

General Statement.

Jesus saw that his disciples were filled with sorrow by his forewarnings. He promised them that they should not be left alone. From the land to which he was going, from the Father's holy presence, he would send them an Advocate. This Advocate or Comforter was to be, not a mere memory of his own teachings, but a Spirit, who should abide in their hearts. He should have a double mission—to the disciples and to the unbelieving world. To Christ's friends he should bring divine guidance, encouragement, and illumination of mind; to the world he should bring conviction of the sin of unbelief, the worthlessness of self-righteousness, and the judgment at God's bar of the "prince of this world." This coming Comforter was to supply our Lord's own place as the guide and teacher of the apostles; for what their Master could not teach, because they were not ready to hear, the Spirit would impart as soon as they should be able to bear it.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. These things. These farewell discourses. **Should not be offended.** Or, "be made to stumble." The disciples must soon tread the stoniest, thorniest path ever marked out for men; and they must tread it alone. Eagerly they listened to learn how not to stumble.

2. Put you out of the synagogues. Excommunicate you. This prophecy was full of terror to the eleven Jews who listened. The disgrace of expulsion from church membership is now dreaded, but it is small compared with the punishment which, even in its lightest form, kept the condemned person away from intercourse with his fellows—even from his wife and child—for thirty days; while the severest form was "a perpetual exclusion from religious meetings and all fellowship of God's people."—*Ellicott*. **Doeth God service.** "Offereth service to God."

3, 4. They have not known. They failed to recognize. **The Father.** Our Lord's favorite title for God. **Nor me.** Jesus went to his grave utterly misapprehended, and ascended to the Father only partly understood by a very few. **Ye may remember.** "Even their persecution would by this means strengthen their faith."—*Watkins*. **I said not . . . because I was with you.** "Hitherto he had been the main object of attack; soon they will have to bear the brunt without him, and it is now necessary that they should be forewarned."—*Rummer*.

5. I go my way. In less than twenty-four hours he would be gone! **To him that sent me.** We are apt to consider death as the foe that tears us from our friends on earth; Jesus looked upon it as the messenger that led him to his Father. **None of you asketh me.** They had asked this very question (chap. 13. 36; 14. 5), but they had asked in a spirit of alarm for themselves, not of love to their Master. *Ellicott* paraphrases thus: "Your thoughts are not with me; it is to you as nothing that I am about to return to him that sent me." (1) *Let us see the glory beyond the grave.*

6. Sorrow hath filled your heart. The thought of their own immediate loss crowded out the thought of his gain and of the benefits coming

to all the world by his departure. (2) *By faith sorrow may be turned into joy.*

7. I tell you the truth. The emphasis is upon I. "I, your Master, I, who, knowing all, am about to leave you; I tell you this as a truth and as a comfort." **The Comforter will not come.** The word "Comforter" is in Greek *paracletos*, which means an Advocate; one who gives aid and support. It here refers to the Holy Spirit of God, who comes to the Church of Christ to give to all what an incarnate God would give to only a few—the light of his presence. **I will send him.** Doubtless, in their ignorance they would have chosen the continued presence of their Master; but (3) *It is well for us that God gives us not what we desire, but what we need.*

8. And when he is come. "He, when he is come." The Spirit is a person, not a mere emanation. **Will reprove.** Better, "Will convict." **The world.** In the writings of John he never refers to Christians. To the world the Spirit comes as a convicting judge; to disciples as a consoling friend.

9. Of sin. Matthew Henry, on this passage, says that the Spirit convicts men of the fact of sin, of the fault of sin, of the folly of sin, of the filth of sin, of the fountain of sin (our corrupt natures), and of the fruit of sin. **Because they believe not on me.** The great sin of mankind is want of faith in him who alone can save them from all sin. (4) *Let us beware how we neglect him who is our only hope of salvation.*

10. Of righteousness. The Spirit first shows a man that he is a sinner; then directs him how to be made righteous in the sight of God. **Because I go to my Father.** That is, our righteousness is not in our own morality or goodness, but in him who stands before the Father as our representative. **And ye see me no more.** The departure of Christ, over which his disciples were mourning, was the means of bringing them their highest blessing. (5) *Often our sorrow becomes the instrument of our greatest good.* (6) *The only way in which a sinner can become a saint is through the righteousness of Christ.*

11. Of judgment. The Spirit comes to open