

Who is the Comforter According to the Bible?

John 14:16-28 tells us many times that the Comforter is Christ by His Spirit, but the moment Jesus says “another Comforter,” most become blind to the fact He is referring to Himself by His Spirit despite His clear words that follow.

The Greek word for another is “allos,” which means another of the exact same kind and hence means another as the same kind as Christ. Jesus was present with His disciples in physical form but after His ascension He comes back in another form, that is, by His Spirit. Hence the “another” is His Spirit. Because Christ's Spirit can function independently of Himself, it is like His Spirit is “another.” And because it is His Spirit, it is “another” of the same kind.

If the Comforter was someone different, then John would have used the word “heteros,” meaning another of a different kind. Easy to understand once you know. Most also fail to notice that Jesus often speaks of Himself in the third person as He has in this passage. See John 17:1-3 for one such example.

Compare “heteros” with “allos”

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G2087 *héteros* – another (of a different kind). 2087 /*héteros* (“another but distinct in kind”) stands in contrast to 243 /*állos* (“another of the same kind”). 2087 /*héteros* (“another of a different quality”) emphasizes it is qualitatively different from its counterpart (comparison). [2087 (*héteros*) sometimes refers to “another” of a different class group or type (as in Plato; Oxy. papyri).]

G243 *állos* (a primitive word) – another of the same kind; another of a similar type.

In v. 16 Jesus says He will send “another” Comforter but leaves no doubt as to who He meant in v. 18. In unmistakable words Jesus says “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”

This “other Comforter” is none other than Christ Himself in another form (Spirit form). He is not seen (physically) as He was when He was here on earth. He is removed from the eye of sense, but He is still with us in Spirit.

The Comforter is referred to as the Spirit of truth in v. 17, which is Christ. Ten verses earlier Jesus says, "I am the truth" (v. 6) and by His Spirit, He is the "Spirit of truth." In v. 17 we also see that the Comforter is someone whom the world cannot receive because it does not know Him. But Christ tells His disciples that they know the Comforter for He is dwelling with them. The only one with them is Christ!

In verse 19 Christ says that in a while the world seeth me no more referring to His death and resurrection, so in v. 18 and 19 Christ is saying that though He is leaving, He will not leave them Comfortless and is going to come back to them. So the disciples knew it was Christ who was going to return to them as their Comforter, but did not understand how. So Judas, not Iscariot, asks Christ how is He going to manifest Himself to them as the Comforter and not unto the world? (v. 22)

How did the disciples understand "another Comforter?" Did they understand that Christ was talking about someone else? No! This Judas understood perfectly that it was Christ who was coming back to them and not someone else. Notice that his question is not "WHO" but "HOW?" So he was not wondering "who" but "how" Christ was going to manifest Himself to them as their Comforter. The answer is: by His Spirit, which is something they did not yet understand.

In John 16:7 Jesus says, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." So how is it that the Comforter who was yet to be sent to them was dwelling with them in John 14? In John 7:39 we find "But this spoke he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

If the Holy Spirit was another being as per the trinity doctrine, it would not be dependent on Christ returning to the Father and being glorified before it could be given. The Holy Spirit could not be given until Christ was glorified as this is how Christ returns as another, that is, by His Holy Spirit.

John 14:23 above says "we will come unto him and make our abode with him." That is, both the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. This is not a separate person of the Godhead who is being sent, it is the very life of God coming to us through His Son Jesus Christ. Who is more qualified to comfort us other than someone who has lived and suffered as one of us and knows what it is like to be tempted? How precious is it to have both the Father and Son?

How many times did Jesus say that He will be our Comforter in John 14? [Parentheses are added]

1. John 14:17 “Even the Spirit of truth [Jesus is the truth and by His Spirit He is the Spirit of truth]; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knows him: but you know him; for he dwelleth with you [Christ is the only one with them], and shall be in you [by His Spirit as the Comforter].”

2. John 14:18 “I [Jesus] will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”

3. John 14:20 “At that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you [by His Spirit as the Comforter].”

4. John 14:21 “He that has my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him [by His Spirit as the Comforter].”

5. John 14:22 “Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that you [Jesus] will manifest thyself unto us [as the Comforter], and not unto the world?”

6. John 14:23 “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we [Jesus and His Father] will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

7. John 14:28 “You heard me say, I [Jesus] am going away and I am coming back to you [by His Spirit as the Comforter].”

Note also that the Greek word “paraklētōs” is used 5 times in Scripture and refers to Christ. It is used four times in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7 and is translated as “Comforter,” and it is used once in 1 John 2:1 where it is translated as “advocate.”

1 John 2:1 “if any man sin, we have an advocate [paraklētōs] (Comforter) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:” [Parentheses are added]

Thus Jesus Christ is both our “Comforter” and “advocate.” The Comforter is not another being but Christ Himself by His Spirit. Who but Christ who has been tempted and suffered as us, and lived as one of us is more qualified to Comfort us? How blessed we are to have our Saviour in us as our Comforter!



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