

20. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE HEARTS OF BELIEVERS

The Holy Spirit comforts and strengthens the hearts of believers. Where fear is mentioned, it is associated with punishment or unfavourable consequences. Where comfort is mentioned, it is always associated with trouble or suffering. The chief work of the Holy Spirit is to bring comfort and strength. He does this by bringing contentment to the troubled soul by some comforting incident or thought that will overcome the difficulty or trouble that we feel overcome by **2 COR 1: 5 – 6.**

This comfort is everlasting. Because the Holy Spirit's presence in our hearts is everlasting, so are the Blessed benefits that He bestows on us. Some of these benefits are everlasting love, eternal redemption and everlasting inheritance.

The comfort of the Holy Spirit is strong. There are no feelings or power on earth that can resist the comforting work of the Holy Spirit.

The comfort of the Holy Spirit is precious to believers. Where would we ever have this wonderful assurance of the Spirit's comfort to us but by the promise of Christ. We learn to value His love and trust in Him in times of trials.

The Holy Spirit brings peace to the hearts of Believers. The power of the Holy Spirit not only refers to the hope that we cherish, but also our peace in believing **JN 14: 26-27** The peace that Christ gives us is the giving of His Comfort to us. The foundation of our peace in Christ is our assurance of our justification and acceptance with God in Christ. We now know that we have been delivered from the wrath to come, from the curse of condemnation, and this fills our souls with the joy and peace of God in Christ Jesus.

Nevertheless, this peace of heart is by the sovereign will and pleasure of the Holy Spirit. Although the believer has the right to all the promises of the Gospel, through his election, justification and sanctification, yet we can by no reasonings or persuasions of our own heart be brought to a state of peace, until it is produced in us by the Holy Spirit. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit, and these fruits are distributed by the Holy Spirit's sovereign will.

GAL 5:22

By way of illustration, we may say that a parent will always love their child, but there will be occasions in that child's life where the responsible parent would need to chastise the child. That does not mean that the parent has withdrawn their love for the child. The chastisement would bring the child back to obedience. The underlying love for the child is secure.

In **PHIL 4:12** Paul is telling us that he has learned to be content in any and every situation. Although the words content and comfort are in some circumstances interchangeable. Paul is saying that he has learned the secret of accepting the situation, whatever it may be. And that is half the battle. Life teaches us to understand and appreciate more and more, that the difficulties and trials that we experience are the tasks that the Master has given us to undertake. We need therefore to undertake them in a manner which is pleasing to Him – not as we are so often wont to do, with complaining and descension. **ROM 8:18** “ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the Glory that will be revealed in us”.

The Spirit brings joy to the hearts of believers. His anointing brings gladness with it. To give joy to the hearts of believers is chiefly the work of the Holy Spirit. This joy is produced by the Spirit pouring into our hearts the love of God, so carrying them through every kind of tribulation.

As the Holy Spirit is a well of water springing up in the soul, so He produces joy in the hearts of believers – bringing peace and comfort to troubled minds. This joy the Holy Spirit works in our hearts is according to His Sovereign will. Through this joy He assures us of the love of God and our acceptance with God, and our adoption into the family of God.

As we see the work of the Spirit in our hearts, we are able to see the strong foundation that He has laid for our continual joy and gladness. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit works joy in us as and when He pleases, according to His sovereign will and pleasure. We always need to remember the verse in **ROM** where Paul reminds us: -

ROM 8:28 “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose”. Our trials are not only good for us but are a witness for others. Therefore, as David says in **PSM 23** “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life”.

The Holy Spirit brings Hope to the Heart of Believers. Our hope is in Christ. The one who shed His blood for us. **1 JN 3:3** “And everyone who has this hope in Him, purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

If we meditate on these works of the Holy Spirit, which bring joy, assurance, boldness, confidence expectation and glorying, we will see the influences of these works that enrich our own lives.