

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth... I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20)

With Us in
God’s
Presence

With Us as Advocate



With Us
as High
Priest
and
Mediator

With Us as
Intercessor

With Us in Community

Class #2: With us as advocate

- “And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 Jn. 2:1)
 - How do we understand this verse?
 - What does the Greek word translated “advocate” (*parakletos*) mean?
 - What are the other occurrences of the Greek word in the NT and LXX?
 - How do the occurrences of these words relate to other verses on the same topic (i.e., Christ’s work)?
- Christ’s Work = Helping Us (“But if anyone does sin, we have a helper [*parakletos*] in the presence of the Father—Jesus Christ” 1 Jn. 2:1 Expanded Bible)
 - “But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate [*parakletos*] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous [*dikaios*].” (1 Jn. 2:1 ESV)

- “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous [LXX *dikaios*] right hand.” (Isa. 41:10 NKJV)
- *parakletos* means...
 - “in the widest sense, a helper” (Thayer)
 - Rare word in the Greek literature
 - untranslatable, therefore many translations (especially early ones) transliterate rather than translate the word
 - “someone called to the side to help”
 - “Comforter”
 - “Always a *parakletos* is someone called in to help in time of trouble or need.” (Barclay)
 - “That which enables us to cope with our circumstances”
- *parakletos* only occurs 5X (all in John’s writings)
 - Jn. 14:6; Jn. 14:26; Jn. 15:26; Jn. 16:7
- Christ tells the disciples that it is better for him to be “with them” in a different way (Jn. 16:7)
 - “Christ’s departure to the Father would give him greater power of imparting gift than he could possess while in the fixed groove of his work in the flesh. If he remained with them, it would not be in his power to do for them what he could do if he went to the Father. It was therefore ‘expedient for them’ (as he afterwards told them), that he should go away. He should then be able to do for them ‘whatsoever they should ask in his name.’” (Bro. R. Roberts, *Nazareth Revisited*)
- Christ helps us through the power of God
 - “It has become abundantly clear that the work of the *parakletos* centres around the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, risen and ascended to the right hand of God, interceding for his people, yet abiding with them, as he had promised. All this Christ does in the presence of God for us, and by his exaltation both he and the Father are glorified.” (Bro. Alfred Nichols, *The Christadelphian*, April 1981)
 - The “third rail”
 - Holy Spirit = the Power of God
 - Scripture (Luke 1:35)
 - “Not only is the Spirit the means by which God is able to be present everywhere – it is also the means by which the Father carries out His work and accomplishes those things which he has purposed.” (Bro. R. Roberts, *Christendom Astray*)
 - “Our comfort comes from both the risen Lord and his Father being present with us. The Holy Spirit is the power by which both God and Jesus Christ work on our behalf.” (Bro. Paul Creswell, *The Christadelphian*, July 2016)

What it doesn't mean	What it does mean
-That Jesus being “with us” now means that we possess the Holy Spirit -“That a man cannot believe without possessing the Spirit of God.” (BASF DTBR #25)	-“In all this, God is the worker. Man is the subject...” (Bro. R. Roberts) -“Whatever of spiritual value accrues in his life is brought about by God working in him, and not by his own personal efforts on God’s behalf.” (Bro. H.A. Whittaker, <i>Studies in the Gospel</i>)

