

painful in any circumstances; but more especially if that friend is endeared to us by all that is righteous, and pure, and lovely in character, and amiable in disposition, and dignified by the possession of great powers, much needed, and employed for the noblest purposes. To think of losing such a person in the midst of his usefulness is distressing; but doubly so to lose him by a violent and ignominious death. This was the position in which the apostles were now placed. For upwards of three years they had lived on terms of the most endearing intimacy with Jesus. They had listened to the words of heavenly wisdom which fell from his living lips, they had felt and witnessed the power of his eloquence, and had seen all that benevolence of heart, and intense human sympathy, which led him to relieve suffering wherever he beheld it, and called forth those stupendous miracles of mercy, by which his divine commission was established. No wonder then that sorrow filled their hearts when he told them plainly that he must be taken from them by a bloody and ignominious death, and it was to comfort them in their sorrow that he addressed them in the words of the text:—"I will pray the Father" &c.

The promise of our text is the first of that series which our Lord gave to his disciples during this, the last interview which he had with them before he suffered, regarding the mission of the Comforter. It is to the effect that, when he had left them, and gone to the Father, he would intercede with him in heaven on their behalf; and he would give them another Comforter, that he might abide with them for ever. *Another Comforter*, that is one who would act towards them, as his substitute, who would be to them, what he had been, their instructor, monitor, comforter. The word in the original is *Paraclete* which properly signifies one sent for to assist by his counsel and advocacy. It is the same word that is elsewhere applied by John to our Saviour, and there very properly translated *advocate*. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." It is used however in a much wider sense, and is employed to denote one who instructs, guides, and comforts, as well as pleads