

## The Worlds Prosecutor

### John 16:8-11

#### John 16:7–11 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

#### **Introduction:**

In a column published some years ago in a popular Christian magazine, a well-known preacher was venting his own *loathing* for long sermons. January 1 was coming, so he resolved to do better in the coming year. "That means wasting less time listening to long sermons and spending much more

time preparing short ones," he wrote. "People, I've discovered, will forgive even poor theology as long as they get out before noon."<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, that perfectly sums up the predominant attitude behind much of ministry today. *Bad doctrine is tolerable; a long sermon most certainly is not.* The timing of the benediction is of far more concern to the average churchgoer than the content of the sermon. Sunday dinner and the feeding of our mouths takes precedence over Sunday school and the nourishment of our souls. Long-windedness has become a greater sin than heresy. The church has imbibed the worldly philosophy of pragmatism, and we're just beginning to taste the bitter results.

### **What Is Pragmatism?**

*Pragmatism* is the notion that meaning or worth is determined by practical consequences. It is closely akin to *utilitarianism*, the belief that usefulness is the standard of what is good. To a pragmatist/utilitarian, if a technique or course of action has the desired effect, it is good. If it doesn't seem to work, it must be wrong.

Pragmatism as a philosophy was developed and popularized at the end of the last century by

philosopher William James, along with such other noted intellectuals as John Dewey and George Santayana. It was James who gave the new philosophy its name and shape. In 1907, he published a collection of lectures entitled *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, and thus defined a whole new approach to truth and life.

Pragmatism has roots in Darwinism and secular humanism. It is inherently relativistic, rejecting the notion of absolute right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error. Pragmatism ultimately defines truth as that which is useful, meaningful, helpful. Ideas that don't seem workable or relevant are rejected as false.

### **What's wrong with pragmatism?**

After all, common sense involves a measure of legitimate pragmatism, doesn't it? If a dripping faucet works fine after you replace the washers, for example, it is reasonable to assume that bad washers were the problem. If the medicine your doctor prescribes produces harmful side effects or has no effect at all, you need to ask if there's a remedy that works. Such simple pragmatic realities are generally self-evident.

But when pragmatism is used to make judgments about right and wrong, or when it becomes a guiding philosophy of life and ministry, it inevitably clashes with Scripture. Spiritual and biblical truth is not determined by testing what "works" and what doesn't. We know from Scripture, for example, that the gospel often does not produce a positive response (1 Cor. 1:22, 23; 2:14). On the other hand, Satanic lies and deception can be quite effective (Matt. 24:23, 24; 2 Cor. 4:3, 4). Majority reaction is no test of validity (cf. Matt. 7:13, 14), and prosperity is no measure of truthfulness (cf. Job 12:6). Pragmatism as a guiding philosophy of ministry is inherently flawed. Pragmatism as a test of truth is nothing short of satanic.

Nevertheless, an overpowering surge of ardent pragmatism is (has been for some time now) sweeping through evangelicalism. Traditional methodology—most notably preaching—is being discarded or downplayed in favor of newer means, such as drama, dance, comedy, variety, side-show histrionics, pop-psychology, and other entertainment forms. The new methods supposedly are more "effective"—that is, they draw a bigger crowd. And since the chief criterion for gauging the

success of a church has become attendance figures, whatever pulls in the most people is accepted without further analysis as *good*. That is pragmatism.

Perhaps the most visible signs of pragmatism are seen in the convulsive changes that have revolutionized the church worship service in the past two decades. Some of evangelicalism's largest and most influential churches now boast Sunday services that are designed purposely to be more rollicking than reverent.

( I recently watched a Saturday evening livestream event at a well known large Southern Baptist Church conduct a service of celebration and recognition for their High School Graduates. The skits were clearly based on the format of Saturday Night Live and songs that were played and mimed were notably secular.

One was “We Are The Champions” by Queen, whose lead singer Freddy Mercury was a homosexual who died of Aids)

Another was

“I wanna Dance with Somebody” by Whitney Houston who died from heart failure related to drug

abuse of cocaine and other drugs, and drowning in the bathtub of a hotel she was staying in.

Although these may not be the best examples you would want your High School Graduate to follow. Pragmatism says otherwise...its fun and gets the attention of the young people.)

Even worse, *theology* now takes a back seat to *methodology*. One author has written, "Formerly, a doctrinal statement represented the reason for a denomination's existence. Today, methodology is the glue that holds churches together. A statement of ministry defines them and their denominational existence."<sup>2</sup> Incredibly, many believe this is a positive trend, a major advance for the contemporary church.