- How Do We Apply the *Parakletos* Verses?
 - Three applications:
 - God’s inspired word helping believers
 - Possession of Holy Spirit (Apostolic age only)
 - Jesus helping us through God’s power (Apostolic age until present day)
- How Does It Work?
 - “Precisely how does our Lord do his intercessory work in our lives today? What mechanisms does he use? How does he go about it? We aren’t told the details, but no doubt all the ways of providence are at work.” (Bro. J. Launchbury, *The Tidings*, 2006)
 - We Feel the Impact Even if We Can’t Identify the Instrument
 - *ruach* (OT)/*pneuma* (NT)
 - (wind/breath/spirit)
 - (Jn. 3:8) “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”
 - “In His response to these advances, He will work by His Spirit; but in what way we know not; we cannot know; we need not care to know...The simple fact is that God can cast down and lift up; He can prosper or hinder; He can comfort or afflict in a million ways, in which we shall not see His working hand, though we shall feel His work...” (Bro. R. Roberts, *The Christadelphian*, August 1893)
- Does Christ Help Us as Our Defence Attorney?
 - *parakletos* rarely used in legal context
 - when used in a legal context it can refer to a witness, or an expert, or someone pleading on behalf of another
 - Translator bias: “...we have a high-powered defense lawyer—Jesus the Anointed, the righteous—arguing on our behalf before the Father. “(VOICE)
 - Christ’s Role is Not to Defend Us From Charges
 - “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” (Rom. 8:33-34 NIV)

- “God is on our side; for us God has given His Son.” (Bro. J. Carter, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*)

Misperception	Scripture
Christ is the defence attorney	Christ is the judge (Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jn. 5:26-30)
God doesn’t have all the facts in evidence	God knows everything (Job 37:16; Psa. 147:5; 1 Sam. 2:3; 1 Jn. 3:20)
God doesn’t know what it like to be human	God knows the human condition (Psa. 103:13-14; Jer. 17:9-10; Psa. 139:1-3)
God is impartial towards us	God loves us and wants us to be in the Kingdom (Rom. 8:31; Lk. 12:32; Phil. 2:13)
God has to be convinced or appeased by Christ	God and Christ are of one mind towards the children of God (Jn. 10:30; Heb. 1:1-3; Lk. 12:32)

- Jesus Helps Us by Being the Propitiation
 - “...we have an Advocate [*parakletos*] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation [*hilasmos*] for our sins...” (1 Jn. 2:1-2 NKJV)
 - “The Greek word is *hilasmos*, which primarily signifies ‘to appease.’ This meaning, however, is out of place in this connection, for God needed not to be appeased, but in mercy and love extended the means whereby our sins may be covered over, or blotted out.” (Bro. HP Mansfield, *Christadelphian Expositor*)
 - Only other use of *hilasmos* (1 Jn. 4:10) emphasizes God’s work, not our work
 - “Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation [*hilaskoma*] for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Heb. 2:17-18 ESV)
- Paul: a Case Study in Christ Helping
 - On-going help: “But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed.” (2 Tim. 4:17 NIV)
 - Paul: Examples of Christ Helping
 - The stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:54-60)
 - Road to Damascus (Acts 9:4-5)
 - Ananias (Acts 9:17-18)
 - Direction for preaching (Acts 16:9-10)
 - Encouragement at Corinth (Acts 18:9-10)
 - While praying to God in the temple (Acts 22:17-21)
 - While under death threat (Acts 23:11)
 - While storm-tossed (Acts 27:23-24)

- 2 Cor. 12:7-10: An example of Christ being called to the side to help (*parakaleo*)
 - Paul talks to Christ
 - The overwhelming Biblical evidence is: as children of God, we pray to God through Christ
 - Speaking to Christ is an integral part of His work with us (1 Tim. 1:12-17):
 - “If Jesus were on earth, and we were to meet him, would we not do homage and make request of his favour? Undoubtedly. Well, he lives, and though we see him not, he sees us, and has all power: for it is given to him... He is able to succour those who are tempted (Heb. 2:18), and shall we not make request?” (Bro. R. Roberts, *The Christadelphian*, 1873)
 - “There are several recorded instances of communication with the risen and ascended Lord....Despite the closeness of these disciples to Christ, they nevertheless form an authentic prototype for the individual believer in their relationship with the Lord.” (Bro. Roger Lewis, *The Current Work and Role of Christ*)
 - 2 Cor. 12:7-10 shows the important difference between “calling alongside” and “praying to”
 - Paul “besought the Lord” *parakaleo* NOT *proseuchomai*

