

# The Holy Spirit a Comforter

by Charles Spurgeon

God the Holy Ghost is a very loving Comforter. I am in distress, and want consolation. Some passer-by hears of my sorrow, and he steps within, sits down and essays to cheer me; he speaks soothing words; but he loves me not, he is a stranger, he knows me not at all, he has only come in to try his skill; and what is the consequence? His words run o'er me like oil upon a slab of marble—they are like the pattering rain upon the rock; they do not break my grief; it stands unmoved as adamant, because he has no love for me. But let someone who loves me dearly as his own life come and plead with me, then truly his words are music; they taste like honey; he knows the password of the doors of my heart, and my ear is attentive to every word; I catch the intonation of each syllable as it falls, for it is like the harmony of the harps of heaven. Oh, there is a voice in love, it speaks a language which is its own, it is an idiom and an accent which none can mimic; wisdom cannot imitate it; oratory cannot attain unto it; it is love alone which can reach the mourning heart; love is the only handkerchief which can wipe the mourner's tears away. And is not the Holy Ghost a loving Comforter? Dost thou know, O saint, how much the Holy Spirit loves thee? Canst thou measure the love of the Spirit? Dost thou know how great is the affection of His soul towards thee? Go, measure heaven with thy span; go, weigh the mountains in the scales; go, take the ocean's water, and tell each drop; go, count the sand upon the seals wide shore; and when thou hast accomplished this, thou canst tell how much He loveth thee. He has loved thee long; He has loved thee well; He loved thee ever; and He still shall love thee. Surely He is the person to comfort thee, because He loves. Admit Him, then, to your heart, O Christian that He may comfort you in your distress.

He is a faithful Comforter. Love sometimes proveth unfaithful. "Oh, sharper than a serpent's tooth" is an unfaithful friend! Oh, far more bitter than the gall of bitterness, to have a friend to turn from me in my distress! Oh, woe of woes, to have one who loves me in my prosperity forsake me in the dark day of my trouble! Sad indeed: but such is not God's Spirit. He ever loves, and loves even to the end—a faithful Comforter. Child of God, you are in trouble! A little while ago you found Him a sweet and loving Comforter; you obtained relief from Him when others were but broken cisterns; He sheltered you in His bosom, and carried you in His arms. Oh, wherefore dost thou distrust Him now? Away with thy fears; for He is a faithful Comforter. "Ah! but," thou sayest, "I fear I shall be sick, and shall be deprived of His ordinances." Nevertheless, He shall visit thee on thy sick bed, and sit by thy side to give thee consolation. "Ah! but I have distresses greater than

You can conceive of; wave upon wave rolleth over me; deep calleth unto deep at the noise of the Eternal's waterspouts." Nevertheless, He will be faithful to His promise. "Ah! but I have sinned." So thou hast, but sin cannot sever thee from His love; He loves thee still. Think not, O poor downcast child of God, because the scars of thine old sins have marred thy beauty, that He loves thee less because of that blemish. Oh, no! He loved thee when He foreknew thy sin; He loved thee with the knowledge of what the aggregate of thy wickedness would be; and He does not love thee less now. Come to Him in all boldness of faith; tell Him thou hast grieved Him, and He will forget thy wandering,

and will receive thee again; the kisses of His love shall be bestowed upon thee, and the arms of His grace shall embrace thee. He is faithful: trust Him ; He will never deceive you; trust Him, He will never leave you.

He is an unwearied Comforter. I have sometimes tried to comfort persons that have been tried. You now and then meet with the case of a nervous person. You ask, "What is your trouble?" You are told, and you essay, if possible, to remove it, but while you are preparing your artillery to batter the trouble, you find that it has shifted its quarters, and is occupying quite a different position. You change your argument and begin again; but lo, it is again gone, and you are bewildered. You feel like Hercules cutting off the ever-growing heads of the Hydra, and you give up your task in despair. You meet with persons whom it is impossible to comfort, reminding one of the man who locked himself up in fetters and threw the key away, so that nobody could unlock him. I have found some in the fetters of despair. "O, I am the man," say they "that has seen affliction; pity me, pity me, O my friends;" and the more you try to comfort such people, the worse they get; and therefore, out of all heart, we leave them to wander alone among the tombs of their former joys. But the Holy Spirit is never out of heart with those whom He wishes to comfort. He attempts to comfort us, and we run away from the sweet cordial; He gives some sweet draught to cure us, and we will not drink it; He gives some wondrous potion to charm away all our troubles, and we put it away from us. Still He pursues us; and though we say that we will not be comforted, He says we shall be, and when He has said, He does it; He is not to be wearied by all our sins, not by all our murmurings.

