

19.a. THE THINGS IN WHICH WE HAVE COMMUNION

WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The First general work of the Holy Spirit is to bring to mind the words and promises of Christ – these are the things that Christ said – **JN 14:26**. This verse contains two promises. There is the promise of teaching, and the promise of bringing to remembrance all that Jesus had said.

Christ had promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit would bring back to their remembrance all that Jesus had said. This would enable them to write and preach the doctrines of grace for the benefits of the Church. The disciples had forgotten much of what Jesus had taught; they had not as yet been anointed with the Holy Spirit. But at their anointing, all that changed.

This bringing back to the apostle's remembrance, was a work of mighty power, as it had to be passed on faithfully. How many of us remember the detail of the last sermon we heard? We might remember the theme of the sermon and go to a commentary or scripture to fill in the detail.

But they were enabled to remember exactly the words Jesus used. What they might have remembered by their natural ability was not a sufficient foundation for them to use as a basis of faith for the Church.

If we do not have the words of Christ, we have nothing. All we have to do is observe the lives of unbelievers – they have no hope, no comfort, no future. We are told not to add to, or subtract from the words of Jesus, otherwise they become false teaching. And false teaching is useless teaching. And so, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, brings to our remembrance the words of Christ as we find them in the scriptures. These words of Christ are the promises of our future life in heaven, and our comfort as we negotiate the trials and tribulations of this life. This comfort we find in the master's words in **JN 14:27**. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you "This is how we have fellowship with the Holy Spirit; in recognising that it is through His work as Comforter, that we have this peace.

The Holy Spirit does His work powerfully. Which of us, in committing our way to Christ in our darkest hours, have not been wonderfully relieved of the gloom and hopelessness we thought we were in? This is the work of the Blessed Holy Spirit. By bringing to mind the promises of Christ, the Holy Spirit lifts us up and encourages us to continue on our journey to Glory. John Owen in his book “The Spirit and the Church” reminds us that “conscience is the sovereign territory or dominion of God in man”. If God (through the Holy Spirit) speaks guilt to our hearts, nothing in the world can bring peace. Similarly, where God speaks peace to the heart, nothing in the world can trouble it.

Thus, believers are not dependant on outward circumstances for their happiness, for they have the inward and powerfully effective work of the Holy Spirit, to whom they give themselves up by faith.

The Holy Spirit does His work sovereignly. The Holy Spirit distributes to everyone as He Wills. We know that the Holy Spirit exercises absolute sovereignty in the distribution of His gifts to believers. Also here, He distributes His peace at His sole discretion. And this is in accordance with the Will of God. **ROM 8:28** “... in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose”. So, there are no rules or courses of procedure given to us to follow in order to get peace and joy in the promises. In this way, faith learns to wait on the sovereign will and pleasure of the Holy Spirit. **DEUT 33:25** |” As your days, so shall your strength be”. We will therefore find relief unexpectedly, as the Holy Spirit watches over us.

Faith deals especially with the Holy Spirit. As we look to the promises for relief of our distress, He at His appointed time will draw close to us in His comforting work. When this help comes by looking to God in faith, our joy is manifest as our hearts are comforted.

The second general work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ. **JN 16:14** “He (the Holy Spirit) will bring glory to me (Christ), by taking from what is mine and make it known to you”. Jesus is speaking of the grace of the Father, through the Son which is brought to us by the Holy Spirit.

These are the things that have been purchased for us by the blood at calvary. They are committed to the Holy Spirit, that He may bring them to us, for our good and for our comfort. As Comforter, He shows to us mercy, grace, forgiveness, righteousness and acceptance with God. We should clearly understand that we should know that these are the things of Christ, which He has procured for us, from the Father. It is therefore, by the work of the Holy Spirit that the believer glorifies and honours Christ for the eternal redemption that he has purchased for us.

The third general work of the Holy Spirit is to “pour the love of God into our hearts”. **ROM 5:5.** Now we usually understand the verb “pour” to transfer copious amounts, usually liquid, from one vessel to another. And this is how we are to understand the “pouring” here. It is God’s love to us. This can be done only by giving us a spiritual understanding of God’s love to us in both the purpose to do us good, and the acceptance and approval of us by God. That the Holy Spirit so persuades us that God loves us that our souls are filled with joy and comfort. What we have of heaven in this world lies in this work of the Holy Spirit.

The fourth general work of the Holy Spirit is to bear witness with our Spirits that we are the children of God. **ROM 8:16.** This bearing of witness by the Holy Spirit is the giving us assurance as a witness’s testimony is to substantiate the facts of the matter. We may from time-to-time wonder to what extent we are a child of God. This is the work of the evil one – sow doubt, sow deceit. But the Holy Spirit draws close to us at such times, assuring us that our claim to heavenly citizenship is true. We bring to our remembrance the evidence of God’s work in our lives – how we have run to the rock of shelter in times of need and found our solace there. We are brought to rejoicing in knowing the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. **MATT 8:25-27** – when Jesus rebuked the storm that was overtaking their boat, they all knew that divine power was at work. And when the Holy Spirit with one word stills the storms of the soul, bringing calm and assurance, then the soul knows by experience that divine power is at work, and so rejoices in that presence.