<i>parakaleo</i>	<i>proseuchomai</i>
-Paul “besought” [<i>parakaleo</i>] -Verb form of <i>parakletos</i> -Meaning: “to call to one’s side” -KJV translates as “comfort” (23X), “beseech” 43X, “exhort” (21X), -6X KJV translates as “pray” (Matt. 26:53)	-“to pray” -83X KJV translates as “pray”, 3X KJV translates as “make prayer”. 1X KJV translates as “pray for” -Paul’s action in Acts 22:17 -Paul uses 17X in his letters -Public prayer (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:4-5, 13) -Prayer to God (e.g., Col. 1:3; 4:3; 2 Thes. 1:11)

- The Core Problem: “weakness” (*astheneia*) requiring help
 - Paul uses *astheneia* 4X in the span of 5 verses (2 Cor. 12:5, 9, 10)
 - Integral to Christ’s current work is compassionately understanding our *astheneia* (Heb. 4:15)
 - “...the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses [*astheneia*]...Now He who searches the hearts

knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” (Rom. 8:26-27 NKJV)

- Paul Calls Three Times (Mk. 14:32-41; Matt. 26:44; Gal. 4:6)
 - Calling as one of God’s children
 - “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” (Jn. 14:18)
 - (Rom. 8:12-20), verse 16 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...”
 - (Gal. 3:26-4:7) verse 6 “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’”
- Christ’s Advocacy Helps Us Find Meaning and Purpose in our Trials
 - *parakletos*: “That which enables us to cope with our circumstances”
 - Christ uses the power of God to help us live faithful lives: “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”
 - “As members of Christ’s body, therefore, we may surely speak to our head...confessing our weakness and waywardness, and offering humble service by which he is glorified. Then, when we lift our petitions to God in Jesus’ name, we shall have confidence that he will know our hearts and intercede.” (Bro. John Morris, *The Path of Prayer*)

Appendix

Bro. J. Thomas (1855). *The Herald of the Kingdom*, vol. v., p. 282, in answer to the question, "Is Prayer to Christ Scriptural?"

In our number for October a worthy correspondent inquires, "*Is Prayer to Christ Scriptural?*" To answer this question aright, we must understand what is meant by prayer, and the circumstances under which it is offered.

The word *prayer* is defined *petition to heaven*, entreaty, submissive importunity. In the sense of *entreaty*, etc., we find in scripture many prayers to Jesus, whom we receive as "*Christ*." Thus, when Peter feared that he would be drowned, he exclaimed, "Lord, save me!" But we suppose that the question does not have regard to the scripturality of petitions to Jesus for temporal favours in the days of his sin-flesh, but rather to the propriety of offering petitions to him now that he is the Lord at the right hand of power.

After Jesus had himself been praying to the Father, one of his disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." From this it would appear, that under the new circumstances created by his presence in Israel, his followers did not know how to pray to God acceptably – they did not know what to pray for, nor how to address the Invisible One.

Though perfectly true, he did not say, "I am God manifest in the flesh; therefore pray to me, and say, Our God who art on earth, hallowed be thy name." The time is coming when the saying of the prophet shall be fulfilled, "*The God of the whole earth shall he be called*"; still, though Jesus knew that he was the heir of this title, he did not teach his disciples to pray to him as such. He taught them to pray to the same invisible Personage that he himself prayed to. If prayer were to be offered to him, he would have taught his disciples so to do. This, however, he did not; but said, "When ye pray, say, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." He was accustomed to address "*HIM dwelling in the light, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, as his Father*"; so that by telling his disciples to do likewise, he taught them that he himself and they were all sons of God – children of one common Father.

Is it scriptural to pray to the Elder Brother for the gifts the Father has in store? But as the First-born is well-beloved, is there not a fitness in securing his favour, that he may present and commend the petitions of his brethren to the gracious consideration of the Divine Majesty?