And oh, how wise a Comforter is the Holy Ghost! Job had comforters, and I think he spoke the truth when he said, "Miserable comforters are ye all." But I dare say they esteemed themselves wise; and when the young man Elihu rose to speak, they thought he had a world of impudence. Were they not "grave and reverend seniors?" Did not they comprehend his grief and sorrow? If they could not comfort him, who could? But they did not find out the cause. They thought he was not really a child of God, that he was self-righteous: and they gave him the wrong physic. It is a bad case when the doctor mistakes the disease and gives a wrong prescription, and so, perhaps, kills the patient. Sometimes, when we go and visit people we mistake their disease, we want to comfort them on this point, whereas they do not require any such comfort at all, and they would be better left alone than spoiled by such unwise comforters as we are. But oh, how wise the Holy Spirit is! He takes the soul, lays it on the table, and dissects it in a moment; He finds out the root of the matter, He sees where the complaint is, and then He applies the knife where something is required to be taken away, or puts a plaster where the sore is; and He never mistakes. Oh, how wise, the blessed Holy Ghost! From every comforter I turn and leave them all, for thou art He who alone givest the wisest consolation.

Then mark how safe a Comforter the Holy Ghost is. All comfort is not safe; mark that. There is a young man over there very melancholy. You know how he became so. He stepped into the house of God and heard a powerful preacher, and the Word was blessed, and convinced him of sin. When he went home, his father and the rest found there was something different about him, "Oh," they said, "John is mad; he is crazy;" and what said his mother? Send him into the country for a week; let him go to the ball or to the theatre." John, did you find any comfort there? "Ah no; they made me worse, for while I was there, I thought hell might open and swallow me up." Did you find any relief in the

gaities of the world? "No," say you, "I thought it was idle waste of time." Alas! this is miserable comfort, but it is the comfort of the worldling; and when a Christian gets into distress, how many will recommend him this remedy and the other! "Go and hear Mr. So-and-so preach; have a few friends at your house; read such-and-such a consoling volume;" and very likely it is the most unsafe advice in the world. The devil will sometimes come to men's souls as a false comforter, and he will say to the soul, "What need is there to make all this ado about repentance? You are no worse than other people;" and he will try to make the soul believe that what is presumption is the real assurance of the Holy Ghost; thus he deceives many by false comfort. Ah! there have been many, like infants, destroyed by elixirs given to lull them to sleep; many have been ruined by the cry of "Peace, peace," when there is no peace, hearing gentle things when they ought to be stirred to the quick. Cleopatra's asp was brought in a basket of flowers; and men's ruin often lurks in fair and sweet speeches. But the Holy Ghost's comfort is safe, and you may rest on it. Let Him speak the word, and there is a reality about it; let Him give the cup of consolation, and you may drink it to the bottom, for in its depths there are no dregs, nothing to intoxicate or ruin, it is all safe.

Moreover, the Holy Ghost is an active Comforter: He does not comfort by words, but by deeds. Some comfort by "Be ye warmed and be ye filled, giving nothing." But the Holy Ghost gives, He intercedes with Jesus; He gives us promises, He gives us grace, and so He comforts us. He is always a successful Comforter; He never attempts what He cannot accomplish. Then He is an ever-present Comforter, so that you never have to send for Him. Your God is always near you, and when you need comfort in your distress, behold, the Word is nigh thee, it is in thy mouth, and in thy heart; He is an ever-present help in time of trouble.

---

Excerpted from *Words of Cheer for Daily Life*. Additional Bible-based resources are available at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).