Some church leaders evidently think the four priorities of the early church—the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42)—make a lame agenda for the church in this day and age. Churches are allowing drama, recreation, entertainment, self-help programs, and similar enterprises to eclipse the importance of traditional Sunday worship and fellowship. In fact, everything seems to be in

fashion in the church today *except* biblical preaching. The new pragmatism sees preaching—particularly expository preaching—as passé. Plainly declaring the truth of God's Word is regarded as offensive and utterly ineffective. We're now told we can get better results by first amusing people or giving them pop-psychology and thus wooing them into the fold. Once they feel comfortable, they'll be ready to receive biblical truth in small, diluted doses.

Pastors are (have been for some time now) turning to books on marketing methods in search of new techniques to help churches grow. Many seminaries have shifted their pastoral training emphasis from Bible curriculum and theology to counseling technique and church-growth theory. All these trends reflect the church's growing commitment to pragmatism.

Notes: \* This article is excerpted from *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1993).

1. Jamie Buckingham, "Wasted Time," *Charisma* (Dec. 88), 98.

2. Elmer L. Towns, *An Inside Look at 10 of today's Most Innovative Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990), 249.

Unlike many years ago when men and women would meet together hours and days to pray that the Holy Spirit would Convict sinners to see there need for Christ.

Today the most popular rock song will do..

Who needs the Holy Spirit, when you have a rock band and a pragmatic Preacher.

Paul was not a Pragmatic Preacher.

In fact you could say, He was as opposite the culture as you could get.

1 Corinthians 2:1–5 (NKJV)

**2** And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. <sup>2</sup> For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

There was other preacher who was not very pragmatic. In fact, if he would have been a pastor,



he would have done everything absolutely opposite of what the church growth gurus tell us to do.

He could have written the #1 most unread book  
“10 things to destroy church growth”

Oh, and by the way, the book could have been endorsed by Jesus Christ, who said that this preacher was the greatest man who ever lived.

Who was it?

John the Baptist

Matthew 3:1–11 (NKJV)

**3** In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup> and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” <sup>3</sup> For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

*“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the Lord;  
Make His paths straight.’ ”*

<sup>4</sup> Now John himself was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went

out to him <sup>6</sup> and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup> And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Listen, every preacher, pastor, theologian, professor, evangelist, every gospel proclaiming apologist, Every defender of the faith, every faithful witness of the truth of God. Every Biblical opponent of our cultural demise. Every person willing to speak and stand for the truth of Scripture. Every person

desirous to see the lost saved, their family regenerated and forgiven of their sin,  
Needs to recognize this most important truth.

You can't do it.

You can't make it happen, You can't help happen.  
You can't manipulate it.

It is solely the work of the Spirit of God.

## **The Work of the Spirit is**

- 1. Special**
- 2. Specific**
- 3. Sovereign**

**1. Special**— it is different than General Revelation that according to Romans 1 and Psalm 19 even the unregenerate man can see. He can know there is a God.

But what he cannot grasp on his own, is who this God is. That is a work of the Spirit.

**1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

### **John 6:63 (NKJV)**

<sup>63</sup> It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life.

## **2. Specific**

The Work of the Spirit is about Christ and the Gospel.

He is not sent to help you do your homework or Read more, or drive better. Or eat a better diet. Or help you take your vitamins. He is sent to Testify of Christ.

### **John 15:26 (NKJV)**

<sup>26</sup> “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

### **John 16:13–15 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will

not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

<sup>15</sup> All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

### **3. Sovereign**

The Spirit of God is not manipulated to do your will. He is not moved by your pragmatic approaches. He is not governed by your philosophy or management skill.

He is not controlled by your clever speech, the inflections in your voice or your oratory skill. The Omniscience Spirit is not moved by your Ph.D or your Master of Divinity.

And the fact that Reverend is in front of your name means nothing to Him.

He moves as He wills, only as he wills and always as He wills.

John 3:3–8 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ <sup>8</sup> 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.”

John 1:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

# Lesson

John 16:7–11 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

We begin in

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you

I told you last week that I would tell you what it is so essential that Jesus leave so the Holy Spirit would come.

The primary reason is given in v. 8-11

<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Jesus has told them that  
John 15:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that your fruit should remain*, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

But they will hate you and kill you.

**John 15:18–21 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. <sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than



his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. <sup>21</sup> But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

### **John 15:26–16:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>26</sup> “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

<sup>27</sup> And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

**16** “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. <sup>2</sup> They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. <sup>3</sup> And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

The Disciples are learning pretty fast that this is an impossible task. They are simple men, with no power and no authority yet they are given a task to take to the world that is undoable on human terms.

