

EXPOSITION OF JOHN

Message #63

John 16:5-15

The disciples were totally distraught. They were in deep depression. Sorrow had filled their hearts (**John 16:6**). They understood that Jesus was about to physically leave them, but they were in such a state of despondency that, just as John records in **verse 5**, none of them even asked Jesus Christ “where He was going” in the sense of actually wanting to know the program of God. Peter had responded this way, but his response was to wonder why he couldn’t go (John 13:33, 37). It was not really out of a desire to understand the program of God.

They were so low that they could not grasp the amazing work of Jesus Christ that was about to take place, which would include His sacrificial death, burial, resurrection and ascension. All they knew is that they were about to lose one they loved. One of the great principles of the Word of God is that for believers a loss can mean great gain.

You can become a very depressed person if you just zero in on one experience or one thing. You need the whole counsel of God to get out of it. So if you stay home you’ll stay in your rut. What was about to happen, which they considered so terrible, would become a great blessing. They were about to go to new levels in their understanding and usability. What Jesus tells them here is this:

IT WAS ADVANTAGEOUS FOR JESUS CHRIST TO LEAVE BECAUSE THIS WILL INAUGURATE A NEW AGE WHICH WILL FEATURE THE AMAZING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The disciples could find great meaning and hope in the ministry of the Holy Spirit and so may we. People in depression often lose their focus on the Holy Spirit and His work. Jesus brings these disciples to this very focus. It would be their relationship with the Holy Spirit that would become so important for the rest of their lives and certainly it is important for us in the Church Age.

Now there are five facts about the Holy Spirit that Christ sets forth for these disciples. All of this says we are about to enter a new dispensation that will feature another member of the Godhead.

FACT #1 – If I don’t go away, the Holy Spirit will not come. **16:7a**

Why would it be advantageous for Jesus Christ to leave? The greatest answer to this question is because it would mean He died and that we could be saved from all of our sins. Another wonderful truth is that the Holy Spirit would come.

Now by virtue of the fact that Jesus Christ identifies the Holy Spirit as “Helper,” we know that these disciples needed His help and lots of it. They would never have a chance of succeeding on their own. They would end up going in different directions and the Holy Spirit would go with every one of them. They could not accomplish anything for God apart from His help.

Jesus is saying, look the plan of God requires that I leave earth for a while, but at the present time I’m not taking you with me. I am leaving you here. It is critical for Me to leave so that the third member of the Trinity can come to live in you forever (John 14:16-17).

FACT #2 – If I do go away, I will send the Holy Spirit to you. **16:7b**

The Holy Spirit in your life has been sent directly by Jesus Christ. Don't miss this and don't forget this. It is no coincidence that you are a child of God. This was not your determination, this was a determination made in the heavenlies. Our bodies actually become the temple of the Holy Spirit. Our witness becomes His witness. Our work becomes His work.

FACT #3 – When the Holy Spirit comes to you, He will convict the world. **16:8-11**

Now the convicting work of the Holy Spirit takes place through the disciples. Sometimes well-meaning will pray, “Lord, send us the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit does not float up and down the rows at church, He convicts as the Word of God is proclaimed. As these apostles would carry out their ministries of proclaiming the truth of God, the Holy Spirit would work through them to bring the world under conviction. **Now conviction is not the same as conversion**. Conviction leads to conversion, but it is not the same as conversion. Not all who are convicted are converted.

The actual word “convict” (ελεγχω) is one that carries with it the idea of bringing someone under conviction by showing or exposing one of his fault and failure (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 144).

There are three specific areas of conviction spelled out:

Area #1 - The Holy Spirit would convict the world in regard to sin. **16:8-9**

The cure for the sin problem is to believe on Jesus Christ (**16:9**). When an unbeliever is confronted with the truth, then the Holy Spirit begins His convicting work to bring the person to the point where he realizes only faith in Jesus Christ can save him from his sin. He stops trusting in himself, in his works, in his religion, in his church membership, in his money, in his goodness and totally relies on Jesus Christ. When the Spirit of God is convicting a person, he will see himself as a sinner in need of a Savior. His belief will be totally and only in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Area #2 - The Holy Spirit would convict the world in regard to righteousness. **16:8, 10**

It would now be the Holy Spirit's job to convict the world that the righteous standards of God had never been met by a sinner, because Christ would no longer be here to tell them or show them (John 15:22). In fact, Christ's very departure, via crucifixion, was all about the righteousness of God.

When Christ arose and then ascended into heaven, it proved that He did not die as an unrighteous sinner but as the righteous Savior.

