

**Small Group  
Preparation and Discussion  
Coram Deo- The Sanctification of the Spirit**

**Goals of Coram Deo Study**

- ❖ The Coram Deo Study has one main goal—to learn to live with God again. Three sub-goals act as supports. Think of a stool. Living with God is the top of the stool and the three truths below are the legs.
  - Learning about God from His own mouth.
  - Guarding ourselves and other from being ashamed of the gospel.
  - Be proud enough of God to defend Him intelligently in a skeptical culture.

**Preparation**

- ❖ The fifth lesson covers the Spirit of Consolation. To prepare for this lesson please do the following:
  - Read the passage
  - Listen to the sermon on our website or SermonAudio while looking at the Bible study outline below. Take notes and figure out how you will guide the group to consider each aspect of the sermon.
  - Review the timeline below and determine how you want to tailor it to your group. The outline follows the order of events in each small group.

**Welcome and Worship [5-10 minutes]**

- ❖ Please review your fellowship manual for extensive details. Worship can be accomplished in many ways. You could read a Psalm. You could simply open with prayer. You could sing a hymn.
- ❖ Use your judgment. What kind of worship best sets the tone to connect people with the presence of God? Invoke Him into your midst.
- ❖ Possible Resources
  - Valley of Vision
  - Hymnal
  - The Psalms

**Bible Study [15-30 minutes]**

Below you will find the outline from the Coram Deo: Spirit of Consolation sermon with questions. Remember, you are not holding a seminary class. You are seeking to bring attention to a few aspects of the Spirit. The application is included, but don't focus on that yet. The sharing time is the best place to explore the implications.

**Coram Deo**

**Sermon: The Spirit of Consolation**

**John 16:1-7**

**Introduction:**

The show, 'This Old House' has a segment called, "What is it?" The hosts place a strange tool or object on the table and try and guess the function of the object. The last one I say was a circular piece of wood about a ½" thick with 1" dowels protruding from the top. What is it?

Interestingly, if you have ever tried to place sandpaper on an orbital sander, you are suppose the place the holes of the sandpaper over the holes on the sander. This is quite difficult. So, first you place the sandpaper on the dowels. Second, you take the dowels and place them in the holes of the orbital sander and then press down the sandpaper.

The segment on the show is popular, because humans by nature long to know the purpose, design or function of something. This is true not only for tools, but for our faith. Have you ever asked? What is God's purpose in this? What His design?

Living before God, Coram Deo, is really about knowing what his design and purpose. Consider the sermons so far: The world is aware by nature that God the Father is powerful and will hold the whole world accountable for their sin. Yet, what has been shouted from the rooftops is that the Father is showing His love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Why is the Father doing this? What is His purpose? He wants reconciliation. Why does He send the Son and why does the Son volunteer? Because the Son's designs to purchase the reconciliation.

The Spirit wants us to know Him similarly. What is his design? His purpose? The first answer was that he designs a re-genesis. His second purpose was progressive sanctification. His third design, this morning, is consolation.

However, in addition, we will look at not just the purpose of the Holy Spirit, but His purpose in relation to the purpose of Jesus the Son. Consequently, listen to the big idea this morning.

**Thesis**

*At this time, the presence of the Holy Spirit as our consolation is of greater advantage to the Church than Christ's bodily presence.*

**Division:**

Bodily Presence, Spiritual Presence, Advantages

- I. Christ must end his bodily presence with his Church.
  - A. Consider verse 5.
    1. Jesus expressly tells his disciples that he must return to His Father. You can see why Jesus needed to explain this to them. In verses 1-4, Jesus warns them that the religious establishment would excommunicate them and kill them. The religious establishment would do this with an invincible motivation. Verse 4- "they think they will be serving God."

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2. In the past, Jesus' knowledge, wisdom and power, which was above measure, would elude the religious leaders. Thus, the disciples were safe.
  3. However, now Jesus must return to His Father and consequently prepare His disciples for His bodily absence.
- B. This can seem strange. Why didn't Jesus just stay?
1. The answer is implied in verse 5 again. The Father sent Jesus.
    - a. The implication or the story beneath that statement is a familiar story.
    - b. God the Father motivated by His own love sent His Son bodily into the world for limited purposes.
      - 1) The eternal Son of God in the fullness of time became man.<sup>1</sup>
      - 2) The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father; and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.<sup>2</sup>
      - 3) 1 What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul? When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down, when I was sinking down, sinking down; when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown, Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul, Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.
    - c. After this, Jesus' incarnate purposes were complete. His purpose after completion of His work was to return to His father.
- C. Jesus the Christ was resurrected. He ascended and he is exalted in heaven in intercession for His church.
1. No listen carefully. The intercession of Jesus is this: Jesus appears in heaven before God the Father and says, "I have completed the mission of redeeming my people and earning all the gifts of the new covenant. I ask now for their first gift, the Holy Spirit."
  2. There is a most profitable answer to our question: What did Jesus leave? Because his work was now in heaven. What work is he doing in heaven? He is collecting gifts from the Father to give to His Church. What is the first gift? The Holy Spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith: Edinburgh Edition* (Philadelphia: William S. Young, 1851), 187–188.

<sup>2</sup> Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith: Edinburgh Edition* (Philadelphia: William S. Young, 1851), 56.

3. <sup>4</sup> And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” *He said*, “you have <sup>f</sup>heard from Me; <sup>5</sup> for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” <sup>6</sup> Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; <sup>3</sup>

[That is the teaching from verse 5. Jesus must end His bodily presence with His Church. He must ascend and intercede and send his ascension gifts—the first of which is the Holy Spirit. That is why Jesus can’t stay. However, the reason goes deeper. It is not just that Jesus can’t stay. It is that, “At this time, the presence of the Holy Spirit is of greater advantage to the Church.”]