So Jesus tells them that the Spirit of God will do what they cannot do.

He will get to the hearts of men.

If you spend time in this text, you will immediately notice that it is simply as far as the words are concerned but it is “cryptic” as far as the meaning.

There are a number of approaches that commentators have taken regarding this text.

Two camps of interpretation of the cryptic passage

### **1. Subjective**

He is talking about the worlds personal response to Jesus

1. Sin of not believing in Christ
2. Refusal to recognize the Righteousness of Christ
3. Wrong judgement (discernment) about Christ

***The Paraclete Shows That the World Is Wrong about What Is Wrong, about What Is Right, and about Who Won***

Bruner, F. D. (2012). *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (p. 925). Grand Rapids, MI;Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans.

## 2. Objective

1. Their guilt of Sin because they don't believe, they are left in their sin.

2. Their guilt of self Righteousness and their refusal of the only true Righteousness of Christ

3. Of Judgement, that their judgement is sure because their ruler, their father and God had already been judged

With that said, to understand the text there are 2 things that govern its interpretation.

1. The Spirit's Purpose and Relation to Christ

2. The Spirit's Purpose and Relation to the World.

## 1. The Spirit's Purpose and Relation to Christ

### John 15:26 (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

### John 16:14 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

So we could read it this way

When He comes,

He will convict of sin in regards to Christ

He will convict of righteousness in regards to Christ

He will convict of Judgement in regards to Christ.

## **2. The Spirits Purpose and Relation to the World.**

To understand this, we need to understand the word convict.

<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will **convict** the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Some believe that this is the inner conviction of sin whereby you feel guilty for doing something wrong. Its like, you feel bad because you over ate or maybe you have a certain conviction about something.

Those things can be founded in truth or they can be very subjective.

But I believe that Jesus has something different in mind.

<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will **convict** the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

## **convict**

**elegchó: to expose, convict, reprove**

**Original Word:** ἐλέγχω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** elegchó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (el-eng'-kho)

**Definition:** to expose, convict, reprove

**Usage:** (a) I reprove, rebuke, discipline, (b) I expose, show to be guilty.

1651 elégxō – properly, to convince with solid, compelling evidence, especially to expose (prove wrong, connect).

**καὶ ἔλθὼν ἐκεῖνος ἐλέγξει κτλ. ἐλέγχειν τινα περὶ τινος** (cf. 8:46) is a classical construction (Aristoph. *Plutus*, 574), “to convict one of anything.” ἐλέγχειν is to cross-examine for the purpose of convincing or refuting an opponent (the word being specially used of legal proceedings), and the ἔλεγχος may be brought to a head by means of witness or testimony.

Bernard, J. H. (1929). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*. (A. H. McNeile, Ed.) (p. 506). New York: C. Scribner' Sons.

The verb ‘to convict of’ (ἐλέγχειν followed by the preposition περὶ) has the sense here of exposing the true situation in regard to each issue in such a way as to confront the world with and prove its guilt.

Lincoln, A. T. (2005). *The Gospel according to Saint John* (p. 419). London: Continuum.

Whether those in the world are subjectively convinced of their guilt does not appear to be in view here.

Lincoln, A. T. (2005). *The Gospel according to Saint John* (p. 419). London: Continuum.

What is primarily in view is that, whether the world recognizes it or not, the Advocate’s role in the cosmic trial is to convict it of its guilt

Lincoln, A. T. (2005). *The Gospel according to Saint John* (p. 419). London: Continuum.

in the Ixx with forensic overtones,<sup>18</sup> as it has here

Kruse, C. G. (2003). *John: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 4, p. 325). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

It is a legal word that means “to bring to light, to expose, to refute, to convict and convince.” It could be translated “pronounce the verdict.” The world may think that it is judging Christians, but it is the Christians who are passing judgment on the world as they witness to Jesus Christ! Believers are the witnesses, the Holy Spirit is the “prosecuting attorney,” and the unsaved are the guilty prisoners. However, the purpose of this indictment is not to condemn but to bring salvation.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 362). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

### Matthew 18:15 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

### Luke 3:16–20 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>18</sup> And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. <sup>19</sup> But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, <sup>20</sup> also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.

John 3:20 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

John 8:46 (NKJV)

<sup>46</sup> Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

1 Corinthians 14:23–25 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those who are* uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind? <sup>24</sup> But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. <sup>25</sup> And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on *his* face, he



will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

Ephesians 5:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*.

