

John 16vs5-15

The Spirit's work in the world

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Through John 13v31 to John 17 (known as the 'Upper Room Discourse') we are learning what it means to have life NOW... in the period after Jesus' death and resurrection, and before his return.

In the last two studies we have seen...

- 1) ...Jesus' promise that those who listen and keep his words will be part of the true 'fruit-bearing vine' of God – i.e. part of his people who will be truly effective in the world; and...
- 2) ...Jesus explain that the world will hate those who live and speak for him because the world hates the Father and the Son. But that the 11 disciples will nevertheless be Jesus' witnesses (Apostles) in the world because God still wants to reach the world through what they say.

In these verses Jesus promises that his going to the Father (i.e. going to the Cross) will provide real help... his going to the Cross means that he will send the Spirit.

We will see that the Spirit has two spheres of work that are closely related:

- 1) vs5-11: the Spirit's work in the World
- 2) vs12-15: the Spirit's work in the Apostles

Part 1 – The Spirit's work in the World: to convict

Read John 16 vs 5-11: *“But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.⁷ 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 go, I will send him to you.⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement:⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;¹¹ concerning judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged.”*

Jesus draws the Apostles' attention to his announcement about his departure.

Why is it to their (the Apostles) advantage that Jesus goes?

- v7 The Helper will come – only when Jesus has gone

- v8 The Helper will work in the world to convict the world of:

Sin... & Righteousness... & Judgement.

v 8: *“And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement”*

Let’s look at each of these words in turn and see what they mean:

Convict

What does “convict” mean?

- We can compare back to John 3v20:

John 3v20: *“For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.”*

- “Exposed” and “convict” come from the same word in the Greek.
- “Convict” – carries the sense of shaming the world and convincing it of its own guilt – thus calling it to repentance.
- So then, just as Jesus exposed the sin of the world, showed the world its need of righteousness and spoke of its impending judgement...
- ...when his Spirit comes, he (the Spirit) will continue this work.

N.B. This is the one place in the Bible which talks of the Spirit being at work in the world. We sometimes hear church leaders speaking of the Spirit being at work in unbelievers and in other religions – Jesus tells us that the work of the Spirit in those outside of Christ is confined to enabling them to be convinced of their sin and guilt.

Now let’s move to the next word, ‘sin’:

Sin

v 9: *“concerning sin, because they do not believe in me”*

What have we learned about ‘sin’ in John’s gospel?

- This ties in with what we learned about sin back in John 5 v 23:
“...Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him.”

In John 5 we saw that there is therefore a difference between SINS and SIN!

- Sin is :
 - A refusal to recognise that Jesus is who he says he is and...
 - A rejection of Jesus' right rule and authority.
- Sins are:
 - The things we DO as we live our lives outside the right rule and authority of Jesus.

This means that there could be two people living their life without recognising the rule of Jesus but one does lots of sinful deeds and another only a few... BOTH ARE EQUALLY GUILTY OF SIN!!

- To illustrate this – two children had chicken pox:
 - one child was covered in spots ... and the other had just two spots!
 - Question: Which child had chicken pox?!
 - Answer: Both!

When Jesus is present his clear RIGHT to rule is evident for all to see. He convicted people of their sin and sins.

When Jesus has gone to the Father, the Spirit will continue this work.

- The Spirit makes us realise we are a sinner.
- WHY? – because v9: ***“they do not believe in me”***

Now let's move to the next word, 'righteousness':

Righteousness

Read John 16 v 10: *“...concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer”*

What have we learned about 'righteousness' in John's Gospel?

- When Jesus was on earth, he showed what true righteousness was – a picture perfect view!
- In contrast – we would feel constantly ashamed in his presence!
- When he is gone – the Spirit will convict the world of a lack of righteousness – and therefore drive the world to seek forgiveness.

Now let's move to the last word, 'judgement':

Judgement

Read John 16 v11: *"...concerning judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged."*

What have we learned about 'judgement' in John's Gospel?

In John 12 vs 31-32, Jesus had said:

John 12 vs 31-32: *"Now is the judgement of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."*

- Jesus taught that Satan's evil work would be exposed and defeated through his death on the cross.
- The cross is a TRIUMPH of God's love and goodness over evil.
- Jesus' resurrection shows that death has been defeated and that Satan is a beaten enemy.
- The Spirit will come and convict the world of the coming Judgement!
- If God's greatest enemy has been exposed and defeated then there is no hope for any who stand against Jesus!! Judgement WILL surely come!

In summary, God the Holy Spirit will convict the world in three areas where, by nature, we remain blasé and unconcerned:

- A right godly guilt:

John 16 v9: *"...concerning sin, because they do not believe in me"*

- An awareness of Jesus' perfection and of my not being right with God:

John 16 v 10: *"... concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer"*

- Fear – of God's judgement:

John 16 v 11: *"... concerning judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged."*

As we have studied God's word, have you experienced the work of God the Holy Spirit as your understanding of Jesus has changed? If so, how?

This is the Spirit's work in the world... now for his work in the Apostles:

Part 2 – The Spirit's work in the Apostles

Read John 16 vs 12-15: *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”*

Once again, Jesus highlights his impending departure.

What does Jesus promise that the Spirit will do for his Apostles? Why is it so good?

- Guide them into all the truth:

v13: *“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”*

- This is truth from Jesus: ***“...he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak”***
- Truth that is to come: ***“...he will declare to you the things that are to come.”***
- He will act to glorify Jesus:

v14: *“He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”*

- He will declare ALL God's truth... they will know everything there is to know about God and his plan for the world... i.e. it will be complete Truth.

v15: *“All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”*

We need to be clear that these words were spoken to Jesus' Apostles – i.e. those of whom he said in John 15:

Read John ch 15 v 27: *“And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”*

The Spirit will take what Jesus has revealed and enable the Apostles to 'get it' so that they are in a position to be witnesses.

The Apostles are the ones who were responsible for the writing of the Scriptures.

What does this passage say about the validity and sufficiency of their work?

- Directed by God - the Holy Spirit
- TRUE
- COMPLETE
- FROM GOD
- ALL TRUTH – past, present and future

We do NOT need to add to them!

Beware – there are developments within so-called “Christian” teaching where people have added to the Bible, and are adding to it!

- Someone might say to you, “*You need to have fresh words from the Spirit for today!*” How should you respond?
- “**NO!** God has given all he has to Jesus, and Jesus has led his Apostles into ALL his truth by the work of the Spirit! We now have ALL this truth contained in the Bible!!”

What confidence does this give you as you read the New Testament?!

- You CAN believe it!

Where would you go if you want to know what God has to say to you today?

- Answer: Simply – to his WORD – in the Bible.

Have you started reading the Bible on your own?

- Would you like some notes to help and guide you where to make a start?

Now that Jesus has gone – how should we expect the relationship with him to continue?

- By the Spirit...
- Through the Apostles’ words...
- ...In the Bible!!

We’re actually better off that if we were with Jesus in the flesh before his death!

So – back to the beginning – Jesus said his departure (i.e. his death) was to their advantage. This was because of the Spirit's work in two spheres:

- 1) The World – to bring conviction of sin, righteousness and judgement... and
- 2) The Apostles – to bring complete revelation of the Truth

How do the 2 spheres relate?

Jesus sends his Spirit to convict...

- How does the Spirit do this?
- Through the Apostles words... that he has enabled them to write.

Next time...

Sorrow... is to be followed by GREAT joy!

John 16 vs 5-15

⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ 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 go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgement: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.