- II. At this time, the presence of the Holy Spirit is of greater advantage to the Church.
  - A. I say, ‘at this time’ based upon God’s plan.
    1. Before the time of the Spirit, it was the greater advantage to be bodily present.
    2. After his humiliating work was done, it is a time for the Spirit.
    3. In the future, Christ will be bodily present again to judge the living and the dead.
    4. During this time, at this time, it is the time of the Spirit.
  - B. The greater advantage of the Spirit is expressed by Jesus in this passage.
    1. In verse 7, Jesus expressly makes a comparison, “It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you.” The comparison is between Jesus staying and the Spirit arriving. Which is of greater advantage to the Church? Obviously, Jesus says, it is better for him to go and the Spirit to arrive.
  - C. Why is it of greater advantage?
    1. Because it is the Spirit who can accomplish the next stage in the plan of the Trinity.
      - a. The Spirit has unique tasks.
        - 1) For example, It never says that Jesus regenerates or makes our bodies incorruptible. That is the task of the Spirit
      - b. In building a house, if I remember correctly. The general contractor sends in the excavation team, then the masonry team, then the framing team, then roofing. As you are able to imagine, each succeeding contractor builds on the work of the proceeding one. Each has a separate purpose. Each completes their purpose. Each builds on the completed work of the other.
      - c. This is similar to the work of the Trinity. The Son completes his initial incarnate work. The Spirit now builds on that work by

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<sup>f</sup> [John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26]; Acts 2:33

<sup>3</sup> *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ac 1:4–8.

regenerating, sanctifying and now consoling the Church while left on earth.

- d. The Church needs the Spirit for two main reasons.
2. Jesus calls the Spirit the helper. And says the Spirit is a helper in two main ways.
  - a. The Spirit helps the Church with the world.
    - 1) They need help witnessing to the world. This is seen in chapter 15 verse 26.
    - 2) They need help convicting the world. This is seen in verse 8.
  - b. The Spirit helps the Church in her sorrow. [consolation]
    - 1) This is confirmed by the following:
    - 2) The word helper has two meanings: comforter or advocate.
    - 3) Jesus tells them about the Spirit as a remedy to their sorrow in verse 6.
    - 4) Jesus chose the remedy of the Spirit in chapter 14 verses 25-27. Here they have great sorrow and fear. The help of consolation from the Spirit is the medicine.

[Recently, I heard someone say, “life is more severe than I had anticipated.” Do you agree? Well, if someone asked you, “how should I make it through this severe life?” What would you say? Would you think to tell them about the comfort or consolation of the Holy Spirit? That is not usually the first answer, because the advantages of his consolation have been overlooked.]

III. Some advantages of His consolation [develop each one with the love of the Father and/or the grace of the Son.]

A. Afflictions or chastenings

1. Verse 16:1-4
2. Hebrews 12:5 tells us of two responses to affliction
  - a. Despise- feel contempt, anger or deep revulsion.
    - 1) Raise your fist
  - b. Collapse- lose hope often in self pity
    - 1) Buckle at the knees
3. The answer to both the consolation of the Spirit
  - a. The problem is that you don't believe the Love of the Father.
  - b. You see through a lens that makes the Father look uncaring.
  - c. The Spirit takes the Words of God and applies them to your heart.
  - d. He says, “<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”<sup>4</sup>
  - e. We say, “How precious *is* Your lovingkindness, O God!
  - f. Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.”<sup>5</sup>

B. The burden of sin

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<sup>4</sup> *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 5:8.

<sup>5</sup> *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ps 36:7.

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1. I said, “Lord, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.”<sup>6</sup>
    - a. How can I begin this sin?
    - b. How can I start this sin again?
    - c. How can I sin for so long?
      - 1) <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,<sup>7</sup>
- C. Creature comforts
1. America offers you everything.
  2. How will we ever recover from our distractions and truly delight in our God as the greatest of all goods?
  3. <sup>1</sup>As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. <sup>2</sup>My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.<sup>8</sup>
  4. St. Augustine on way to celestial city

### Conclusion:

#### Thesis

*At this time, the presence of the Holy Spirit as our consolation is of greater advantage to the Church than Christ's bodily presence.*

#### Division:

Bodily Presence, Spiritual Presence, Advantages

- I. The story of the Quakers separating the Spirit from the Word.
- II. The Spirit takes the Word
  - A. About the Love of the Father
  - B. About the grace of the Son
  - C. Seals it to your heart, renews your mind.
- III. Holy Ghost, dispel our sadness,
- IV. Pierce the clouds of sinful night;
- V. Come, thou source of sweetest gladness,
- VI. Breathe thy life, and spread they light.
- VII. Loving Spirit, God of peace,
- VIII. Great distributor of grace,
- IX. Rest upon this congregation;
  - I. Hear, O hear our supplication.

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<sup>6</sup> *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ps 41:4.

<sup>7</sup> *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 8:15–16.

<sup>8</sup> *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ps 42:1–2.

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### **Sharing [15-30 Minutes]**

1. Do you remember a time when someone consoled you?
2. Do you wish Jesus was still physically present? Why?
3. Why is it difficult to live in the age of the Spirit?
4. What can you do to appreciate Jesus' gift of the Spirit?
5. How do you relate to the Spirit? Do you talk to Him? Is it ok to pray to Him? What about worship Him?
6. How has Christ through the Spirit helped you in afflictions or prosperity?

### **Prayer Time [5-10 minutes]**

Remember, all kinds of prayer requests may be taken, but keep a good balance. Make sure the emphasis falls on prayer for discovered needs relative to the consolation of the Spirit.

### **Socialize [Up to you]**

This is a time to be intentional in your relationships. God has placed you in a leadership position of some sort. Take it seriously!