The Holy Spirit convicts people of the reality of who Jesus Christ is and what He actually accomplished on that cross. The Holy Spirit convicts that one has not come close to measuring up to the righteous standards of God.

Area #3 - The Holy Spirit would convict the world in regard to judgment . **16:8, 11**

The death of Jesus Christ was a real victory over the devil and his hold on the world (John 12:31). According to the writer of Hebrews, Christ's death took the power of death away from the devil (Hebrews 2:14). The victory accomplished by Jesus Christ on that cross totally demolished the work of the devil, because it opened the door for all people of the world to have a relationship with God.

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts people that life may be found in Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts that escape from the righteous judgment of God may only be found in Jesus Christ.

As the Holy Spirit does His convicting work, people begin to realize that Jesus Christ took our sin and God's wrath on Himself. He took our judgment and by placing our faith in Him, our sin and judgment are gone.

You and I will never be able to convince anyone of this reality, but God's Spirit can and will. It is His job to bring people under conviction and that is precisely what He does as we preach the Word of God.

FACT #4 – Jesus could not teach all things to His disciples at once . **16:12**

This must not be overlooked; **growth in knowledge is progressive over a period of time**. There is no weekend seminar that will produce mature spirituality. When we are actually in tune with the Holy Spirit, we will continue to grow in grace and knowledge until we get out of this world.

FACT #5 – The Holy Spirit will guide and teach things concerning truth of God. **16:13-15**

In this context Jesus Christ will clearly spell out what truth is - "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). John Calvin observed that by virtue of the fact that we have the written Scriptures, we know that the Holy Spirit did His job (Vol. 18, p. 143).

There are five realities brought out about the Spirit's ministry here:

(Reality #1) - The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth . **16:13a**

God is the fountain from which all truth springs. He was the One who authorized His Word which is truth and it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit who leads in truth. The Holy Spirit does not distort things or twist things, He deals in truth. The Holy Spirit will never be involved in anything that is a lie. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Many say they are led by the Spirit who actually led away from truth.

(Reality #2) - The Holy Spirit is the Guide . **16:13b**

Notice where He will guide into "all truth." One in tune with the Holy Spirit wants to know all truth of God, every doctrine and every one of the 66 books of the Bible. The Holy Spirit works in harmony with the apostles teaching, first guiding them and then enabling them to communicate truth.

Now notice what the Holy Spirit's true ministry is - to guide into truth. Not to speak in tongues, not to bark like dogs, not to laugh like a bunch of hyenas, not to fall backwards on a stage and wiggle on the floor like one having an epileptic seizure. I guarantee you none of this is the work of the Holy Spirit, it is demonic. The Spirit's ministry is to guide one to a true understanding of the truth of God. That is precisely what Jesus said.

(Reality #3) - The Holy Spirit only teaches what is authorized by God the Father and God the Son. **16:13c**

The Holy Spirit's ministry is never to teach anything of His own volition. His job is to "disclose" assigned truth from the heavenlies. This in no way diminishes anything about the Holy Spirit, it just informs us of His work. His work was not to reveal doctrine of this world but to reveal that which is authorized out of heaven.

(Reality #4) - The Holy Spirit will teach futuristic things. **16:13d**

When Christ made this statement it would have included things that were about to happen to Him and also the entire prophetic plan of God. People who want to know about the future, must have a relationship with God and then must have a Spirit-guided understanding of the prophetic things in the written Word of God.

(Reality #5) - The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus Christ by disclosing truth to them about Him. **16:15**

The Spirit of God did not come into this world for the purpose of establishing some new pneumatological kingdom empire or to bring glory to Himself. He came to glorify Jesus Christ.

J. Vernon McGee said whenever he heard someone say that we are having a Holy Spirit revival and the Spirit is doing this and doing that, he immediately knew it wasn't the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit will always glorify Jesus Christ.

He will disclose all God-glorifying truth about Jesus Christ to these disciples.

Everything that belongs to God the Father belongs to God the Son. According to **verse 15**, whatever the Father has, the Son has. He is coequal with God. The Spirit would work in a disciple to help them grasp this important doctrinal truth.

The Holy Spirit will always work in a person's mind and heart so they realize Jesus Christ is totally and completely God and that salvation is only found in Him.

He will take the O.T. law and will show how it is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. He will see to it that Christ is exalted over all and above all. He will show how all the riches of God may be ours in Jesus Christ. That is what the Holy Spirit would do and that is what He is still doing to this very day.