

The Five Paraklete Sayings

Christ in Us: Five Functions of God's Spirit

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If I were to mention the word, "Comforter," to you in just casual conversation, it is likely that your first thoughts would go to something like bed linen rather than to the Holy Spirit. It may have reminded you of the comforter you saw at Bed, Bath, and Beyond. Some of you who live in colder climates might think of a certain type of scarf. I do not know if you were aware of it, but there is a long scarf that people call a comforter, and you wear it to keep your neck and face warm.

But, many of you would also think of a person who simply consoles another. Everybody likes to have a comforter when they are down.

Yet, theologically, "comforter," or "The Comforter," is another name for the Holy Spirit, and it is a name that Jesus Himself gave to the Holy Spirit during His Passover discourse the night before He died.

Now, it is unfortunate that the word, "comforter," has come to be used for the Holy Spirit, since "comfort" is not really the idea that Jesus was trying to get across. The idea of comfort gives us a nice, warm, contented, and cozy feeling. But actually, Jesus was describing a dynamic power that would be at hand, ready to work for every one of His disciples then and now. I should say every one of His disciples at all times, for all time.

Today, we are going to examine the Holy Spirit as Jesus described it to His disciples just before His arrest on that Passover night in the garden of Gethsemane. His descriptions have become known as, "The Five Paraklete Sayings." *Paraklete* is the anglicized Greek word translated "Comforter." The word in Greek is *parakletos*. Jesus' five *parakletos* sayings during His Passover discourse are of critical importance to understanding the Holy Spirit, and its purpose within our Christian lives.

We need to realize that God bestows the Holy Spirit on us as a replacement for Christ in the flesh. That is what Jesus leads with in his five *parakletos* sayings. In essence, Christ is saying that the Holy Spirit is Christ in us, and/or God in us. So, I would like to begin right there to lay the foundation for what Jesus was trying to say to His disciples.

Parakletos is the word variously translated as "Helper," "Comforter," or "Counselor." It is very important to know that it literally means, in the Greek, "One called alongside." The reason for one being called alongside is to give aid and help. So its literal meaning is,

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"one called alongside you to give aid to help."

The word in Greek contains a heavy emphasis on judicial advocacy, as in a court. You have someone who is there to argue on your behalf. This is why, in many places, and many Bibles, the term *parakletos* is translated as "Advocate." If you have an advocate in court, it is someone who speaks for you in the trial. We know them just as lawyers these days. But, that is what an advocate is—one who speaks in your place for you, on your behalf, for your defense.

So, what we can do is give you several words that are synonyms to help describe the *parakletos* in more modern terms. These would be things like "assistant," which is very similar to "helper." We could use "counselor," or "advisor"—someone who tells us things we need to know in order to move forward. It could be a "mediator," or an "intercessor"—one who steps between you and somebody else in order to speak on your behalf, and to soothe things between two parties. It could be "one who pleads" as in a court case—someone pleads your case. Or, it could be a "defender," defending you from someone else's complaint. A "proxy" is another word, someone who steps in, in your place, to act for you, or to speak for you. It could even be so simple as to be described as a friend and an ally in a time of need.

What I hope to do by giving you these definitions is to bring it down from its theological, high-falutin' definition, into very simple everyday terms that we can use. We probably use the word "friend" everyday. Aid, comfort, counselor—notice that I did not use "comforter" in any of those up above? But—aid, assistant, helper, counselor, advisor, mediator, intercessor, advocate, pleader, proxy, defender, friend, and ally—these are all common, easily defined terms. And these are the types of things that the *paraklete*—the Holy Spirit—does for us. These are the kinds of jobs that the Holy Spirit is "designed" to do.

I have mentioned a couple of times that "comforter" is not the best term. The esteemed Mr. Thayer who did Thayer's Lexicon, says this about it, "The meaning 'comforter,' although adopted in some renderings, does not fit any of the passages."

