all good works, and the root of all spiritual excellency. If we would serve God acceptably, we must receive grace to do so; if we would have our life as befits the gospel of Christ, it must be by grace received from God; and if we would patiently endure afflictions and cheerfully carry our cross, we must come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

All our graces are wrought in us by the Spirit; all our graces are preserved and kept alive by the Spirit; all our graces are excited and drawn forth by the Spirit. Nor is the plant in nature more dependent on the moisture of the soil, the rays of the sun, the dews of heaven, and the air which surrounds it--than our graces are dependent on the Spirit of grace. We can do anything through grace; but we can do nothing correctly, or as it ought to be done, without grace.

O Spirit of grace, fill us with grace from Jesus, and teach us to make use of all our grace for Jesus; and at length may grace ripen into glory--to the honor of Jesus.

"Restore unto me the joy of your salvation; and uphold me with your free Spirit." Psalm 51:12

THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION

"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry: Abba, Father!" Romans 8:15

The spirit of bondage is the spirit generated by the law, which leads us to dread God's majesty, fear his wrath, and tremble in his presence. But the Spirit of adoption is the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, which is given to us through the gospel. We receive not this Spirit by the works of the law--but through the hearing of faith.

We are made the sons of God by adoption--an act outside of us; we receive the nature of the sons of God by regeneration--a work within us; then we receive the Spirit of adoption--a favor conferred upon us. The Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of adoption, reveals God's paternal character, sheds abroad his love in our hearts, gives us soul-captivating views of him in the person of Jesus, and then secretly and sweetly whispers, "Abba, Abba;" and almost before we are aware of it, we look up and call God, Father.

This is accompanied with a sweet sense of interest in him, and a soul-transforming enjoyment of his presence; as the effect of which, all dread, fear, and bondage depart, and we have boldness and access with confidence into God's presence by the faith of Jesus. Now we know Paul's meaning when he said, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Spirit of adoption, take up your permanent residence in my heart; lead me from all legal and soul-straitening views; and give me to enjoy my new covenant relationship, to the praise and glory of free grace.

"Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father!" Galatians 4:6

THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is--there is liberty." 2 Corinthians 3:17

When the Spirit of God, as the Spirit of Christ, takes possession of the soul, he finds it in bondage under the law, the slave of sin, and the captive of Satan. There is no real liberty, nor even the desire for any! The sinner loves his bondage--until quickened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit having imparted life, throws open the prison windows of the soul, and the man discovers his dreadful state of vassalage and woe! Now he sighs for freedom, and longs to walk at liberty in a perfect way. He prays for

deliverance from his thralldom; and the blessed Comforter breaks off his fetters, casts away his chains, and brings him out from under the yoke. He is delivered from the power and tyranny of sin, his conscience is cleansed from guilt, and his heart is freed from slavish fears. He is brought from under the law, which requires of him, threatens, and galls him; and comes under the gospel, which speaks peace, presents him with every needed blessing, and tells him of God's most free and everlasting love.

Sin cannot now have dominion over him, as he is not under the law--but under grace. Satan is cast out; and though he may harass, solicit, and endeavor to lead astray--he has lost his power and authority, and can no longer lead us captive at his will. We have liberty to approach God with confidence, to confide in Jesus with comfort, and to serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. We are free indeed--and free forever. The jubilee of the soul is come, and the year of release has arrived. We are no more slaves--but sons; and being sons, we are heirs of God through Christ. The Son having made us free--we are free indeed.

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:2

THE SPIRIT, THE REMEMBRANCER

"The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." John 14:26

The memory of the believer is depraved and treacherous! He can remember the evil--but he forgets the good. Often when he is in darkness or trouble, or bowed down under the inward cross--then the promises intended to cheer, animate, and comfort him--are forgotten by him! But it is a part of the work of the ever blessed Spirit--to bring home God's Word to the mind. This he does sometimes by fixing the eye on the promise in the Book; sometimes by using a fellow-Christian to point it out; and sometimes by directly suggesting it to the mind. How many precious truths, sweet promises, and pleasant remembrances of the Lord's work in us and for us in times past, come to the mind, so opportunely that we cannot account for it, (when we forget this part of the Spirit's work).

He directs the preacher to address us--as if he knew the most secret thoughts of our hearts; or some Christian speaks to us--as if he had been listening at our closet door; or some sweet portion of the Word, perhaps never noticed before--flows into the soul, filling us with joy and peace. This is the Spirit's work as a remembrancer. At times, when we are in prayer, portions of Scripture present themselves--just what we needed to plead; or sweet views of Jesus are given us--just what we needed to encourage us; or portions we had heard, read, or enjoyed years before, come back upon us with force and energy, clothed with new power and impregnated with new sweetness! All this is to be ascribed to the presence, love, and operation of the Holy Comforter. Blessed Spirit, remind me of Jesus daily--and bring home his sweet words with power to my soul.

