

apostles be satisfied, and submit without a murmur, to the removal from them of their beloved master. And with such a comforter in the church still, what cause has the believer for thankfulness, and encouragement, and holy joy! Having made such a provision for the instruction, and guidance, and comfort, and sanctification of believers, well might Jesus say to the apostles,—I will not leave you comfortless, or as it is in the original, “orphans,” fatherless, unprovided for, in the midst of a cold and hostile world.

This infinitely glorious one is invisible to the eye of sense, and therefore the men of the world receive him not. It is things seen, and material, and gratifying to the sense, that they receive and appreciate. They do not repose confidence in the divine testimony regarding him, nor value the graces which he bestows, and consequently they do not listen to his holy suggestions. Instead of this, they resist, and grieve him away, and so have no experimental knowledge of him. Thus they receive him not, as their heavenly monitor; and if they do not reject the divine testimony regarding him, they have no well defined and settled convictions, with respect either to his existence or his mission. But the very invisibility, and immateriality of the Holy Spirit, instead of being a disadvantage to be regretted, is an advantage for which to be thankful. Unlogged by a material form, he is limited to no place, but is everywhere present, watching over the true interests of the church, and ministering to the spiritual wants of believers. And most important of all, being immaterial, he can so manifest himself to the souls of believers, can come into such immediate contact with their spirits, that he is said to dwell with them, and to be in them.

It is a very mistaken idea to suppose that we could know more of the spirit of God, and have more satisfactory evidence, with regard to his existence, if we saw him in bodily form. We can know God only from his attributes, as manifested in his works and word; and the sight of the Holy Spirit under some material form, instead of giving us clearer views of his nature, would only mystify us. But the humble Christian who believes Christ's testimony