That is pretty significant. And also, Gerhard Kettel was another man, esteemed by some to be one of the best New Testament Greek scholars, also wrote a huge 16-volume dictionary of the New Testament, says this,

If we are to avoid *paraklete* [just as an aside, the reason he wants to avoid the word *paraklete* is because it is just an anglicized Greek word, meaning nothing to us] the basic thought is that of "advocate." But, the more general

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"supporter," or "helper" is perhaps the best rendering.

And the reason for that is because we understand what those things are. So, it gives us a nice insight into this idea of *parakletos*.

Now, a bit of a New Testament Greek lesson for you: *Parakletos* is a verbal adjective in the masculine gender. It is an adjective, not a noun. But, it can work, kind of, as a noun. But the thing I want you to catch right now is that it is in the masculine gender.

In Greek, like many other languages, such as the Romance languages, and many of the Teutonic languages, they add gender to their nouns. And so, in order to write or speak an understandable sentence, you have to use the correct pronouns and articles in the correct gender according to the corresponding noun it is associated with.

So, if you start with masculine, you have to continue with masculine. All the Greek pronouns that refer to *parakletos* are masculine. So, in your English Bibles, when you see the contexts that contain the Holy Spirit in terms of *parakletos*, you will almost always find "He," and "Him," and "His." This is because the English translators were being sort of honest with the Greek. In other places, however, there were not quite so honest. They transferred this situation to other areas where they should have used the neuter, "it." But, they were thinking in terms of the trinity doctrine.

So, what I am getting at, it is not technically wrong that we find He, Him, or His as translated in these *parakletos* passages. But, in English, we should not have matched gender in our pronouns except when talking about something definitely female or male. For women we use she, her, and hers. And when talking about men we use he, him, and his. But, when we know that the thing has no gender at all—it is neuter—we use "it."

So, what I am saying is that they did it technically correct with the word *parakletos* by using "he," and "him." They did not do right by capitalizing them. If they were to be consistent throughout the whole New Testament, they should have used the neuter pronouns, "it," "itself," and so on.

I am sorry if this is confusing (and it can be confusing). They did it right, but they did it wrong. They did it right for the specific passage, but they did it wrong for the entire Bible. So, I just wanted to tell you that, and I will try as I read these passages to you in its correct forms so that you can understand that this is the way that it should have been. But the translators were steeped in trinitarianism, and it was just automatic for them to use the male pronouns capitalized.

Now, for studying *parakletos* in the New Testament, it became clear that the idea derives from Old Testament examples. These examples were the ones that the patriarchs, prophets, and even angels gave to the people. Now, when Jesus spoke about the *parakletos* to His disciples, they already had a background of understanding from their knowledge of the Old Testament and it would have reassured them that though Jesus would not be there physically, they would have God's help.

Now I do want to mention that in the Old Testament there is no *parakletos*, *per se*. Remember that *parakletos* is a Greek term. So, in these examples we are about to go through regarding the *parakletos* in the Old Testament, the Greek term *parakletos* is not there. It is the story's example that shows us what *parakletos* meant to the disciples, and therefore to all of us.

In our first passage, we see Abraham acting as a *parakletos*. If you will notice that in the New King James Version, there is a title to this section, "Abraham intercedes for Sodom." Abraham acts as a *parakletos* for Sodom!

Genesis 18:23-26 And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

Abraham is not the *parakletos*, but he acts, in this case here, like the *parakletos* does now. Abraham interceded for Sodom. He went before God, and he said, "Is not this the truth, God, that You are the righteous judge? And if there are so many righteous, you will let these live?" And God said, "Yes, that is the truth, I will do it."

This is how a *parakletos* acts. He goes alongside as an advocate. I am sure that Abraham did not approve of the things being done in Sodom. But, he went before God as an advocate, like a lawyer might do. And in a way, bargaining with God, telling God, letting God know that he (Abraham) understood the character of God, and that this is the way that God acts, and that this is the way that he expected God to act, and told Him, "Is not this true, God?" And He answered, "Yes, this is true. I will have mercy if there are so many righteous found in Sodom." So, Abraham acted as a *parakletos*.