When Jesus first taught his disciples to pray, he instructed them to pray for the hallowing of the Father's Name; but did not teach them to pray for things in that name. He is himself the Name of the Father. Now, five days before the Passover of crucifixion, he said, "Father, glorify thy name!" This was answered by a voice

from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;" that is, it had been glorified in the past, and was about shortly to be again. Alluding to the time when it should be made glorious, he said, "In that day *ye shall ask me nothing*. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall *ask the Father* in my name, HE will give it you. *Hitherto* have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive."

Here, then, is a precept to *ask the Father in the name of Jesus*, which is the reverse of *praying to Christ in the name of the Father*. Praying to the Father in the name of Jesus, however, is equivalent in its results to praying directly to Jesus. This is apparent from the words of Jesus himself, who said to the disciples, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, *that will I do*, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, *I will do it*."

The favours of the Father are granted through the Son; so that what comes from the Father comes also from the Son. Hence their intimate association in the epistles in the formula: "Grace and peace to you from *God* our Father, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*." These are distinct persons; for "there is one Lord, and one God and Father of all, who is above all": yet, in relation to things terrestrial, *one in manifestation*. In this text, Paul teaches that the one God and Father is above the one Lord; for He is "above *all*." We should pray to him in the name of the Lord; and in so doing we "honour the Son even as we honour the Father." This is the scriptural procedure.

The Mosaic Law is "the pattern of things in the heavens" – "the form of the knowledge and the truth." Hence the Aaronic high priesthood and its ordinances were typical, or representative, of the Melchizedec. Would it have been in conformity with scriptural propriety for Israel to have offered prayer to Aaron? No; the people in the courts without prayed to Him who dwelleth between the Cherubim, while the high priest entered within the veil with blood and incense, and stood before the Ark of the Covenant in presence of the Shekinah. He returned with blessing, but it was blessing from the glory of Jehovah.

Now the Lord Jesus is high priest over the house of God, which is composed of those who embrace and hold fast to the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope to the end. These are his priestly household, all of whom "call upon his name" on becoming members of it. Thus they are "*in his name*," and being in his name, when they pray they pray in his name, and when they praise they praise in his name, and whatsoever they do religiously they do in his name to the glory of God the Father.

When they pray they do not pray *to* their high priest, but they pray *with* him as their "advocate with the Father." When they call upon his name, as Paul did in obedience to the exhortation of Ananias, who said to him, "Be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," the attention of the High Priest is fixed upon them. A union is then established between him and them,

and he undertakes for them with the Father. His ears are open to their prayers, and he bears their names and petitions before his Father's throne. This is according to the Mosaic representation. Thus the faithful go to the Father by him; for he is "the way, the truth, and the life: and no man cometh to the Father but by him."

All prayers, then, ascending from the children of the covenant, ascend to the Father as sweet odours from Christ. He is the golden censer in which the incense is deposited. He the censer; the prayers of his brethren, and only theirs, the incense fuming around the priest after the Order of Melchizedec. The arrangement is very beautiful, both in type and antitype; but so much more so in the antitype, as the reality transcends its shadow. Jesus prayed to the Father, and was heard in the days of his flesh, for his circumspection or obedience, in all things. He needed not to approach the Father in any other name than his own. He prayed to God, and he instructs his people to do the same. They dwell in him, and he dwells in them by faith – Christ in them the hope of glory. As incarnations of Christ, they pray to Him whom Christ prayed to. This is scriptural, in type and substance – in form and precept. So let us be therewith content.

(Bro. John Morris, *The Path of Prayer*, 2004)

"As members of Christ's body, therefore, we may surely speak to our head...confessing our weakness and waywardness, and offering humble service by which he is glorified. Then, when we lift our petitions to God in Jesus' name, we shall have confidence that he will know our hearts and intercede."

