

action by the messenger. So he is not only sent by the Father but proceeds to this mighty work which he is destined. (From the Father as been translated, "a position at the side of rather than an origin from". This suggests intimate union between Father, Son and Spirit. A person who is spoken of as he, a divine person whose home from of old has been close to the Father's side, a person whose instrument is the revealed truth who is sent by Christ as his representative. A divine, personal Spirit coming from the Father, as the truth sent by Christ, to take his place at the side of the persecuted and the weak in this hostile world. He is to come as an ally, as a champion, one to inspire them to power. It is not only to make the weak strong. He will cause them to be more than conquerors. They are not to do the fighting but the Spirit of God is to work through them.

We have (more in this verse) concerning the Holy Spirit than in any one verse besides in the Bible. You will notice he (tells us of his essence or substance). He is the Spirit of Truth who proceeded from the Father. He is spoken of as a distinct person with the proper title, the Spirit of Truth. He is spoken of as a divine person that proceeded from the Father. We know that the rays of the sun proceed

Jesus has explained to his disciples that friendship with him creates hostility. Then he (interprets) the world's hostility. In verses 21 - 25 he says it is (ignorance, sin, hatred, and without cause.) In the closing two verses of this chapter he sends a (beam of light) into the darkness and tells them what their defense will be and how they are to meet the hostile world. He is about to leave them and they are face to face with the world. He lets them see that they will not be left alone, but that their defense will be sent straight to them and will be a real weapon in conquering the world. He has spoken of the terrific opposition. Now he tells them how to meet this opposition and he proceeds to tell of the provision which he is about to make.

I. The Promise of an Ally, verse 26

In some of the preceding verses he has dealt with the same thought but this re-emphasizes in a brief sentence what their defense will be.

He gives a (double designation) to the spirit, the Comforter and the Spirit of truth.

We have discussed the Comforter in an earlier sermon signifying that it was not the kind of comfort we usually think of, but it means one who is summonsed to the side of another. It conveyed the idea of a helper who is brought along beside and will aid in whatever circumstances might arise. They are to be as sheep in the midst of wolves, but they are to understand that they will not be defenseless even though they stand in the midst of enemies, there must be someone beside them to fight for them, and so here is one who is called to our side as an ally. He is well armed to meet all that the hostile world has to offer. John 14:16.

He is further designated as the Spirit of Truth. This is not so much as a characteristic, but it is rather as a weapon which he might use. This is the material with which the Christian works. Truth is his instrument. Truth is an encourager as well as a comforter. Truth is the perfect revelation of God and man and duty and salvation. Truth speaks that which is so and it speaks of the person of the deity. The divine Spirit is more than a mere messenger, but he comes to give us truth concerning the assurance of salvation. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but have received the spirit of adoption, Rom. 8:15.

It is sad that so many people who really are Christians go through life (lacking assurance) of that fact. The verse just quoted should be of great comfort to all who have been regenerated but who lack assurance. The fact is that we in our hearts cry to God the Father is proof that we are his children. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit. It is (not) that my spirit says one thing, bears witness that I am a child of God and that the Spirit of God comes with a separate evidence to say amen to my persuasion. But it is that there is one testimony and it originated with the Spirit of God which is truth. This confidence is not based on anything in us. It is not because of us but because of him that we have assurance of salvation. We do not look to ourselves but to Him. The presence of the Spirit in our lives is called the earnest of our inheritance, Eph. 1:14. By this he means that it is a pledge of the fact that some day we shall inherit the eternal kingdom. What better pledge or promise could we have than one by the Holy Spirit.

In this verse John tells us of the origin of the Spirit. Not merely a messenger sent, but he proceeds from the Father. What is meant here is the historical coming forth. The word proceeds is chosen in order to contrast with the word sent, and to give the idea of a voluntary personal

troubled. You may take an empty vessel and fill it and then bring pressure from the outside. The sides will resist the pressure. So with a growing knowledge of Christ in our personal experience we will resist the worldly pleasures and treasures which otherwise would crush us and destroy us.

The true secret of this age is tranquility in the midst of doubt, no matter what comes to the Christian heart. No matter how doubtful he may be there is one sure thing that the Spirit will enable him to say, "I know in whom I have believed". And that settles all of the controversies in the way. The Spirit comes and helps us to know that Jesus Christ is true.

Of course there are certain conditions by which the Spirit will come and work through us and teach us and guide us into this truth. There is a glorious instrument through which the Spirit speaks and that is the Bible. If a Christian will not read his Bible, then he need not expect to have the words of the Bible interpreted and made real in his inward experience. If you want to have a faith which is strong, there is only one way to get it and that is to

from the sun and yet they are one with it.

Nothing but the force of truth planted Christianity and only the force of truth preserves it and extends it and insures the prospect of reaching the world. Jesus submitted his Gospel to the keenest examination. He came before the world as one would go before a court of justice. He was certain that he had truth on his side.