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There is another example just a couple of pages over in Genesis 20, where Abraham goes and meets with Abimelech, saying that Sarah was his sister, and Abimelech took Sarah. And then, of course,

Genesis 20:3-7 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this." And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live." ...

God tells Abimelech that Abraham would be his intercessor. Abraham is going to act as the *parakletos* would later, and come before God and plead for Abimelech's life.

Genesis 20:7 ...But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

So, Abraham again, the father of the faithful, shows us the way. Here he gives us an example of an intercessor, advocate, helper, counselor, and all those other things that the *parakletos* does.

There is another example in Job 33. I want you to see that the disciples had a good background in this sort of thing. So when Jesus mentioned this example to them, it would not take them very long to figure out what He meant. Here, at this point in the example, we are in the midst of Elihu's speech to Job. And he tells Job,

Job 33:19-22 "Man is also chastened with pain on his bed, and with strong pain in many of his bones, so that his life abhors bread, and his soul succulent food. His flesh wastes away from sight, and his bones stick out which once were not seen. Yes, his soul draws near the pit, and his life to the executioners.

Job has a trial unto death. He is right on the edge.

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Job 33:23-26 "If there is a messenger for him, a mediator, one among a thousand, to show man His uprightness, then He [God] is gracious to him, and says, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom'; his flesh shall be young like a child's, he shall return to the days of his youth. He shall pray to God, and He will delight in him, he shall see His face with joy, for He restores to man His righteousness.

Elihu is talking about someone who goes before God for another person as a mediator, to help bring a man understanding of God's righteousness, and help correct the man so that he repents of whatever his sin was. And then, God responds with restoring the man's health and life to him. This was Elihu's way of talking about what we have come to know as *parakletos*—someone who would "go to bat" for another person before God, and before the man. And I think primarily in this example it is the messenger, the mediator who goes to the person who is ill, and he shows him God's righteousness, and gets him to start thinking about himself in comparison to God's righteousness. And, the man repents.

So, this is eventually what happened to Job. Of course, the Mediator in this case was God Himself. He finally got through to Job about God's righteousness. "Where were you, Job? Do you not understand how great I am in comparison to you? You have no reason to think that you are anything in comparison to Me." And so later, he was redeemed.

Later still, down in chapter 42, we find Job acting as a *paraklete* toward the other men before God for their sin. So, what we have here is not only Job repenting, but he also learned the lesson of the *paraklete*, and performed that for those who were in need.

But, the best example in the whole Old Testament, I think, is found in Daniel 9. This passage takes place just as the 70 years were coming to an end, and Daniel writes:

Daniel 9:2-7 In the first year of his [Darius'] reign, I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by

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departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

You could also read verses 16-19, which I will not for lack of time.

What Daniel did was place himself in the position of confessing for the entire nation of Judah, and all Israel, for the sins that they had done, and caused God in His righteousness to punish them, and to exile them. In verses 16-19 he gives you the understanding that this was all part of God's plan, and these 70 years needed to come to an end, and things needed to go forward now. God had a purpose for all of this, and it needed to run its course. Now it was time for the temple and everything to be raised again in Jerusalem, and things needed to be returned to the holy land, so that the plan of God could move forward.

And so, Daniel acts as a *paraklete* for the whole nation of Israel. But again, what he does is to tell God the truth, and tell God the situation, and confesses for the whole nation that they were wrong, and He was right, and they had learned their lesson; it was time to move on with things.

I have another example. I am giving all these to you because I want you to see what the disciples knew. And, if they were making the connections, then they would understand what Jesus was talking about in a much more concrete way than maybe we believe they may have thought about it. Turn to Zechariah 1, where we will see Jesus Christ Himself in His pre-incarnate form as the Angel of the Lord, doing the exact same things.

Zechariah 1:12 Then the Angel of the LORD [Christ] answered and said, "O LORD of hosts [the Father], how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?"

Look! We are in the same context that we found just a moment ago in Daniel. Now, here is the Word going before the Father, as the *paraklete*.

