

The Gospel of John

The Work of the Holy Spirit

John 16:8-11

INTRODUCTION:

For many weeks now, we have been experiencing the night before Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

In our scripture text this morning, Judas has left to betray Jesus. Christ and His disciples have left the upper room and they are on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. During this journey, Jesus continues to prepare His disciples for what lay ahead of them.

Jesus has just told His disciples that He is going away. But when He leaves, He will ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to them.

John 16:5-6 (NASB)

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, grief has filled your heart.

The disciples did not understand the significance of what was about to take place. They were overwhelmed with their own personal sorrow. They were so concerned about themselves that they could not share the joy of Christ successfully completing His work on earth. They did not ask “Tell us what it means for you to go back to the Father. Tell us what it will be like. Tell us what will happen with the angels in the presence of God. Tell us what it will feel like to have finally accomplished all the work that the Father sent you to do and to go back and receive the reward.” No one asked. No one cared. They were stuck on their own sorrow at the moment. They didn’t ask Him about death, burial, resurrection, ascension, exaltation, coronation – not on this occasion.

Finally they did, when Jesus was carried into heaven. The scriptures say that they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising God.

They finally were able to rejoice in Him going back to the Father, but not here. And then, lovingly in His disappointment, He reiterates the greatest of all promises in verse 7.

John 16:7 (NASB)

⁷ But I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I am leaving; for if I do not leave, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

He told them earlier that the Holy Spirit had been with them in Jesus, but now He’s going to dwell inside them. And if I don’t go away, the Helper will not come; and when He comes, He will take all that is Mine and deposit it in you.

That is the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer is a gift that heaven sends as a reward for Christ's completed work. The work had to be completed before the Holy Spirit could be sent.

Listen to Peter as he declares the promise fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:33 (NASB)

³³ Therefore, since He has been exalted at the right hand of God, and has received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.

Once Jesus finished His work, died on the cross, and rose again, then the Father sent the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The gift of the Spirit then is the pledged and promised reward for Christ's completed work.

How could a group of persecuted, weeping, sorrowing disciples confront a hating and persecuting world? It would only be through the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 15:26-27 (NASB)

²⁶ "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *namely*, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me, ²⁷ and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

The Holy Spirit is going to empower you to make an effective testimony against the enemies of God. "If I go, I'll send Him; and when the Spirit of truth comes He will enable you to reach the world.

It is the Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures. It is the Holy Spirit who makes us alive so that we can believe. It is the Holy Spirit who grants us faith, who makes the gospel clear. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us life – we are born of the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who is now setting us apart from the world and will one day bring us to glory.

Stand and Read Scripture

John 16:8-11 (NASB)

⁸ And He, when He comes, will convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment: ⁹ regarding sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ and regarding righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer *are going to see Me*; ¹¹ and regarding judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

Prayer

In verse 8 Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. In this verse, we see a three-fold ministry the Spirit will perform in relation to the unsaved world. He will "convict" the world; that is, He will show it to be wrong. This reproof will target three areas in which the world needs admonishing: sin, righteousness, and judgment.

BODY:

I. CONVICTING THE WORLD OF SIN.

John 16:9 (NASB)

⁹ regarding sin, because they do not believe in Me;

I know it's real popular today to measure people against the Ten Commandments; that's not what this is talking about. Everyone has a general sense of morality, everybody has a general sense of sinfulness and breaking the rules, but everybody tends to think that even in spite of breaking the rules, they are good enough. However, all views of morality, all compassion, all good works mean zero if you reject Christ.

The sin that ultimately sends people to destruction is the sin of **not believing in Jesus Christ**.

The world is a sinful place, and one of the Holy Spirit's tasks is to **convict** the world of its **sin**. No amount of preaching, pleading, or pointing of fingers will bring about the conviction of sin, unless the Holy Spirit is at work in the sinner's heart. It is the Spirit's job to convict. And what is the most basic sin of which the world is guilty? Jesus specifies it as *unbelief*. The convicting power of the Holy Spirit is at work in the world because they do not believe in Christ.

He shows the sinner that unbelief is wrong. In fact, a person can commit murder, blaspheme, commit adultery, or any number of other sins and they can be forgiven. But one of the sins that cannot be forgiven is the sin of unbelief. If we do not believe, we are condemned.

We are prosecuted in the world's courts. The truth is, that now, we are God's prosecutors. The prophets prosecuted and were killed. John the Baptist prosecuted and was beheaded. Jesus prosecuted and was crucified; now it's our turn. Ten out of the eleven disciples –with the exception of were killed. So the Holy Spirit is the one who convicts.

I want to emphasize here that the Holy Spirit works on the heart of the sinner and convicts, but His work is done through the word. They have to hear the word from someone. **This is talking about the work that we do, empowered by the Holy Spirit with the Scripture.**

It is the same as salvation in Romans 10, right? We know the Holy Spirit saves people – you are born again of the Spirit. But we also know that they can't be saved unless they hear. Because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. That is the truth concerning Christ. So the Holy Spirit does the heart work, but not apart from the Word being preached.