"When He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this." John 2:22

THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT

"Be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18

That which is our greatest privilege--is here spoken of as if it were our duty. Indeed, privileges always imply duties--and duties suppose privileges. Every believer has the Spirit--but we have not that measure, that fullness of the Spirit that we might have. There is a fullness--and we may receive more; there is

abundance--and we are invited to come and obtain freely. The parties to whom Paul wrote, had the Spirit, and were sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption; and yet to them he says, "Be filled with the Spirit." An increase is possible--is desirable--is certain. It would be a preservative from a multitude of evils; keeping the soul holy, the body chaste, the person fit for Christ's service, and prepared for heaven. It would qualify us for all other duties, influencing the views, thoughts, motives, words, and actions. It would rule our wills, control our passions, direct our energies, employ our talents, honor our profession, and increase our happiness!

It is therefore a duty, to which we ought immediately to attend. We have the promise, the invitation, the examples, the inducements, and the exhortation, placed before us in God's Word. Shall we despise or neglect all these? Let us ask our consciences, Was I ever filled with the Spirit? Do I feel that I ought to be? Do I heartily desire the blessing? Do I daily and energetically seek it? Can I be happy without it? All we want to need us holy, active, useful, liberal, and happy--is to be filled with the Spirit--but nothing but being filled with the Spirit will make us so!

O Spirit of God, come and fill my soul! Let me be filled with your light, your life, your love, your power, your holiness, yourself! O to be full of God!

"for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." Acts 11:24

HAVE YOU RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT?

"Have you received the Holy Spirit?" Acts 19:2

There can be no true religion--without the Holy Spirit--for he is its author, source, and spring; and the religion that is not spiritual, is not the religion of Christ. If you have received the Holy Spirit, you must know it. You may not know the time when you received the Spirit, nor are able to describe the manner or immediate effects of his entrance into your heart; but if you have received the Spirit, you may know it by the following marks:

You know that you had not the Spirit once--but were sensual, having not the Spirit.

You have high and honorable thoughts of Christ, and low and humbling views of yourself.

You reverence God's law as holy, just, and good.

You prize Christ's gospel as glorious good news, and the glad tidings of a full, free, and finished salvation.

You dread deception, and would rather suffer anything now than find yourself deceived at last; and you seek by all means in your power to know the certainty of your interest in Christ.

You hate sin--sin within you, sin without you, sin everywhere! But especially in yourself!

You long, pray, pant, and strive for holiness, holiness of heart and life.

You wish to be useful to your fellow-men, and to honor Jesus in your day and generation, in your body, soul, and spirit, which are his.

You are ruled by God's Word, and habitually deny self that you may honor Christ and glorify God.

Where these marks are--there the Holy Spirit resides; but if we have none of these, there is every reason to question whether we have received the Holy Spirit.

Examine me, O Lord; search my heart, and reveal to me my real spiritual state. Never let me be satisfied with a religion without the Holy Spirit; or, having the Spirit, dishonor him by denying it!

"Now, if any man has not the Spirit of Christ--he is none of his." Romans 8:9

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN AFTER FAITH

"Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" Acts 19:2

God gives the Spirit at first--to convince us of our need of Christ, lead us to Christ, and enable us to find salvation in Christ.

Afterwards, the Holy Spirit is given more fully--to reveal Christ, to lead us into closer fellowship with Christ, and to make us happy in Christ. He takes up his dwelling in us as the joy-inspiring, peace-imparting, confidence-producing Spirit. He brings us from under the law--and then places us under the gospel. He shows us that there is a fullness of joy in Jesus, and that it is there for us; that it is our privilege to be happy--happy under all circumstances, as it is written, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice." He sets up God's kingdom in our hearts, which is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Those who receive this blessing are said to be "full of joy and of the Holy Spirit." The "fruit of the Spirit is joy."

And of believers, though persecuted, tried, and tempted, it is written, "Whom having not seen--you love; in whom, though now you see him not--yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." "After you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

Heavenly Father, give us the Comforter in fullness and power! Blessed Spirit, take full possession of us, dwell in us, act in us, and raise us above our sins, doubts, fears, and sorrows, and fill us with joy and peace in believing. Holy Jesus, give the Spirit anew to all your believing people, that they may be strong in faith, active in duty, patient in tribulation, peaceful in trouble, courageous in the prospect of death, and may anticipate your glorious advent with unspeakable delight!

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

HAVING NOT THE SPIRIT

"These are sensual--having not the Spirit." Jude 19

Man may have many things, and yet the one thing necessary, be lacking. He may have an office in the church, a reputation among Christians, a false hope, an unfounded confidence, a clear knowledge, useful gifts, and correct morals--and yet not have the Spirit!

Without the Spirit--there is no true faith, spiritual repentance, genuine love, enlightened zeal, deep convictions of sin, heart-affect

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