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Zechariah 1:13-17 And the LORD answered the Angel who talked to me, with good and comforting words. So the Angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal. I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; for I was a little angry, and they helped—but with evil intent." Therefore thus says the LORD: "I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it," says the LORD of hosts, "and a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem." Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; the LORD will again comfort Zion, and will again choose Jerusalem.'""

Here we have the next step of things that Jesus Himself in His pre-incarnate form goes before God, and God says, "Let's do it. I will again have mercy on Jerusalem. Let's get things moving."

This is one of the last prophecies in the Old Testament, with only Malachi coming after it. So, here is Jesus acting as the Intercessor in Old Testament times between the prophet, and I should say, the whole nation of Judah, and God. He is giving comforting words. "Yes, the exile is over, bad times are behind us; let us go forward." This is because things had to be set up for the coming of Jesus Christ. So, that is the hope, here, that is being conveyed through the *parakletos*.

I also want you to notice that He says He is going to restore His name, His residence in Jerusalem, and then later, if we would look at verses 18 through 21 (which we will not do today), He promises that He was going to judge the powers that caused the scattering and captivity. He does all this as the Intercessor. He tells all of this to the prophet. (That little bit about the judging the powers who did this, is in the vision of the "horns.")

Now that we have the Old Testament backdrop for what occurred in John 14-16, but before we go there, I need you to see I John 2:1. This next thing has to be the foundation for everything we study about the *parakletos*. John writes to the church:

I John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate [*Parakletos*] with the Father, [and who is it?] Jesus Christ the righteous.

This needs to be the foundation for our understanding of *parakletos*. That Jesus Christ

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Himself is the *Parakletos*. He is the One we go through for everything. Is He not all in all? Is He not everything to our salvation? We do nothing except that it is through Jesus Christ, or in His name. So, we have to use this as the basis for our understanding.

The idea of Christ being our Mediator and Intercessor before God appears throughout the New Testament. I want to go through these quickly without much comment.

Matthew 10:32-33 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

So this says very clearly that He is the Mediator; everything goes through Him for acceptance, or denial and rejection. He is the "gatekeeper" if you will.

Romans 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

See? It is Christ who is there for us, sitting right next to the Father Himself, making intercession for us.

The book of Hebrews is just full of the idea that Jesus Christ is the Mediator.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

That is all that He lives for! He wants to be the One to stand between us and God, helping us in all our interactions with Him.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; [as our Advocate, as our Lawyer as it were; the One who speaks for us.]

Please get this truth, that the foundation for our understanding *parakletos* is that Jesus

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Christ is **The Parakletos**.

Now *Vine's* says this: "The Comforter, or Consoler corresponds to the name *Menahem*, given by the Hebrews to the Messiah." What he is saying is that *paraklete* or *parakletos* is equal to the Hebrew word *Menahem*, and the Hebrews of the Old Testament used this term to name Jesus Christ the Messiah.

Vine's continues, "In John 14:16 Jesus tells His disciples that He will send them another *Parakletos*. 'Another,' is *allos*, meaning 'another of the same kind.' This is not *heteros*, which means 'another of a different kind.'" So, when He says that He is going to send another "comforter," He means "another just like Himself." The Spirit He would send as the *parakletos* was just like Him. In fact, it is Him in Spirit.

Do you need proof of this?

II Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

All we need is the first clause, "Now the Lord is the Spirit." Is that not conclusive? "The Lord is the Spirit."

Every year at the Passover service, we read John chapters 14-17. We know the story. Jesus gives His disciples a final crash course of His teaching before His arrest. The disciples are confused. They do not understand much of what He says, but they do realize that He is going away, and they are stricken with doubt, worry, and fear. They really do not know what to do. Here, this man, Jesus Christ, has been guiding them for three and a half years, and then He suddenly tells them that He is "outta here!" What are they going to do? And Jesus calms them by telling them that He will send a *parakletos*—a Helper, an Aide, an Advocate—to them in His place.

THE FIVE PARAKLETOS SAYINGS

1. The spirit as helper

And so, He gives five *parakletos* sayings. We will start in John 14:15 to include the context.

