

God-Guided Men

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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,

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"I conferred not with flesh and blood." [Galatians 1:16](#).

THE conversion of Paul is one of the evidences of the truth of our holy religion. So far as this life was concerned, he had nothing to gain, but everything to lose by becoming a Christian. From being a great Rabbi he came to be the companion of poor fishermen who themselves were the followers of One who was poorer even than they! It is clear that he was no fanatic and not at all likely to be carried away by any sudden impulse. He was clear-headed, thoughtful, logical and his conversion must have been worked by some very extraordinary power—there must have been, to him at least, overwhelming evidence of the truth of what he believed and of that form of faith to which he devoted his whole after life.

In addition to supplying us with valuable evidence of the truth of Christianity, Paul has left to us a most remarkable example of its force in his own person. Never was there a man more fully possessed with the Spirit of Christ than he was. He was no feeble saint with just enough Grace to enable him to go limping into Heaven—he was a spiritual athlete, wrestling with the powers of darkness, running with endurance the race set before him and "filled with all the fullness of God." He was one who was indeed "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." He threw himself, with all his natural zeal, into the cause of Christ—that natural zeal being so sanctified by the Spirit of God as to make him a mighty and valiant servant of the Lord. I pray that we, also, Beloved, may be what Paul was. I will not even deny his bonds! He did so when he said to king Agrippa, "I would to God that not only you, but also all that hear me this day were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." But we might be willing even to wear his bonds if we might but have such a character as his fully developed within us!

Paul—being converted through Christ appearing to him out of Heaven, and speaking personally to him, being deeply repentant for the past and believing fully in Jesus as his Lord and Savior—had no sooner been baptized than he struck out at once an independent path for himself. He did not need to receive any commission from men, for he had received his commission direct from Heaven and, therefore, "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."

In our text Paul says, "I conferred not with flesh and blood." He did not consult with good men as to what he ought to do! Why should he? Why should he ask them to countersign his commission when he had Christ's name at the bottom of it? He did not consult his relat-

ives, for he knew very well what they would say. They would think him ten thousand fools in one to throw up all his prospects of advancement to become the follower of what they thought to be the meanest of all superstitions. He did not consult even with his own flesh and blood, with himself. As I have already reminded you, he had everything to lose and nothing to gain by becoming a Christian—but he willingly descended from being a student of Gamaliel and a member of the Sanhedrim, to earn his living as a tentmaker and to be a simple itinerant preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He descended from comparative ease and luxury to poverty and stern toil— from safety and peace to bitter persecution! And at last to death by martyrdom. And while knowing that he could never be a gainer as to temporal things, he nevertheless calmly and deliberately gave himself up to be the bondservant of that Christ who had spoken to him out of Heaven and called him into His service.

I want to show you, first, that faith needs no warrant for its action but the command of God. If it gets that, it need not consult with flesh and blood. I shall try to show you, in the second place, the range of application of this principle to

ourselves practically. And then I shall show you, in the last place, that the principle is a grand one and commends itself to our best judgment

I. First, FAITH NEEDS NO WARRANT FOR ITS ACTION BUT THE COMMAND OF GOD.

Believers have no need to consult with flesh and blood. I may refer you in illustration of this Truth of God to good men in all ages. There is Noah, for instance. He is commanded by God to build an ark of gopher wood—an ark large enough to hold himself and his family and some of all beasts, birds and creeping things that were upon the face of the earth! Was it not an absurd idea to build so huge an ark upon dry land? Yet Noah did not consult with any of the people who were then living—we read, "Thus did Noah: according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

Then, think of Abraham. He was commanded by God to leave his country, his kindred and his father's house and to go unto a land that God would show him." And we read, "So Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken unto him." Further on—in his life there was that very memorable occasion when God commanded him to offer up his son Isaac as a burnt offering. Abraham did not consult with Sarah. He knew the mother's feelings far too well to wish to lacerate them, and she might have said, "No, my Husband, such a deed as that must not be done." So he did not ask her, but he rose up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, prepared the wood and set out on the three days' journey to the place of which God had told him. He did not even consult Isaac, who was, apparently, thus to die. And when Isaac said to him, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" his father replied, almost choking, I think, as he said it—"My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." He consulted not with his own flesh and blood, else had the father been too strong for the Believer, but as God had commanded him to offer his son as

a sacrifice, he unsheathed the knife to slay his beloved Isaac—a glorious instance of what faith can dare to do without asking the advice or the approval of men!

