

Sunday February 11th sermon: "The Testimony of the Comforter -- The God of All Comforts (Pt 44)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,
by John Pittman Hey

John 15:18-27; Psalm 35:11-28

Christ has promised us another Comforter, the Holy Ghost, Who will dwell within all the Lord's people. The Comforter gives us life, and sustains that life on account of the sacrifice of Christ for our sins.

The Comforter will teach us all things, and bring to remembrance the things that Christ said. The Comforter will, as it were, take His place when Christ ascends to glory, and continue to teach and to bring to mind the things that Jesus had told them during His ministry.

Christ warned us, that the world will hate us, because it hated Him first. That's because Christ chose us out of the world.

The world hated Christ because He told them of their sin. It was His speaking the truth that brought out their hatred of Him. Christ's gospel preaching unmasked their hatred, because they no longer had a cloak for their sins.

The world hates Christ, and Christ made it clear that the world hates the Father also.

Christ warned that the hateful world has no valid reason to hate Him or His people, so it can be said, they hated Jesus without just cause. This was foretold by the Spirit of Christ through David in Psalm 69.

Christ then introduces the answer to the world's derision and hatred and violence against the Lord's people: it is the Comforter!

The Comforter is the Spirit of Truth, Who answers powerfully against the lies of this wicked world.

Christ makes it clear that the Comforter testifies to the truth about Christ. He refutes the slanders against Jesus by the world. He convicts the world of sin against God and His Christ. Those who hate God and His Son cannot escape the rebuke of the Holy Ghost's testimony. They know that they have done wrong.

But far better, the Comforter testifies to Christ's people the glorious things about our Savior!

Christ contrasts the hatred and slander and persecution of His people by the wicked, with the comfort given us by the Comforter. The Comforter speaks to us the truth about our God, about our Lord Jesus.

Christ puts great weight upon this work of the Holy Ghost for us, and for the cause of Christ in us.

But Christ states that His apostles would also testify of Him, because they were with Him and had seen and heard Him. The Savior had previously explained that it is the Comforter Who will remind the apostles of the things that Christ said and did, so that their testimony will also be accurate and truthful. Their testimony is preserved perfectly in God's Word down to us.

It is clear that Christ deems the dual testimony of the Comforter and of the apostles in the Scriptures as fully sufficient to refute the lies, the slanders, the persecutions by wicked men, and the evil conduct of those who oppose Christ and hate God.

In this life and in these times, there is to be no violence, or revenge by the saints against wicked men who attack all that is God's. Rather, there is to be spirit-led testifying to the truth by the Lord's people, by the Word of God, and by the comfort of the Comforter to our hearts.

This greatly disappoints those who think that they will help bring the kingdom in by force, and whose favorite image is of the medieval knight

in shining armor, wearing a cross, and wielding a sword against the infidels.

Christ makes it clear: in these days, the defense and advance of Christ's gospel is to be carried out by preaching the truth, and the testimony of the Holy Ghost in both the lost and in the Lord's people.

Psalm 35 contains a haunting recitation of the persecution of Christ, and of the reaction of His people to His cause.

Christ was in fact, cruelly beaten, and stripped naked, and oppressed with a crown of thorns. He was tortured, mutilated, pierced and crucified, but before He died, He was mocked and taunted by wicked men, who traduced His character and derided His protestations of obedience to God, and God's love for Him.

The Psalmist laments the lies told, the rewarding of evil for Christ's good deeds, the rejoicing at Christ's death. Christ cries out that God would rescue Him.

Christ foretold the rejoicing of the wicked against Him, and the gloating that took place at the foot of the cross.

Christ called out for judgment to awake against His persecutors, and that they would be ashamed after they had magnified themselves against Him.

Indeed, God has vindicated our Lord Jesus! God raised His Son up the third day from the grave, and exalted Him to the highest in Heaven, and given Him all power and authority over the entire world.

Most importantly, God has granted to Christ the complete salvation of all His beloved people, for whom Christ died.

To all the calumny and lies and brutalities Christ endured, and that His people endure, it is the reproof of the Holy Ghost and the testifying of the Comforter to the Lord's people, and the testimony of His witnesses

and His people before the world, it is all these replies that the Lord Jesus deems sufficient in this life to answer and overcome all the persecution.

Therefore, it is the Lord's people who shout for joy, and are glad, because they favor Christ's cause!

They cry out, let the Lord be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant Jesus!

We can see that our Lord Jesus has prospered mightily in His great work of redemption! That work is sealed unto us by the Comforter, Who continually speaks of Christ to us, and regales us with the truth about Jesus, and the Father's exceeding love for us!

Isaiah described how it pleased God to crush Jesus, and to put Him to great grief. But, when God had made Christ's soul an offering for our sins, Christ would see His seed, His days would be prolonged, and the pleasure of the Lord would prosper in His hands!

At the Lord's Table, we preach the Lord's death for us! We testify of what Jesus did to save us at Calvary!

This is wrought in us by the testimony of the Comforter in our hearts.

No matter what the wicked world says about Christ, we say, let the Lord be magnified!