

22. PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION WITH

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We should consider the works that the Holy Spirit came to do in order for us to prepare ourselves for the communion that we shall enjoy with Him.

Afflictions and troubles are what God has provided in His house for His children. These are designed to bring us to obedience and to train us in the good works that God has set out for each and every one of His children. We need the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit to sustain us in our trials, and that is what He has come to do.

Men often despise afflictions, they become angry and refuse to see God's hand in them. And so, they forfeit the comfort of the Holy Spirit. The pride of their hearts despises the Spirit's help.

Men also despair under trials and afflictions and sink under the weight of their trials.

There is no way that we can glorify God through our trials but by the comforts of the Holy Spirit. In **ROM 5:3** Paul says that "... we also rejoice in our sufferings "

The Christian life is not about me and my comfort and welfare. The Christians life is to be lived for Christ. Our good works which God has set aside for us, are to bring Glory to Christ and not to us. And these good works are very often characterised by trials and tribulations. And so, it is necessary for us to acknowledge our need of comfort and encouragement from the Holy Spirit, in order that God receives the Glory for our sufferings.

The Holy Spirit brings comfort to us when we are burdened with sin. Our great and only refuge from the guilt of sin is the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been set free from the bonds of sin, but we nevertheless continue in it until that Great Day. A sense of sin fills the heart with troubles and sorrows. It is therefore the Holy Spirit who sustains us by giving us the peace of Christ by pouring out the love of God into our hearts and being a witness with our Spirits that we are indeed the children of God.

The Holy Spirit brings strength and comfort in the whole course of our obedience. The original sin was Adam's disobedience to God's command through his inherent pride. The Holy Spirit enables believers to obey cheerfully, willingly and patiently to the end. We will always stand in need of the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit. Without this comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, we will either despise or despair under our afflictions, and so God's purpose in sending them to us will be defeated.

Without the comfort of the Holy Spirit, our duties will either puff us up with pride (on a job well done) or leave us without that joy that will bring encouragement to us to further obedience. And so, prosperity will make us worldly and so weaken us for the day of trial.

Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit we shall not have wisdom in our secular or spiritual work. Nor strength for duty in trials. How will we have the joy and comfort of life as we draw near to our day of departure.

How the Holy Spirit comforts us.

The Holy Spirit brings us comfort by communicating to us and making known to us the love of the Father. The Father is the source of all love. God loved us first. Jesus said in **JN 16:27** "No, the Father himself loves you" And so, we may say under trials – "the world hates me, but my Father loves me" We are poor and despised in this world, but we are loved by God, who has a rich inheritance for us. "I mourn in secret under the power of my lusts and sins where no eye sees me, but the Father sees me, and He is full of compassion". **ROM 7:15 FF** "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate, I do" We therefore rejoice in tribulation, glory in affliction and triumph as a conqueror. But the breadth, the depth and height of the Father's love, who can measure that?

The Holy Spirit comforts us by communicating to us and acquainting us with the Grace of Christ. The Grace of Christ are the fruits that Christ purchased for us on the cross at Calvary. It is through the work of the Holy Spirit that we are able to enjoy and appreciate the purchase of our lives by the shedding of Christ's blood.

He shows believers that in Christ they are justified and adopted as heirs to that glorious Kingdom to come.

Why the Holy Spirit comforts us?

We are utterly weak and helpless. We would be overcome by our sorrows and trials. But the Holy Spirit in His love for us is able and willing to bring us the comfort that we so very much need.

He knew we would grieve Him, provoke Him and quench His work in our lives, His earthly dwelling place. But it is through His love for us that He continues to draw near to us with His comfort and encouragement. Our negligence of these comforts from the Spirit weakens all the principles of our obedience. As we value the love of Christ in laying down His life for us, so we must value the work of the Holy Spirit as our comforter.

Do we as God's children ever experience a sense of over whelming gratitude to God for His love and kindness to us? If we don't, we will learn about this in our next series "Thinking Spiritually".