Remember, too, how Moses obeyed the Divine command to lead Israel out of the house of bondage. He certainly did not consult with his own flesh and blood, for the riches of Egypt were at his feet! Perhaps Pharaoh's throne would have been occupied by him before long had he not counted "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," and he gave up glittering prospects to go forth into the wilderness with the despised people of God.

Remember David, too. He had those who wished to give him counsel, when he twice stood over his sleeping foe, the despot Saul. On the second occasion Abishai said to David, "Let me smite him, I pray you, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time." But David said to him, "Destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?" He knew right well that it is not for good men to do ill actions, even though they think the best results might follow from them. So he consulted not with flesh and blood and he would not let the son of Zerniah lead him into sin. Think too, of Daniel. When the royal edict was signed that none should ask a petition of anyone except King Darius for thirty days, did he confer with flesh and blood as to what he should do under the circumstances? Did he consult with himself or with others as to how he might satisfy his conscience and yet, at the same time, save his life? Not he—he went into his house, where his windows were open towards Jerusalem, and there he prayed to God three times a day, as he had done aforesaid, although the lions' den awaited him! And think, also, of those three brave young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When Nebuchadnezzar told them that they must worship his golden image or be cast into the burning fiery furnace, they replied, "We are not careful to answer you in this matter." Their only care was to do as God bade them—regardless of all consequences! They did not consult with flesh and blood, but obeyed the command of their God!

This has been faith's rule all through the ages. It was the rule of the martyrs in the old days of the Roman persecution. They knew that they might be put to death in the Coliseum—"butchered to make a Roman holiday"—yet, knowing that, they dared to confess that they were Christians. This was the glory of our Protestant ancestors in the days of Queen Mary. They went joyfully to Smithfield to be burnt for the sake of Christ and, as one of the pastors significantly said, "the young people went to see the others burn—and to learn the way when it should come to their turn." They did learn the way, too, to stand there, not consulting with flesh and blood, but being ready to be burned to ashes rather than worship the beast, or receive his mark on their foreheads! This is still the spirit that animates true faith. God's command is her sufficient warrant. She consults not with flesh and blood.

I would have you also remember that if we do ask for something over and above God's plain command, we are virtually casting the command, itself, behind our backs. God tells you to do a certain thing, but you say that you must

first consult your advisers and friends. Then has it come to this—that a mortal man is to tell you whether you are to obey God or not? That would be making man your god and rejecting the living and true God! Suppose that in such a consultation you should be advised not to do the right thing? And if you should obey that advice, would you be relieved of your responsibility? Certainly not! It would still rest upon you. To you comes the Divine command and it is for you to obey it, whether you are advised by others to do so or not. Even to ask for such advice is to trifle with the authority of God. To hesitate to do right because of self-interest is rebellion against God. Suppose you say, "That is plainly my duty but it would involve me in a loss"? Well, then, which shall it be—will you suffer the loss or will you commit the sin? If you choose to commit the sin, you do distinctly make your own gain to be your god, for that which has the highest place in your soul is, after all, your god. What right have you to ask, "Will such a course pay me? Will it answer my purpose? What will be the good of it to me"? Such questions contain the very essence of rebellion against the Most High! What if you are no gainer by obeying your God? He who bids you do it is your Maker and Preserver! What if you should lose everything through obeying Him? Would it not be better to lose the whole world than to lose your own soul, for what will you give in exchange for your soul? The very thought of weighing self-interest against the authority of God should be revolting to all right-minded men!

Further, to consult with flesh and blood is diametrically opposed to the Character of Christ Flesh and blood, in the person of Peter, rebuked Him when He talked of suffering and being killed. But the Lord said to him, "Get you behind Me, Satan: you are an offense unto Me, for you savor not the things that are of God, but those that are of men." When Jesus said to His disciples, on one occasion, "Let us go into Judaea again," they said to Him, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone You; and go You there again?" Yet bravely did He go where He felt that He had a commission to go. His life was one of self-denial and self-sacrifice—His rule was not, "spare yourself," but this was His rule, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit." He knew that without the sacrifice of Himself, He could not glorify God. So, if you would be like your Master, you must not be making provision for the flesh to gratify the ease and the lusts thereof—but you must be willing, like He, to suffer! Like He you must be willing to be reproached—and like He, even to die, if so it must be for the Glory of God!