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

This is the opening salvo to introducing the *parakletos*, and the reason why He opens with this is because only those who obey Him receive His Spirit. So, you have got to keep the commandments!

Acts 5:32 "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

It says very clearly that only those who obey Him receive the Spirit. So, here we start with the very foundation of things—keep the commandments,

John 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He [it] may abide with you forever."

I should probably say, "it." Well, I am not sure, now that I look at it, because it could be either. It could be the Spirit abiding with us forever, or it could be the Father abiding with us forever, because we find in John 17 that they will dwell in us.

John 14:17-18 "The Spirit of truth [most likely the 'helper'], whom [which] the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him [it] nor knows Him [it]; but you know Him [it], for He [it] dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."

I think that the easiest way to understand this particular section is by what Jesus says in verse 18, "I will come to you." When He sends the *paraklete* to us, He is saying that, "I will be with you." And, not only will He be with us, He will be in us.

So, let us look at it this way: Jesus was with His disciples for three and a half years. They walked with Him, they talked with Him, and ate food with Him, and slept right near Him. They were with Him almost all the time during those three and a half years. Every once in a while He would send them out two by two, and they would go, but for the most part, for the entire time, they were with Him. To put it another way, He was with them.

Now He says, "Look, this really is not going to end. I am going to send another helper to you who is going to be in you 24/7—all the time. And, this *paraklete* is going to do the exact same things that I did while I was with you."

This, to me, is the easiest way to understand this. The *paraklete* is the one who helps us,

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just as Jesus helped them. And to put it in the present tense, Jesus helps us today, just as He helped them then. He does it now through His Spirit.

I need to mention here that He calls the Holy Spirit, "The Spirit of Truth."

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. ...

We will be seeing a lot of these similarities between Jesus and the Spirit as we go through these, and they are just little bits of evidence that the Spirit is nothing more than the essence of Jesus Christ in us—the Spirit, the mind, and power of Jesus Christ living in us. So, just as Jesus Christ is the truth, the Spirit is the truth.

2. The Spirit as teacher

John 14:25-26 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, [it] He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Another way we could look at this, is if He had said, "The Holy Spirit is our Remembrancer." One of its functions is to elicit memories of God's teaching so that we know what to do in any given situation—memories of God's teaching. The Holy Spirit prods our memory to recall Scripture, and lead us to new insights in applying what we have learned. What the Holy Spirit does is that it teaches us by helping us through experiences along the way to God's Kingdom. So, what it does is that it reminds us of things.

Say we are walking down the street, and you see a bar. And here it is, it is only ten in the morning, and we suddenly have this hankering for a Rusty Nail. Well, the Holy Spirit's function to this point is to remind us of the dangers of alcohol. They are all through the Bible. There is a time and a place for it. [Ten o'clock in the morning of a workday is not it.]

It might remind us, also, that sloth and shirking one's duties is a bad thing. God has a *very* strong work ethic. And while it is time to work, get to work. We should not be taking off to go visit the local "watering hole." And we can probably come up with several other scriptures that it might bring to mind. The Holy Spirit is simply doing its job. It is reminding us about what God says about a certain situation.

And so, it not only prods our memory, it motivates us, then, to take those steps to walk past the bar, and continue on with our responsibilities. It brings things to our memory, so that we would choose to do the right, rather than obviously blundering on and doing sin.

Now, one thing we need to understand here is that Jesus is saying that the Spirit would help us to recall biblical teachings. It is very important. He says He will bring things to mind—to our remembrance. **The job of the Holy Spirit is not to reveal new truth.** That is not the Holy Spirit's job. It gives us reminders, and insights, but the truth is already there in God's Word.

Be very careful of people claiming to have new truth, because the Holy Spirit probably did not inspire them. Now, it might reveal old truth. The truth is in the Word. And this takes me on a tangent.

John 12:49-50 "For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

John 14:10 [speaking to Philip] "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works."