II. The Testimony of the Spirit

The testimony of the Spirit or the witness of the Spirit is our defense in meeting the world. Jesus said, "I will send him unto you". That tells us at once that the witness which Jesus has in mind here will work within the circle of Christian believers. The Spirit of God is working. As of old he brooded over the darkness and turned chaos into order and darkness into light. So today all over the world he is operating. He is speaking here of something that is done in and for Christian men. He will testify of me to you. Here is a special application of these words to the disciples who are listening to him. Never were men more desolate and defeated than were these. Christ was about to make his departure and never were men so utterly bewildered as these men were. They were but Jews like their brethren

believing indeed that Jesus was the Messiah, but did not yet know all that was involved. They loved him, they were led by him and so now they were being brought into a larger place by the Spirit whom Christ sent.

It was like taking dwarfs and turning them into giants for the resurrection of Jesus Christ had a great deal to do with the change, that the purpose for which the Spirit of truth is here said to come to the disciples is to bear witness concerning Christ. The hatred of the world is not to prevail against Jesus. It is not to silence his followers at his death. But there will come one who will honor his cause for the world felt that once he was on a cross he was done for. But the Spirit was to come as an advocate and witness and work through them and interpret to them and explain to them concerning Christ's life, Christ's works. The Spirit was to deepen their understanding of Christ and enlarge their knowledge of him.

This was a promise which was especially given to these Christians and today we discover that the Spirit will teach us concerning the record in the New Testament and it becomes for us authority and practice and truth. This is a promise that would be universal to all Christian men and

women that he will dwell with each one and speak to their hearts.

What will he do there? He will teach us a better knowledge of Jesus Christ. He will help us to understand better what he is. He will show us more and more the whole glorious truth about God, and above all John 3:16 which is the summary of the truth about Jesus will be interpreted to every faithful heart.

And as the days roll by and new problems arise and new difficulties come to the surface, and new circumstances in our personal life, we will find that the Spirit will open up wisdom and depth of meaning that we never dreamed of. He will bear witness of Christ and will make us understand him better every day we live.

This is an inward witness of Christ's depth and is to be a precious weapon to aid us against a hostile world. We know that a little candle in a room will make the lighting outside almost invisible. Therefore, if we have burning in our hearts this inward experience and conviction of what Jesus Christ is, and what he has done and will do for us, the storms without may rage and we will not be

There are three things possible that might take place in reference to any power; its use, its abuse and its dis-use. Our failure to use this power now doubt arises from the fact that it has been abused. For the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has suffered from over-emphasis and under-emphasis. By some there is no such person in the Trinity as the Holy Spirit. And at times, as in Acts 19:2, the people were asked, "Did you received the Holy Spirit when you believed", and they replied, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." How like these Ephesians many are today. The reality of the Spirit is simply not there. He is not understood or either there is a misunderstanding. When they talk about God the Father, it is easy for them to talk about him, and the Spirit is very much in contrast to Jesus for it existed before the world was created. He came and dwelt among us and was made flesh and in the future will reign in power. We know that the Holy Spirit existed before Pentecost. He was busy with God the Father in Genesis 1:2. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters". The Spirit helped to fashion the universe. All through the Old Testament the Spirit appears to move with power through the lives of Godly men. In Gen. 6:3, "My spirit shall not abide in man forever." In Joel 2:28, God says, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all

use the truth which the Spirit uses and to bring yourself into continual contact. There are too many who take their religion as (second-handed) and this stands in the way of hearing the Spirit of God when he speaks. Take your Bible, read it, meditate upon it, get near to the Master and the Spirit will use this truth to make Jesus real and precious. As our helper, the (Spirit's greatest work) is to make Jesus real and precious to our hearts. Jesus said, "He will glorify me" John 16:14. The Spirit, in other words, does not point to himself but to Jesus. He particularly witnesses to the love of God for us which was perfectly expressed in Christ's death on the cross. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This is the main message of the Holy Spirit to our hearts and what a help and comfort it is. Whenever we allow the Holy Spirit to give testimony, then it is that we come to realize that Jesus is more real and precious than ever before. John 16:13. He shall not speak of himself.

III. The Testimony of Christians

It is stated here in verse 27 that the Christian shall not also have the honor of the Spirit's presence, but the (honor) of being Christ's witness. They are appointed to be

witnesses in the world. The Spirit shall testify, and then he adds, you also shall bear witness. The work had been cut out for them. They were to testify of the truth. They fled, however, during the trial of Jesus, but after the Spirit was poured out upon them they appeared with greater courage. They are to testify of his life, death, resurrection and ascension. This is the task of the Christian church and of all of its members.

Note what we have to do to bear witness. He does not tell us that we must argue the claims of Christ, he does not tell us to adorn, but simply to testify of these facts. We are to tell of the power in our own experience of what he has done for us and that is by far the most powerful agency for winning the world. You can never make men angry by saying to them, we have found the Messiah, but you can irritate people when you seek to discuss controversial things with them. When you come and say to a person, "Let me tell you of my experience", and tell them how that you were sinful, miserable, and how pardon and joyful hope came. It is very much like the blind man who was healed. You remember me when my eyes were dark. I sat by the roadside begging. I was blind, now I can see you. We can all say

that. This is the witness. It need not be eloquent or given by genius, but an honest experience that whosoever has tasted and has been satisfied can tell someone else. We ought to all do this. It is a real Christian privilege of being a witness by the Spirit of God. This is our main weapon against hostility of Godless humanity. We can win men by giving testimony to this truth.