I have generally found that when men do consult with flesh and blood, the consultation usually leads to the neglect of duty and the forsaking of the Lord. Had Paul conferred with flesh and blood he would probably never have been an Apostle. I pray that you, Beloved, may have the Grace to say, "My Master's command is my only Law. My Master bids me do

such-and-such—this is my reason if men say that I play the fool by doing it, if they charge me with throwing prudence to the winds—and even if they thrust me into prison and lead me forth to death. Sooner let the sun refuse to shine at the Almighty's bidding! Sooner let the earth refuse to revolve upon her axis, or any longer to traverse her orbit! Sooner let all Nature revolt against the laws of its Maker, than ever a man of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, should dare to refuse to obey Him, let Him command whatever He may."

There I leave the grand and searching principle that faith needs no warrant for its action but the command of God!

II. Now secondly, I am going to show you THE RANGE OF ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION TO OURSELVES.

I judge that, first of all, it applies to all our known duties. I am not now speaking to unconverted people—I am speaking to you who profess to be converted. You say that you are saved and that you do not trust in your own works. That is well. I have preached to you the Scriptural Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, but now I am going to give you a practical principle that is inseparably associated with that Doctrine. It is this—It is the duty of every Christian to forsake every known sin, whatever it may be, and, in doing so, he is not to consult with flesh and blood. Many professors say, "This course is wrong, judging by the Scriptural standard. But then, society has long tolerated it. No, it has even decreed it to be right." But will society judge you at the Last Great Day? If you are cast into Hell as a deceitful professor, will society fetch you out of the bottomless pit? If you are found at last outside the gates of Heaven, will society recompense you for your eternal loss? What have you, O man of God, to do with society? Christians are to come out from among the ungodly to daily take up their cross and follow Christ—to go outside the camp, bearing His reproach. The friend of the world is the enemy of Christ. What have you to do with doing as the world does?

The same principle applies to the duty of consecration to Christ. Every Christian should live for Christ alone. All that we are and have belongs to Christ. Even Paul wrote, "You are not your own, for you are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Well then, do not consult with flesh and blood to find out how far other Christians obey that command, for the pulse of the professing Christian is in a sickly state at this time and Christianity is sadly adulterated. But what have I to do with what my fellow Christians do? If they are not what they should be, is not that a reason why I should be the more consecrated to Christ? If I see others put into the scales of the sanctuary and found wanting, is that a reason why I, too, should be found wanting? I charge you people of God who are here present to try how near you can get to complete consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ! Never say, "I am as good as my minister." You had need be much better than I am! Never say, "I am as good as such-and-such a Christian." O Sirs, if you compare

yourselves among yourselves, you are not wise! The only model for Christians is Christ Himself!

This principle of not consulting flesh and blood also applies to our service for Christ. We have known ministers whose "call" to a place always depended upon the size of the salary. We have heard of others whose work for Christ depends upon whether it is to be done in respectable society and whether it is a tolerably light and easy task. If they find that it is Ragged School work, or if they will have to labor among very poor people and get no credit for it, they do not care for that kind of service—and if it involves a great deal of toil, they do not feel that they could manage it. The real difficulty is that it is not pleasing to flesh and blood! O soldiers of the Cross, has it come to this, that you must have an easy place, or you will not fight for your King? Soldiers of the Queen do not wait to ask whether it will be hot or cold in the lands to which they are ordered to go—but away they go at the royal command. And so it must be with Christians! We must not be such featherbed soldiers that we can only go where we shall be easy and comfortable. No, but in the name of Him who bought us with His blood, let us ask, "Is this my proper sphere of service for Christ? Then I will occupy it, by His Grace, cost what it may."

Perhaps I am addressing some Brother or Sister here who says, "I feel that I am called to service for Christ, but I am going to consult my friends to see whether they are with me or not." That will probably put an end to your service before it begins! Nothing good will be done by a man who will not attempt it until everybody thinks it is wise. If God has called you to any work for Him, go at it at once with all your might, for if you stop to consult even good people, it is very likely that they have not the faith that you have—or if they have, they will frankly tell you that they are not judges of your call. I cannot decide whether it is a call from God to you—you must yourself be the judge as to that. And if you feel that God has called you to any work, go and do it!

