

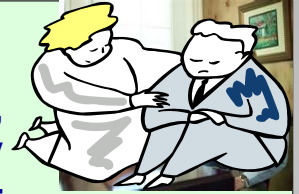


The Comfort of The Holy Spirit

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you” (John 16:7).

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Our state of mind affects our ability to think clearly, make right decisions, plan coherently and take pragmatic steps to success. This is where the Holy Spirit in His role as comforter can help to transform negative mindsets to peaceful and healthy one for progress.

In life we often pass through trying situations that bring misery and hopelessness (John 16:33; Psalms 42 and 43). Sometimes the circumstances are so severe that we are like a drowning person frantically throwing hands here and there in search for help. Naturally, we look for sympathy, help and comfort from friends or relations who fail to respond because they either do not understand what we are going through or do not care or cannot help. In the unlikely event that helpers turn up, we soon discover like Job that they are miserable comforters (Job 16:2) who instead of delivering comfort make our condition worse because they fail to correctly diagnose our hurts and aches; and therefore offer a wrong prescription that can kill rather than heal. **“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes”** (Psalms 118:8,9).


God knew that human help is vain (Psalms 60:11). That is why Jesus Christ towards the end of His earthy ministry promised the disciples **“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you”** (John 14:16-18). These were not just empty promises because in Acts 9:31, we read of where this was literally fulfilled in the early church **“Then had the churches**

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied”.

The Holy Spirit soothingly comforts, cheers, helps, assists and brings us the much needed solace, peace, consolation that refreshes and impart strength and confidence to face life with courage, hope and assurance even when we are passing through even the most extenuating situations in life.

In the John 14:16 promise, the Holy Spirit is identified as “allon parakletos”, a Greek word, which is translated as “another comforter”. He is another comforter in the place of Jesus; but He works along with Jesus and God to comfort believers. The same word translated as “comforter” with respect to the Holy Spirit in John 16:7,8 is also translated “advocate” in I John 2:1 in relation to Jesus Christ. In its widest sense “Parakletos” has the connotation of a helper, succourer, aider, assistant, intercessor, consoler and advocate comforter. Jesus was our comforter while physically on earth. The Holy Spirit came as “another comforter” to continue Christ’s role after He ascended to heaven (i.e. being the babysitter of Christians). The translation “another comforter” comes from the Latin influence in which comforter means “to come alongside with strength”. So the Holy Spirit comes “alongside” the troubled Christian and impart



the strength to resuscitate and revitalise him or her by bringing:

- 1) Peace to a heart that was deep in grief
- 2) Joy into a heart that was in the midst of trial
- 3) Life into a desperate and hopeless situation
- 4) Hope, Strength and confidence into a life that was full of weakness

With His excellent knowledge of us, the Holy Spirit is able to accurately diagnose where it hurts and soothingly deliver the right level of comfort that lifts us up from the deepest of emotional turmoil, thereby transforming us for the better. Some salient points from scriptures (including those already quoted in this bulletin) about the Holy Spirit as a comforter includes:

- 1) He is the source of true, genuine and lasting comfort; and His operation enriches lives and the church with comfort, help and peace.
- 2) The Holy Spirit comforts us through the word of God. He sheds light and brings life into the word (John 6:63) and applies them to our situations in a way that lifts us up from dependency to hopefulness.
- 3) Sometimes the Holy Spirit inspires other people and use them to speak the right words at the right time that comforts us even where those people did not know what we were going through.
- 4) Sometimes He allows us to go through experiences that will later become sources of encouragement to others. **“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God”** (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). This highlights the necessity of every Christian yielding themselves to be used of the Holy Spirit.
- 5) The Holy Spirit can connect to the human spirit and speak inwardly and directly through the inner voice to comfort believers.

The quote from John Owen reproduced below, provides us valuable insights into the role of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter.

“The Holy Spirit enables believers to obey cheerfully, willingly and patiently to the end. In a word, in all that concerns us in this life and in all our expectation of another life, we will always stand in need of the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, we will either despise afflictions or collapse under them and God’s purpose in sending them to us will be defeated.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, sin will either harden us so that we treat it with contempt, or else cast us into despair and so we neglect the gracious means that God has graciously provided us with to defeat it.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, duties will either puff us up with pride or leave us without that joy which will encourage us to further obedience.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, prosperity will make us worldly and sensual in finding contentment in these things and so weaken us for the day of trial.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, the comforts of our loved ones will separate us from God and the loss of them will turn our hearts to stone.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, the poverty of the church will overwhelm us and the prosperity of the church will not concern us.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, we shall not have wisdom in our work, nor peace in any condition, nor strength for any duty, nor success in trial. Nor will we have joy and comfort in life, nor light in death.

How sad, then, is the condition of those who know nothing of the Spirit as Comforter”.

It is only the Holy Spirit that can provide the right level of comfort that we need. His comfort is real and tangible; but we also have a part to play in the process. It is imperative that we develop a strong relationship with the Holy Spirit and have regular intake of the word of God so to provide the Holy Spirit with both the framework (authorisation or access rights) and the tools (or building materials) to comfort us when the need arises.