

such as the paying of the ransom of Calvary, but of a Person, who by His personal appearance actually comes to comfort us. Overwhelmed by distress and sorrow, we have not lost the *comfort*, for nothing can come to us without the will of our heavenly Father; but we may have lost the *Comforter*. It is one thing to be watching by the bedside of my sick child, and to remember that even this affliction may be to God's glory and a blessing to the child; and quite another when a faithful parent enters the room, and seeing my tears wipes them away; reading my sorrow seeks to drive it from my heart; with the warmth of his love cherishing me in the coldness of my desolation; and leaning my head against his breast looks me hopefully in the eye; and smoothing my brow, with holy animation, points me to heaven, inspiring me with trust in my heavenly Father.

Comfort is a deposited *treasure* from which I can borrow; it is like the sacrifice of Christ in whom is all my comfort, because on Calvary He opened to all the house of Israel a fountain for sin and uncleanness. But a comforter is a *person*, who, when I can not go to the fountain nor even see it, goes for me and fills his pitcher and puts the refreshing drops to my burning lips. When Ishmael lay perishing with thirst, his mother's comfort was near by in the cleft of the rock from which the water came gushing down; yet with comfort so near he might have died. But when the angel of the Lord appeared and showed her the water, then Hagar had found her *Comforter*.

And such is the Holy Spirit. So long as Jesus walked on earth He was the Comforter of His disciples. He lifted them when they stumbled; when discouraged and distressed by fear and doubt, He was their faithful Savior and Comforter. But Himself was not comforted. When in Gethsemane, being exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, He asked them for comfort, they could not give it to Him. They were powerless; they slept and could not watch with Him one hour. So He struggled alone, un comforted and comfortless, until an angel came and did what sinners could not do, comforting the Savior in His distress.

When about to depart from the earth, Jesus foreknew how desolate His disciples would be. They were weak, helpless, broken reeds. As the slender vine clings to the oak, so they cling to their Lord. And now, as the tree was to be removed and the vines