"Oh, but Christian people throw cold water over my plans!" Yes, that is a common practice, but it ought not to stop you from doing the Lord's work! Remember how David's brother, Eliab, said to him, "I know your pride and the naughtiness of your heart; for you are come down that you might see the battle"? I have always admired the modesty of David's reply, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" He had been sent down to the camp by his father and he had a further justification, a little later, when he stood before Saul with the giant's gory head in his hand! If God bids you do any work for Him, go and do it in His strength without consulting with flesh and blood. Many a noble purpose has been strangled by a committee! Many a glorious project that might have been the means of carrying the Gospel to the utmost ends of the earth has been crushed by timid counselors who said that it was not practicable! Whereas, had it been attempted, God would have worked with the worker and great would have been the result. So go, O man of God, to the work He has called you to do—and consult not with flesh and blood!

In the next place, this principle applies to all necessary sacrifices. There are sacrifices which we must make for Christ and His cause. For instance, there are persons who, if they are converted to God, must make sacrifices in their business. There are here tonight one or two men who used to be publicans. But when they became converted, they took the very first opportunity of getting out of that business, although it meant a considerable sacrifice. They have cheerfully borne the loss and they are now sitting here with clear consciences as they could not have been if they had not done what they believed to be right. There are others here who used to get a living by their Sunday trade, but they willingly gave it up for Christ's sake when they became His. I do not think they have ever got back as much money as they gave up, but they have great peace of mind and they feel perfect satisfaction at the loss because they believe it to be right. Every Christian is bound to act thus, not considering for a moment the profit or loss of the matter. As God is God, He is to be served at all costs!

Sometimes, however, the following of Christ involves the loss of more than money—the loss of friendships. There are separations still made in the world because of devotion to Christ. Ungodly parents drive away from them their converted children. Close friendships have been snapped and situations of influence and usefulness have had to be given

up for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. "What am I to do?" asks one who is threatened with grievous loss if he will not give up Christ. Be willing to let father and mother, or husband or wife and all else go rather than let Him go upon whom your eternal interest depends! Remember that He said, "If any man comes to Me and hates not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters; yes, and his own life, also, he cannot be My disciple." Some persons feel that if they become followers of Christ, they will lose prestige and position—and that is more than they can endure. There have been some who, when they had joined this Church, have henceforth had the cold shoulder in the aristocratic circles to which they belonged. And they have come to me and said, "Our former friends no longer call upon us, nor ask us to their houses." And I have replied, "Thank God! Then you will be out of the way of the temptation to which you might be exposed from their idle chat." They have said, by-and-by, that it was even so and that it was well. But at the first it was hard to bear. Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, always do what is right! Whatever may come of it, be out-and-out for Christ. Verily I say unto you—there is no man who shall be a loser by Christ at the last! Great shall be his gain who, for Christ's sake, can give up even all that he has!

I want you to further notice that this principle also applies to the confession of your faith, if you have been converted to Christ. Very often some of those who really do believe in Jesus neglect to avow their faith in the Lord's appointed way. Nothing is more plainly taught in the New Testament than that it is the duty of every Believer in Christ to be baptized. It is the duty of every Christian, having first given himself to Christ, afterwards to give

himself to Christ's Church, according to the will of God. Now, my dear Friend, do your Master's will and consult not with flesh and blood!

Do not consult with yourself about this matter, for if you do, Self will say, "Why need you go through that trouble? You will bring a great deal of unnecessary notice upon yourself if you do. And perhaps you will not be able to hold out to the end—you may fall into sin and bring disgrace upon the name of Christ!" Self will reason in this way, but what have you to do with such reasoning? Is it not your bounden duty to do as your Master bids you? If soldiers, in the day of battle, are commanded to charge the enemy at the point of the bayonet, they must not stop to consider the danger of such a course, or to ask why their commander gave such an order. And so it must be with all the soldiers of King Jesus! And so surely it will be with every true Christian. Are you a Christian and does your Lord bid you confess your faith in Him? Then come forward and say, "According to His will, I with confess with my mouth, because with my heart I have believed in His name." Possibly someone says, "If I were to do that, I should grieve my parents." Do not needlessly grieve anybody, but if it is necessary for Christ's sake, grieve everybody—and grieve yourself most that they should be grieved because you do what is right!