The Spirit will empower us to be a successful witness. One reason why we are not effective is that we are not filled with the Spirit. On the day of Pentecost when the Spirit first came, the believers were filled with mighty power in witnessing for Christ and 3,000 souls were saved on a single day. We all can be effective in our effort for Christ if we are directed by God's Spirit. The Spirit still dwells within the church, but we need a fresh infilling of his power. God wants to work through us. We too can pay the price for power. For these all disciples were weak and yet they were loyal. They had often testified of the wisdom and the power of Jesus. They were now ready to repeat their testimony. Jesus said, Ye are now and have been from the beginning of my ministry, my witnesses. They will be free agents along with the action of the Spirit and they will bear testimony to their knowledge of Jesus.

Second, a spiritless church would be without courage.

Before the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were hiding in fear of the Jews and after the Spirit came they went forth with the message that Jesus is alive. It traveled like (prairie fire). They were even spoken of as men who had turned the world upside down. The church today needs vital courage like this in its leadership. There have been some brave souls who have refused to drop their banners. Dr. Kilpatrick said, "In speaking of the church today, we are unable to stand against the evil of the present generation. The church has made itself at home in the midst of American materialism." Who would deny but that his statement has some truth in it. Because we have lost something of that courageous spirit and we are happy in our own condition and have deserted this testimony. A spiritless age takes the courage away.

Third, a spiritless age is a shallow age. The Bible says that he will guide you into all truth. That means learning and wisdom. What is the matter today. We have been living on the surface. I have read somewhere how the Japanses are able to stunt ant/tree so it can be kept in the living room or parlor in the home, simply by ting off the tap root and forcing the plant to live on the surface

flesh". Psalm 51:11, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

The Spirit operated in the life of Jesus. He was instrumental in Christ's birth, for the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you," Luke 1:35. Jesus was led up by the Spirit in the wilderness and tempted of the devil, Matthew 4:1. Christ said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born anew. The wind blows where it will and thou hearest the sound thereof, so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit. John 3:7.

Therefore, we have a (consciousness) that whatever the church has done in any age, it has done in the power of the Spirit and through the Spirit, and there is the absolute necessity of the Spirit dwelling in us. First of all, the Spirit is necessary to the experience of spiritual life. 1 Cor. 6:19, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." In the (second place), there can be no power without the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Man is but a channel for the working of the Holy Spirit. Power must flow from him. We know that the (light bulbs) in this building does not mean that there is light. Nor does it mean that because some wires are attached to it that it will

produce light. We do not have light until the current flows through and then there is light. The light of the Christian life comes on when the current of the Holy Spirit works through the bulbs of the body.

Without the Spirit there is no real experience of Christ because Jesus said, "When the Comforter is come he shall testify of me." That which we believe about Christ is believed on the basis of the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

When we pray it is the Spirit which intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. The Spirit makes other contributions such as giving unto us gifts and power to witness through those gifts. Without the Holy Spirit there is no church. This may come as a surprise to some of you, but the Ephesians said, "We have not so much as heard of the Holy Spirit."

Christ, on the other hand, found us dead through the trespasses and sins. Eph. 2:1. Now the Holy Spirit comes and one by one Christians are built up as lively. He corrects us, he comforts.

In (closing I mention) something that you might think

about. What would be the result of a spiritless age, and a spiritless church.

First, we would note here that it would be a (comfortless age.) Christ said, I will send the comforter, and we have discovered that this means to come alongside to strengthen. So he comes to instruct us concerning death and to reveal to our hearts something of what God has prepared for us. (1 Cor. 2:9.) "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (Science) cannot give us this revelation of eternal hope. And when he says, "Neither has it entered into the mind of man," we face the fact that (intellectual processes) will not be sufficient. No one has ever returned from that celestial realm to tell us except Jesus. But God has revealed all this unto us by his Holy Spirit. By his revelation we know that if this earthly house of his tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Until the Holy Spirit pulls aside the curtain all of this is covered and then we lose the comfort of it.

nourishment from surface roots. If we tie off the tap roots of the Holy Spirit, we become shallow.

4) A spiritless church will be one without vitality.

When it loses its power it becomes indifferent. In fact, the early church on one occasion had such new life and new enthusiasm that they were said to be drunk with new wine. There is nothing about us today that would be classified as unusual. People seldom comment on the church today as being out of the ordinary. The church will be without life and the church today has been specializing in getting along with everyone. They have been majoring in adjustability. Above all, they say, let us not be different. Let us be normal, but we know that the world is subnormal and people feel that a real live Christian is one who has a high fever and is abnormal.

5) The spiritless church will be one without a message.

We have the message to meet the hostile world. We have been charged to bear witness and should we be faithful we will certainly turn things upside down. Wherever they are wrong we will set them aright.