We need to see the progression here. God the Father has the truth. He embodies the truth. Everything He is, is truthful. Under Him is Jesus Christ, who is the truth, who embodies the truth; everything He is, is truthful. But, Jesus Christ is not the One who came up with the truth. The truth resides in the Father. The Father told the Son what the truth is. The Son then preaches the truth, and it was recorded in God's Word.

The Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ living in us. It will not tell us something different than what is in God's Word. There is a clear hierarchy of authority here. The Father has the truth, He tells the Son. The Son reveals that truth to us, by His Spirit. There is not going to be anything that is from God through the Holy Spirit that would ever contradict something that He has already said, and has been written down. Jesus Christ is the Revelator. The Holy Spirit will not contradict Christ.

So, if you receive a revelation, but it cannot be clearly verified with what is already written within God's Word, it is not a message from God. God will never tell you to do

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anything against His own word. Another spirit is trying to lead you off course.

So, how do we test the spirits?

I am going to go through several scriptures all in a row, and I am just going to read them.

I John 3:24-4:6 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God [this in regard to things going on in his day]. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you [the Father and Jesus Christ] is greater than he who is in the world [Satan]. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us [meaning the apostles]; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

You test the spirits by listening to the words of the Book.

Isaiah 8:19-20 And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony [that covers the whole book]! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

So if someone tells you to do something, what should you do? You go to the law and to the testimony, and if it is not according to God's Word, shut them off; run; get out of there.

I John 2:4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

So, if someone says to you, "I love Jesus. I have been reading the Word of God, and I have got to tell you that you should be keeping Sunday." Stop them right there. Ask them, "Do you not keep the Fourth Commandment?" They reply, "Oh no! That is been done away!" Then, you just leave. Turn around and walk away. You have got to keep the commandments. And, the teacher has to keep the commandments. And, if the teacher is not keeping the commandments, then turn a deaf ear to them, because he is not doing what God says.

This is the apostle John in 95 AD or so, saying, "If you have a teacher come unto you, and he does not keep the commandments of God," and I am sure he did not mean nine. He meant ten, plus the statutes and judgments. He is saying, "Do not listen to him."

Now, a final scripture on this found in Matthew 7, out of Jesus' own mouth, part of the Sermon on the Mount, verse 15,

Matthew 7:15-20 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Just adding one more point. Let us say that the man seems to be keeping the commandments, but his back-trail is littered with wreckage—wrecked lives, and problems, and lots of bad and evil results. That is a pretty good clue that the things that he is teaching are not right. We can see the fruits of his life, and his teaching, and how things turned out.

Jesus says here that a good tree cannot bear bad fruit. A good tree bears good fruit. And so, not only must there be a keeping of the commandments, not only must it square up with the whole Bible, not only must the teacher himself be keeping the commandments of God, his record must be good too.

See how important it is for the preacher to be upholding everything that God says? If you cannot trust the teacher, you cannot trust his teaching.

Now, of course, we can apply the same things to Jesus Christ. He had nothing but good

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fruit in His life. He lived everything that He said. He kept the commandments to a "T." Everything He ever said squared with what was written in the Old Testament. We can trust Him to the uttermost! And that is where our faith resides—in Jesus Christ, and on through Him to God the Father. Do you believe Him? All those things are factors in why we believe.

3. The Spirit as witness

John 15:26-27 "But when the Helper comes, whom [which] I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who [which] proceeds from the Father, He [it] will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

We have had helper, and then teacher, and now we have witness. We saw part of this before in an earlier sermon in Matthew 10:20. That, and similar scriptures throughout the gospel are the ones that said, "If you get into a tight spot, do not worry about what you are going to say, I will put My words in you, and you will witness for Me." John 15 above fits right in with this thought.

The Spirit in us gives us, first of all, not just the people who see us, but it gives us evidence of Jesus, and the truth of what He says. And then, of course, once it works in us, people who are around us then have evidence or proof of Jesus—the life He lives now in us. Remember those scriptures?