Another says, "My position would become very uncomfortable if I were to be baptized." Then find your comfort in the Presence of Christ with you in uncomfortable circumstances! "But," says one, "I don't see how I could be baptized at present." Is it your duty? Then remember that the Apostle says, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." When I preached in the country, before I came to London, I used to have a hearer who professed to have been a Christian for many years. Whenever I spoke to him about joining the Church, he always said, "He that believes shall not make haste," to which I replied, "Well, if you come at once, you certainly will not have made haste." Then I tried to explain to him that the haste referred to there was the haste of fear and cowardice. And I said that a much more appropriate text was this one, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep Your commandments."

"Well," says one, "I don't wish to put off joining the Church. At the same time, I cannot quite give up the world." Then, do not join the Church! We do not want in the Church those whose hearts are still in the world, so injurious both to the world and to the Church are those who try to join the two together! If you are Christ's, you must give up the world—but why should you hesitate about doing that? What is there in the world but vanity and vexation of spirit? You will find Christ to be infinitely preferable to the world, for in Him you will have—

"Solid joys and lasting treasure."

III. I see that my time has gone, but I need not dwell upon the last point— that THIS PRINCIPLE COMMENDS

ITSELF TO OUR BEST JUDGMENT.

It is the judgment we exercise upon others. We do not like to see half-and-half people, do we? And if we see people who are willing to suffer for their principles, we respect and honor them. Well then, let us so act that others may be able, in their inmost hearts, to respect and honor us!

This principle will commend itself to us when we come to die. I never heard of a Non-conformist father, when he was dying, saying to his son, "My Boy, you know that I was a Dissenter and I lost my farm for that reason. I advise you to go to the State church and get into the good books of the parson and the squire." I never heard of a Christian, when dying, saying to his wife, "My Dear, the shutting up of our shop on the Sabbath has meant a great loss to us and I have all the less to leave you—and I regret now that we were so unwise." No, no! I never heard and never dreamed of hearing of anyone saying such a thing as that! I never heard a dying Christian say, "I gave too much to the Lord's cause. I worked too hard in Christ's service. I did not really exercise sufficient prudence and look out for myself as I ought to have done." Oh, no! Their regrets always are all the other way! Those who have denied themselves most always wish that they had done more, given more and been privileged to even suffer more for Christ's sake!

And finally, this will be our judgment at the Last Great Day. We shall account that to have followed Christ and to have suffered loss for Christ was the right thing—but for anyone to have gotten off cheaply through consulting with flesh and blood will then seem to us to have been the meanest thing that was ever heard of—treason against the King of Love, treachery against the Christ who died! Those who have been faithful to Christ on earth shall share His Glory in Heaven and dwell with Him there forever and ever! So, if you believe in Him, come out boldly and confess that you do.

If you love not the Lord Jesus Christ, take heed that He should come against you with His rod of iron and utterly destroy you. May He, by His gracious Spirit, give to all of us faith in Him and loyalty to Him for His dear name's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 14.

Verse 1. Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. [See Sermons #730, Volume 13—let not your

HEART BE TROUBLED; #1741, Volume 29—"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED" and #3076, Volume 54—THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF HEART TROUBLE—the Sermon to which this Exposition belongs.] Here is a troubled company of

disciples, very much cast down, so their Divine Master, full of infinite tenderness, talks to them in this gentle manner, "Let not your heart be troubled." He does not like to see them troubled, for when they are, He is also troubled. Our Lord here prescribes faith as the only remedy for heart trouble. If you, poor troubled soul, can believe, you will leave off fretting. Twice our Lord uses the word, "believe." He seems to say to His disciples, "Take another dose of faith—it will take away from you this faintness of heart from which you are suffering.

'You believe in God, believe also in Me.'" And then He seeks to make them forget their heart trouble by talking most sweetly to them about His Father and His Father's dwelling place. It is a great thing to divert the mind, when it is troubled, from that which bores into it and threatens to destroy it.

2. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. "You have all My heart, so I have no secrets from you. 'If it were not so, I would have told you.' Even in going away from you, I am going away for your good."

2. I go to prepare a place for you [See Sermon #2751, Volume 47—"A PREPARED PLACE FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE"] "I am all yours, and always yours, and everywhere yours—and I am doing everything for you."

3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself "I will not send an angel to fetch you, but I will Myself come for you. If you die, I will come for you in that way. But if you live on until my Second Advent, 'I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.'"