(Bro. L.G. Sargent, *The Christadelphian*, 1967)

"We recognize the principle of prayer to the Father through the Son; but there were times when the disciples could mark the intimacy of their relation with the glorified Jesus by addressing him directly. A sentimental cult which adores Jesus to the neglect of the Father is woefully unscriptural; but a doctrinaire approach which deprives the Son of honour is hardly less so."

Bro. R. Roberts, The Christadelphian (1873)

Is Jesus an object of worship? – J. E.

ANSWER. – The blind man at the temple, cured by Christ, "worshipped him (John 9:38), and Jesus did not say as Peter said to Cornelius, when Cornelius "fell down at his feet and worshipped him," "Stand up; I myself also am a man." His disciples worshipped him. – (Matt. 28:17; Luke 24:52.) So did the women who met him after his resurrection. – (Matt. 28:9.) So also a ruler came and worshipped him. – (Matt. 9:18.) A leper did the same. – (Matt. 8:2.) They that were with him in the ship worshipped him. – (Matt. 14:33.) The angels were commanded to worship him. – (Heb. 1:6.) The saints in glory are represented as worshipping him, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and wisdom, and riches, and honour, and glory, and blessing." – (Rev. 5:12-13.)

But these testimonies do not exclude, nor are they in any degree inconsistent with the fact, that the Father is the Supreme object of worship, as the source of all being and power; that Christ is subordinate to Him (1 Cor. 11:3; 15:28; Jno. 14:28), the mediator or connecting link between God and man. – (1 Tim. 2:5.) To “worship” is to do reverence, and this act is recognised as permissible towards even a human object, if the circumstances justify it. Thus Jesus says to the ecclesia at Philadelphia: “I will make them (of the synagogue of Satan) to come and *worship before* THY FEET, and to know that I have loved thee.” – (Rev. 3:9.) Thus, also, Jesus says to a man taking the lowest seat, and afterwards invited to go higher: “Thou shalt have *worship* (or glory) in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.” – (Luke 14:10.) Thus again, the servant of the parable is represented as “falling down and worshipping his lord.” – (Matt. 18:20.) Thus also, Nebuchadnezzar worshipped Daniel. – (Dan. 2:46.)

Now, though the Father is the highest object of reverence, is not Jesus an object of reverence also? Yes, verily, for God hath given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow and every tongue confess. – (Phil. 2:9-10.) To him will we sing the song of praise, and make the completest obeisance in the day of his glory. Yet it remains true that there is a worship of the Father that Jesus will not accept. When offered more than his due, when on earth, he refused it, saying, “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.” Jesus did not teach the disciples to make their supreme petitions to him, but to the Father *through him*: “Ye shall pray the Father *in my name*” – (Jno. 14:13; 15:16; 16:23, 24, 26); “We come unto God *by him*” – (Heb. 7:25; Jno. 14:6); “We give thanks to God, through our Lord Jesus.” – (Rom. 16:27; Eph. 5:20; Rom. 7:25.) Yet this need not exclude such prayer and thanks (subordinately permissible to him) as are illustrated in “Lord Jesus, come quickly” – (Rev. 22:20); “Lord, save me.” – (Matt. 14:30.) “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord.” – (1 Tim. 1:12.) If Jesus were on earth, and we were to meet him, would we not do homage and make request of his favour? Undoubtedly. Well, he lives, and though we see him not, he sees us, and has all power: for it is given to him (Matt. 28:18); and symbolised in the seven horns and seven eyes of the slain Lamb. – (Rev. 5:6.) He is able to succour those who are tempted (Heb. 2:18), and shall we not make request? But this does not clash with or conceal the fact that “the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3), and that “out of him, are all things.” – (1 Cor. 8:6.) There is a place for every element of truth. The difficulty is sometimes to find it: and the misfortune often finds illustration in one man with one element of truth fighting another man who holds another element, both equally making havoc of that which properly blended is harmony itself.