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

That is what makes a witness. That is why He says here in John 15 that the Holy Spirit will "testify of Me." The Holy Spirit gives proof of Jesus in us—first to us, and then to those others who see us. And, here He mentions the Spirit of truth, again, and in this context He is talking about us making connections between bits of God's truth, and drawing logical conclusions from them. And by doing this, it convicts us in our belief in Jesus and His gospel.

Did you catch the way that it works? It is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit that works within us to let us take a little here, and a little there, and put them together. And then, "Ah Ha! That is what Jesus meant!" That firms up our faith, and we can then practice it, and

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make a witness for Him. And that is why He mentions the Spirit of truth in this context. The witness does no good if there is no truth. It makes a false witness instead.

The Spirit of truth is necessary for us to make a true witness. The witness we are making is of Jesus. We are pointing to Jesus Christ through our own life, and our own words. All the glory goes to Him, and not to us.

So, because of Him in us, and the Spirit testifying that Jesus Christ is in us, we then go out and become witnesses for God in the world. And, we can do this because of what He said there in verse 27, "Because you have been with Him from the beginning." It is our relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father that makes us effective witnesses. And because Christ is in us, and because we have been with Him, we can then be an effective witness.

Turn to I John 5 because I want to make a connection here to help us understand just how much Jesus Christ is all in all.

I John 5:6-13 This is He [Christ] who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who [that] bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness. . . . the Spirit, the water, and the blood [those intervening words should not be there. They are not in the original]; and these three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son [through the Spirit] has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

Can you grasp what the apostle John was trying to tell us here? I know it is a bit to get your mind around, because of the way that John writes. But, it is perfectly sensible. The Spirit witnesses because it is the truth. Jesus said in John 14:6 that He is the truth. So, the Spirit and Jesus are same. We have seen this too, already.

Notice that this whole section, here in I John 5, is about the Son, Christ, and the three

witnesses that come through Him.

The water—baptism—are you not raised in Christ? Did not your old man go down into the watery grave? And like Christ was resurrected from His grave, you were resurrected into newness of life? And is not that newness of life, then, the life of Christ? Is the new man Christ in you, the hope of glory? It is!

And the blood—we have access to the Father through Christ's blood which He shed for us, which we are going be memorializing here in about a month. Without the blood of Christ there is no forgiveness of sin, no justification, no access to God, and no eternal life.

And there is the Spirit—which is now given to us. It is through that Spirit that we live the life of Christ, and which gives us the opportunity to have eternal life.

These three things, the water, the blood, and the Spirit, take us all the way through our conversion unto the Kingdom of God. They are the three witnesses that we have that we are the children of God, that we have gone through these steps, that we are continuing in the way, and as He says there winding this section up, "These three things testify that we have eternal life through Him—Jesus Christ—and that gives us faith to continue to believe and grow and to endure to the end. That is how essential Jesus Christ in us is.

4. The Spirit as prosecutor

John 16:5-11 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him [it] to you. And when He [it] has come, He [it] will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

The word "convict" in verse 8 is the word, *elencho*, and it means to expose, or refute, or to convince, as well as to convict. It is another legal term that implies forceful cross-examination, and strong argument like in a court of law between two lawyers. The Holy Spirit does this for us. We could say that the Holy Spirit, then, is God's prosecuting

attorney against the world.

What the Spirit does is it lays out irrefutable evidence to a person who is truly listening. That is just like a lawyer does. He is supposed to lay down evidence that cannot be gainsaid.

Now, here, Jesus says that it convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It exposes to us, primarily, but also to the world through our witness, it exposes the world's erroneous ideas regarding these three matters—sin, righteousness, and judgment. It does such a thorough job that the world stands guilty and exposed in all its anti-God rebellion and depravity. Now, it does not do this necessarily to the world, but it sure does this for us.

It convicts of sin, it says. John says, "Because they do not believe in Me." What this does is that it exposes to us the world's unbelief in Christ. Because the Holy Spirit dwells in us, we can see that the world really does not believe Christ. They do not believe what He says, they do not believe what He did, and we can see that. It exposes that to us. We can see what hypocrites the world is.