3. That where I am, there you may be also. "So do not be troubled because I am going away from you. I am going first in order that you may follow afterwards. I am going as the Pioneer into that blessed state where you shall dwell with Me forever! So do not be troubled at My departure." How tenderly and lovingly this is all put!

4. And where I go, you know, and the way you know. "I am not going to take a leap into the dark—you know where I am going, and you also know the road along which I am going." Ah, but sometimes sorrow forgets what it knows and thus creates a cloud of unnecessary ignorance which darkens and increases the sorrow!

5. Thomas said unto Him, Lord, we know not where You go; and how can we know the way? It was a pity that Thomas had such a thought as this in his mind, but as it was there, it is a great mercy that he told his Lord of it.

Sometimes to put your trouble down in black and white is a quick way to get rid of it—but to bring it to your Lord in prayer is a still better plan!

6. Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me. [See Sermons #245, Volume 5—THE WAY TO GOD and #942, Volume 16—THE WAY.] How

impossible it is to fully describe our Lord in human language! He is going away, yet He is, Himself, the way! And He is, Himself, the beginning and the end—He is everything to His people—"the way, the truth, and the life." We are obliged to have mixed metaphors when we talk of Christ, for He is the mixture of everything that is delightful and precious. All over glorious is our Lord—there is no way of setting Him forth to the full in our poor halting speech.

7. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also: and from henceforth you know Him, and have seen Him. It cheers the children of God to talk to them about their

Father, and about their Father's house, so that is what the Elder Brother did in His great kindness to His disciples—He talked to them about their Father and His Heaven.

8-10. Philip said unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. Jesus said unto him, Have I been so long a time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me has seen the Father; then how can you say, Show us the Father? Do you not believe I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works. Christ and the Father are indissolubly One. Even when He was here in His humiliation, He was not separated from His Father except in that dread hour when He was bearing His people's sins upon the Cross. Now He is visibly One with His Father on the Throne of Glory!

11, 12. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works 'sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also. "I am going away from you; but be not dismayed, for I shall not take away My power from you—that will remain with you."

12, And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. "My very absence will let loose a greater power than you could have experienced while I was here! You will need more power when I am gone from you, and you shall have more. Therefore, 'let not your heart be troubled.' Besides, you will still be able to pray, and prayer will bring you greater blessings than any that I ever gave you."

13, 14. And whatever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. Every word in this address of Christ was full of comfort to His disciples.

15, 16. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever. There was the One who would enable the disciples to meet every trial—

that other Comforter [See Sermons #4, Volume 1—THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT; #5, Volume 1—THE COMFORTER; #1074, Volume 18—THE

PARACLETE and #2074, Volume 35—INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.] whom Christ promised to them! Their trouble was that their Lord was going away from them. That other Comforter made amends for that and He will make amends to you, Believer, for every form of trial to which you may be exposed. Is it bodily weakness? Is it the infirmity of old age? Is it depression of spirit? Is it losses and crosses at home? Is it crooked things that cannot be made straight? Well, Christ's promise still stands good, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."

7. Even the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him."You are on familiar terms with Him. You are intimate with Him. You know Him."

17-20. For He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me: because I live, you shall live also. At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. These are the three wonderful mysteries of the union between God, and Christ, and His people—"I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you."

21, 22. He that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me: and he that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas said unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us, and not unto the world? "Perhaps if You did manifest Yourself to the world, the world would bow down before You and worship You." But Christ's plan was to manifest Himself to the inner circle of His own chosen ones.

23-27. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings: and the word

which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. [See Sermons #247, Volume 5—THE BEST OF MASTERS and #300, Volume 6—SPIRITUAL PEACE.] He had given them peace while He was with them. His Divine Presence had been their continual comfort. But now, although He was going away from them, He would leave His peace behind Him as the most precious legacy that He could bequeath to them—"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."

27, 28. Not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice—. "I know that you do love Me, but if you really acted as if you loved Me, you would rejoice."

28, Because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I. The Lord Jesus, though equal with the Father, had voluntarily laid aside His Glory and taken the form and place of a Man, making Himself of no reputation, so His disciples ought to have rejoiced that He was going back to His primitive Glory!

29, 30. And now I have told you, before it comes to pass, that when it is come to pass, you might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world comes, and has nothing in Me. Still Christ would have enough to do to meet that arch-enemy and to endure all that would come upon Him during that dread encounter.

31. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go from here.