

Comfort.

BY REV. W. H. PORTER, M.A.

Then had the churches rest and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied. Acts 9:31.

Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Rom. 15:4.

The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John 14:26.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. Ps. 94:19.

Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts. 2 Thess. 2:16.

Blessed be God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; he comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

COMFORT IN SORROW.

God that comforteth those that are cast down. 2 Cor. 7:6.

O that I could comfort myself against sorrow. Jer. 8:18.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Is. 40:1.

I sigh; and there is none to comfort me. Lam. 1:21.

I, even I, am he that comforteth you. Is. 51:12.

I looked for comforters, but I found none. Ps. 69:20.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. Is. 66:13.

Mine eyes fail for thy word, when wilt thou comfort me? Ps. 110:82.

I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. John 14:18.

I weep; mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me. Lam. 1:16.

I will pray the father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. John 14:16.

If you have no pleasure in your religion, make haste to change it.

He who seldom thinks of heaven is not likely to get there, as the way to hit a mark is to keep your eye upon it.

As the shadow follows the body in the splendor of the fairest sunlight, so will the wrong done to another pursue the soul in the hours of prosperity.

Where to Look for Sympathy.

True friendship is beautiful, and a treasure to be highly prized. But can we trust our happiness wholly to any human being? Trifles often separate those who have looked forward to a life-long interchange of friendship. True recognition and sympathy come only from the One who looks into the heart.

We are sometimes denied human sympathy because our Saviour wishes to be our only sympathizer, that we may lean on him, and learn of him, and gain an insight into his life and character which those who do not spend much time alone with him can never gain. He does this not for our sake alone, but that we may be the better prepared to tell others of his beauty and of his divine sympathy.

When he has a special service for us to perform, he often separates us from the world that our minds may not be distracted from that service by the demands of the world upon us, and calls us to lonely work, or lonely endurance, or to experience those things which are beyond human sympathy. Then how closely he holds us in his strong arms! How tenderly his divinely human love and sympathy are shown towards us! How tenderly he comes to sick ones, to bereaved ones, to the unfortunate, to all who are reaching out after him! In him, though he is infinitely above us in character, there are responses to all our aspirations and all our needs. Though we are sinful, and he is sinless, he is congenial to us from the moment we begin to love him, and in all the varying circumstances of our lives we may have the most tender help and comforting of the Son of God. If all the lonely and struggling ones would see this sympathy when first they set out in life, how many hours of disappointment and wounded pride and actual suffering would be spared them. In his presence they would be at home, and at rest; surrounded by the ineffable glory of his love they would be satisfied. Communing much with him they would be Christlike, and their lives would be as stars for brightness; for do we not grow to be like those with whom we associate? And to be like Christ is the highest honor that can be conferred upon man, even the glory of glories.—*Louisa Heywood Reynolds in Christian at Work.*

If you would not fall into sin, do not sit by the door of temptation,

The True Spirit of Bible Study.

J. H. VINCENT, D.D.

1. The spirit of implicit faith, recognizing it as the word of God, who is himself the truth.

2. The spirit of self-appropriation, accepting it as the word of God to me. He speaks to each soul in the bible as though that soul were alone in the universe.

3. The spirit of cordial assent to all that it teaches, whether the truth be clear or obscure to the understanding, palatable or unpalatable to the mortal taste.

4. The spirit of profound reverence for the book and its contents, because of him who is its author, substance and inspiration. The holy oil in the Jewish tabernacle was never put to a profane use under pain of death. Exodus xxx. 32, 33. The old Jews in the private houses never placed another book upon the bible. They washed their hands before touching it. They refused to sit on the bench where it lay, and they kissed it as they opened and closed it. Shall the Christian reverence less his larger and fuller bible, with its wealth of gospel truth?

5. The spirit of prompt and perfect obedience to all that it commands; the obedient spirit is the receptive spirit. Matt. v. 3.

6. The spirit of fervent believing prayer, inspired by a sense of need. As we open the word we should open the heart. We should pray before we study. We should turn the very scripture we read into a prayer. Moses prayed when the ark was taken up or set down. Paul prayed when he opened, and when he closed his epistles. Since the Spirit of God alone knoweth the deep things of God, we should call upon God for His light when we look into His word.

7. The spirit of patient waiting for the divine spiritual interpretation. The Spirit of God moves in scripture. Words which mean little to the carnal mind are weighty with significance to him who is spiritually enlightened. Lines which are dull to the superficial and worldly student, are brilliant to the persistent, diligent and devout student, who, on bended knee, looks into the mysteries of the word under the illumination of the spirit. We never know what unfolding of truth is to be made by the divine spirit. Therefore we should ponder long and patiently, reading as the eunuch read, waiting for some Philip to come by the divine order for our assistance.

8. The spirit of delight in it, as the divine revelation of wisdom, love and power—the delight which comes from a thirst, a taste, a genius for it. An old writer says 'As a bar of iron by long lying in the fire waxeth red hot, so that soul which daily employeth itself in reading and meditating on the word of God, groweth to be spiritual and divine, and is kindled in a fire of holy devotion and love by the word of God.' Let the word be precious to thy soul.