Ephesians 5:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

1 Timothy 5:19–20 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup> Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

Titus 1:9 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

Titus 1:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

Titus 2:15 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Hebrews 12:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:

*“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord,  
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;*

James 2:9 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

## Jude 14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, <sup>15</sup> to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

## Revelation 3:19 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Arguably, in every instance the verb has to do with showing someone his sin, usually as a summons to repentance

(so, rightly, F. Büchsel, *TDNT* 2. 473–474)

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 534). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

So base on the evidence, The initial role of the Holy Spirit is to Convict in a legal sense that you are guilty.

He does this through the preaching of the Truth. The teaching of the Scripture, the proclamation of the gospel.

## Matthew 16:18–19 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

**John 20:22–23 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained.”

In saying this, I am not denying that there are other very essential and absolutely necessary works of the Spirit to save.

No one can be saved apart from the Spirit’s convicting and regenerating work. The Bible teaches that all people are by nature rebels against God and hostile to Jesus Christ. They are “dead in [their] trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1); “by nature children of wrath” (v. 3); “darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness

of their heart ... callous [having] given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness” (Eph. 4:18–19); “and alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds” (Col. 1:21); blinded by Satan so that they cannot understand spiritual truth (2 Cor. 4:4; cf. Luke 8:5, 12). In that condition, they are helpless; they are unable to believe the truth and are even guilty of suppressing it (Rom. 1:18–32). In John 6:44 Jesus declared, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.” In a graphic description of fallen man’s utter inability to seek God on his own, Paul wrote,

There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one. Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their paths, and the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. (Rom. 3:10–18)

The world hates Jesus Christ because sinfulness hates righteousness, imperfection hates perfection, and the “domain of darkness” hates the “kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col. 1:13; cf. John 3:19). It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to penetrate hearts steeped in sin, overcome sinners’ resistance to the gospel, and bring them through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to fellowship with God.

To do that, the Spirit must break the power of sin that enslaves people (John 8:34), and the love of iniquity that keeps them in rebellion against God. Jesus had already told the disciples that the Spirit would testify about Him to the world (15:26). In addition to that outward testimony, the Spirit also convicts the hearts of sinners. **When He comes** on the day of Pentecost, Jesus said, the Spirit **will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.**

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). *John 12–21* (pp. 196–197). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

So looking at the text.

You find yourself in a Court, The Highest Court of Heaven.

The Judge, Jesus Christ has Ascended to His Throne.

And the Holy Spirit, God’s Prosecutor has entered the room.

The Defendant, the world of unbelievers has taken its defiant position, had insurmountable evidence placed against them.

The Prosecutor has shown all the insurmountable evidence placed against them

As a result there are 3 convictions against you.

1. The Wrong Response
2. The Wrong Righteousness
3. The Wrong Ruler

## **Conviction #1**

### **1. The Wrong Response**

**8** And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

και ελθων εκεινος ελεγξει τον κοσμον περι  
 αμαρτιας και περι δικαιοσυνης και περι  
 κρισεως

ελθων εκεινος ελεγξε  
 Aorist Pass pt. emphatic demonstrative pronoun Future  
 Having come That one will convict

**9** of sin, because they do  
 not believe in Me;

περι αμαρτιας μεν οτι ου  
πιστευουσιν εις εμε

of sin,  
 περι αμαρτιας singular, not sins

what sin?

μεν indeed

because they do not believe in Me;

believe πιστεύουσιν

P.A.I they are not believing

This is the sin that is the issue.  
 There is only ONE unforgivable sin.  
 NOT believing in Jesus Christ.



### John 8:21–24 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> Then Jesus said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”

<sup>22</sup> So the Jews said, “Will He kill Himself, because He says, ‘Where I go you cannot come’?” <sup>23</sup> And He said to them, “You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins.”

### John 9:41 (NKJV)

<sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

### John 15:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

### John 15:24 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

John 3:18 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 (NKJV)

<sup>36</sup> He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Acts 4:12 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Matthew 12:31–32 (NKJV)

<sup>31</sup> “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. <sup>32</sup> Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.

The Counsellor, when he came, would likewise convict them of their sin of unbelief, just as Jesus

himself had done. The sin of unbelief, refusing to accept Jesus and his revelation, is extremely serious, because it is a rejection of the one God sent, his one and only Son (3:18). It is tantamount to a rejection of God himself.

Kruse, C. G. (2003). *John: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 4, pp. 325–326). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

## Conviction #2

1. The Wrong Response

2. The Wrong Righteousness

10 of righteousness,

because I go to My Father and  
you see Me no more;

περι δικαιοσυνης δε οτι προς τον πατερα  
μου υπαγω και ουκ ετι θεωρειτε με

of righteousness,

περι δικαιοσυνης

**dikaiousuné: righteousness, justice**

**Original Word:** δικαιοσύνη, ης, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** dikaiosuné

**Phonetic Spelling:** (dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay)

**Definition:** righteousness, justice

**Usage:** (usually if not always in a Jewish atmosphere), justice, justness, righteousness, righteousness of which God is the source or author, but practically: a divine righteousness.