The essence of sin is unbelief. If they do not believe what Jesus said, they are not going to do it—they are going to sin. If they really believed Jesus, they would obey Him. But, since they do not, they continue to sin. And this is what the Holy Spirit does—it opens our eyes to the fact that the world, even though they confess Christ, really does not believe Him. And so, it exposes their sin.

The next thing it does, it convicts of righteousness. This is the other side of the coin. It convinces us of God's righteousness by upholding His absolute standards of character. And what it does for us is that it compares our feeble character with His, and it gives us an awareness of His absolute holiness. So, what we see, then, to try and put it in simple terms, when it convicts of sin, it shows us what is wrong. When it convicts of righteousness, it shows us what is right. And, it leaves us no excuses. This is what the Holy Spirit does. It convinces us of what is wrong, and what is right.

And then, it convicts of judgment. This is the next step.

What happens after you know what is right, and after you do what is right? And, after you know and do what is wrong? There comes a judgment. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand that if we choose the good, our judgment is going to be good, and we are going to end up in the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, if we choose to do sin, our judgment will be bad, and we are going to end up like the ruler of this world who has

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been judged already, if we do not repent.

So, in simple terms, the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to what is right and wrong, and then it convinces us that there is a judgment coming and we had better make a choice. And that, basically, is what Jesus Christ is trying to get across here. This is one of the functions of the Holy Spirit—to expose to us what is wrong, what is right, and that there is a judgment coming, so get on the stick.

And so, to us, it provides help, strength, motivation, revelation, eternal life, but it works the very opposite against the enemies of God—this world, human nature, and Satan. It works the other way—it condemns them, but it helps us.

And so, seeing that, we can stand against the enemies of God, against our human nature, we can stand against the things of this world, we can stand against Satan the Devil, and then we can go and conquer! Paul says in Romans 8:37 that we are more than conquerors if we would just allow Jesus Christ to live in us.

5. THE SPIRIT AS REVEALER AND GUIDE

John 16:12-15 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He [it], the Spirit of truth, has come, He [it] will guide you into all truth; for He [it] will not speak on His [its] own authority, but whatever He [it] hears He [it] will speak; and He [it] will tell you things to come. He [It] will glorify Me, for He [it] will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He [it] will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Remember I told you about that hierarchy? We are seeing it again, here. A lot of these headings overlap a bit. The Holy Spirit opens up the truth to us, and it guides us further along the way. And what does that do? It prepares us for the Kingdom of God, and eternal life. It makes the message of the gospel explicit to us. It brings out plainly the fuller implications of the teaching of Jesus Christ. It takes of what is His, and gives it to us. If we have the Spirit of God, we have the mind of Christ. (I Corinthians 2)

We can understand the spiritual things, the deep things of God, because of God's Spirit in us. So, we have God the Father giving the word to Jesus Christ. He spoke that word, and then He through His Holy Spirit helps us to understand it, and then that leads to our eventual glory.

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So, what the Holy Spirit does is make God a reality to us. It makes God and Jesus Christ central to our thinking. Its ultimate aim is for *full comprehension* for God's way of life—not just partial, and not just little things. He means the whole thing. He wants us to have the complete mind of Christ. And this is available through His spirit. At least, we should begin to think like Him. And, we will have that then, in its fullness in the resurrection. And so, as it says here, it glorifies Christ. It brings to fruition all of His plans for us, ultimately ending with glory.

To summarize what we have seen in these five *paraklete* sayings, is that Jesus Himself, and the Father (John 17) lives in us by His Spirit. The Spirit is the essence—the mind, the power—of God in us. It is what God could give of Himself to us for our use for our advantage, living in the flesh, apart from Him, physically. Remember that Jesus said that He had to go away in order to give us the Spirit. And it was to our advantage that He did this, because He could be so much more effective by living His life in each one of us, and not just being with us.

Jesus shows in these five sayings that what He could do for the disciples while He was there with them on earth can be done so much more effectively and powerfully through His Spirit in us. You remember how the Jews were promised Emmanuel—God with us? Jesus promises us, God in us.

John 17:20-26 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."