1343 dikaiosýnē (from 1349 /díkē, "a judicial verdict") – properly, judicial approval (the verdict of approval); in the NT, the approval of God ("divine approval").

1343 /dikaiosýnē ("divine approval") is the regular NT term used for righteousness ("God's judicial approval").

1343 /dikaiosýnē ("the approval of God") refers to what is deemed right by the Lord (after His examination), i.e. what is approved in His eyes.

This is in fact the only place in the Fourth Gospel where *dikaïosynē* ('righteousness') occurs, and the context must determine its exact force

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 537). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

This righteousness is closely associated with the incarnate Son of God. While here on earth he confronted the self righteousness of the Jews and

showed forth by his life perfect righteousness . Perfect Holiness.

of righteousness,  
because I go to My Father and  
you **see** Me no more;

**theóreo: to look at, gaze**

**Original Word:** θεωρέω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** theóreo

**Phonetic Spelling:** (theh-o-reh'-o)

**Definition:** to look at, gaze

**Usage:** I look at, gaze, behold; I see, experience, discern; I partake of.

2334 theōréō (from 2300 /theáomai, "to gaze, contemplate") – gaze on for the purpose of analyzing (discriminating).

[2334 (theōréō) is the root of the English term "theatre," i.e. where people concentrate on the meaning of an action (performance).]

That's why the Holy Spirit will need to come to convict the world of what real righteousness really is. They rejected Jesus and said he was born in sin.

That He was of the Devil.  
That he was a blasphemer  
But the fact that He ascends to heaven and is  
received by the Father is testimony that he is  
righteous

1 John 2:1 (NKJV)

**2** My little children, these things I write to you, so  
that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an  
Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the  
righteous.

1 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for  
the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put  
to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

Acts 3:14 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and  
asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

But they rejected the one true righteous none for a  
man made righteousness.

Matthew 5:20 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Philippians 3:6–9 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

<sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit

But True Righteous can only come from Christ.

## Romans 10:3–4 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

<sup>4</sup> For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

## 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

## Conviction #3

1. The Wrong Response

2. The Wrong Righteousness

# 3. The Wrong Ruler

**11** of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.



περι δε κρισεως οτι ο αρχων του κοσμου  
τουτου κεκριται

of judgment,

περι δε κρισεως

**krisis: a decision, judgment**

**Original Word:** κρίσις, εως, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** krisis

**Phonetic Spelling:** (kree'-sis)

**Definition:** a decision, judgment

**Usage:** judging, judgment, decision, sentence;  
generally: divine judgment; accusation.

Cognate: 2920 κρίσις (a feminine noun derived from  
2919 /κρίνω, "to separate, distinguish, judge") –  
judgment, emphasizing its qualitative aspect that  
can apply either to a positive verdict (for  
righteousness) – or more commonly, a "negative"  
verdict which condemns the nature of sin that brings  
it on. See 2919 (krinō).

[2917 (kríma) stresses the results that go with a  
particular judgment (of blessing or pain depending  
on the choice).]

This can refer to

Judgment = Discernment  
 Judgment = Judicial

I believe both are referred to here.

The world has made the wrong judgment of Christ and are following in the footsteps of their father the devil

And they will be judged in final judgment as the devil has already been judged.

**11** of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

περι δε κρισεως οτι ο αρχων του κοσμου τουτου κερριται

κεκριται

Pert Pass verb

Having been judged and remaining judged.

John 12:31 (NKJV)

<sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

John 14:30 (NKJV)

<sup>30</sup> I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

## Hebrews 2:14 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

Before the triumphant in-breaking of God's saving reign, before the inauguration of the new covenant, millions ignored the claims of the true God.

Pentecost transformed that limitation, and millions have been brought to happy submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and to growing obedience by the power of the Spirit whom he bequeathed

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 534). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

When a lost sinner is truly under conviction, he will see the folly and evil of unbelief; he will confess that he does not measure up to the righteousness of Christ; and he will realize that he is under condemnation because he belongs to the world and the devil (Eph. 2:1–3). The only person who can rescue him from such a horrible situation is Jesus

Christ, the Son of God. There can be no conversion without conviction, and there can be no conviction apart from the Spirit of God using the Word of God and the witness of the child of God.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p.

The Holy Spirit will prosecute you as a sinner and that the Judge is righteous and your not. and Judgement is sure.