II. COMPARING THE WORLD TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.

John 16:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ and regarding righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer *are going to see Me*;

The Holy Spirit **convicts** those who are lost of the need for getting right with God. He produces in the heart of the lost a deep seated feeling of filthiness. We need to remember that we are absolutely unrighteous in and of ourselves!

Yet, in His **convincing** ministry, The Spirit demonstrates that Christ alone is righteous and all others fall short of God's standards. He points us to the truth that Jesus has paid the price for sin and that He has been accepted by the Father. Now, anyone who places

their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation will be saved and declared righteous by God in Heaven. The righteousness of Jesus will be placed within anyone who receives Him.

1 Peter 2:24 (NASB)

24 and He Himself brought our sins in His body up on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by His wounds you were healed.

There is only one Person who came down from heaven, lived a life of sinless perfection, and who ascended back to heaven. That was the Son of Man. No one can come to the Father unless he is truly righteous.

The righteousness that the world tries to deny is found demonstrated in Christ. Everything He ever said and did perfectly conformed to the will of God the Father. No one can measure up to Him.

Romans 3:23 (NASB)

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

So we have to preach righteousness.

Most people think, "If there is a God, then there must be a heaven. And if they live a good moral life they will be good enough to go there. But we already know that if you do not **believe** in Christ you **will not get there!**

There is only one person who ever walked on this earth who had a right at the end of His life to go directly on His own merit into the presence of God, only one. So unless you possess the righteousness of Jesus Christ, you will never see God. When Jesus flawlessly completed His work on earth God highly exalted Him, lifted Him to glory, sat Him at His right hand, and gave Him the name Lord, the name that is above every name.

The divine message of Scripture is this: the sin that damns you is rejecting Jesus Christ. The righteousness that saves you is the righteousness that belonged only to Christ. The divine message is this: there is absolutely no righteousness in any human being that can ever bring that human being into the presence of God. If you are ever going into the presence of God, you have to possess the righteousness that Jesus Christ possessed.

That, by the way, is the gospel. When you believe in Christ, He gives you His righteousness. You become the righteousness of God in Him. Our righteousness is as filthy rags when compared to Christ. Our righteousness will damn us. The only way you or I will ever get to heaven is to be granted His righteousness.

And then we preach judgment.

III. CONVINCING THE WORLD OF THE JUDGMENT.

The Spirit of God **convicts** the heart of man about the reality of approaching judgment and condemnation. People who do not repent and believe in Christ will share condemnation with Satan.

While He convicts men of approaching judgment, He also **convinces** men of the great truth that the price of judgment has already been paid in full! He teaches us that when Jesus went to Calvary and died, that He satisfied the demands of God for sin and that

judgment has already been passed. You see, Satan and sin have already been judged, all that remains is for the death sentence to be carried out.

John 3:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

The world is facing judgment..The Holy Spirit convicts them of this truth. There is a day of reckoning scheduled. It will be a day in which God will deliver justice and rid His creation of sin. In fact, this judgment has already begun.

With whom did it begin? Jesus identifies *Satan* as the one on whom judgment will fall when He dies on the cross. It was on the cross that Jesus redeemed sinners for God and utterly vanquished Satan.

Hebrews 2:14-15 (NASB)

¹⁴ Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, so that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

Three days later Jesus rose from the dead, showing to all the world that Satan's rule has been overthrown. **Jesus overcame death!** All who reject Christ and remain in their sin will be condemned along with Satan, and this is the warning that the Holy Spirit sounds in the hearts of the unsaved.

The influence of the Holy Spirit in an unsaved person's life will lead that person to the realization that he is guilty, that God is just, and that all sinners are deserving of judgment. Once a sinner has been awakened to his soul's great need to avoid judgment, the Spirit will point him to Christ, the one and only Savior.

CONCLUSION:

If God has overpowered and judged the most powerful, evil force in the universe, let me assure you that you are not going to escape. Your **sin** will condemn you, because the Scripture says if you do not believe in Christ, you are not saved.

If you do not have Christ's **righteousness** within to you, you will never be accepted by God.

If you reject Christ and His righteousness it will lead to **judgment**, and you will never escape because even the greatest force of evil, which is Satan and his demons, supernatural beings, cannot escape the judgment of God. You have no chance. This is how we're supposed to preach the gospel: sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Do you think Peter was listening that day? Here is a part of the first sermon that he preached on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:22-23 (NASB)

²² "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst,

just as you yourselves know— ²³ this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

Peter is a prosecutor on the Day of Pentecost. He is a prosecutor with an indictment, accusations, proof, and a conviction: **sin**, the sin of rejecting Christ.

Then notice the second thing, verse 24:

Acts 2:24 (NASB)

²⁴ But God raised Him *from the dead*, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

Then go down to verse 32:

Acts 2:32-33a (NASB)

³² *It is this Jesus whom* God raised up, *a fact to which we are all witnesses.* ³³ Therefore, since He has been exalted at the right hand of God,

That is **righteousness**, right, because Christ was exalted to the right hand of God. Christ was taken into glory. He was the only holy man! It is that righteousness that God accepts and that alone. Unless you have that righteousness imputed to you, you have no hope.

And finally Peter preached **judgment**. Look at verse 34.

Acts 2:34-35 (NASB)

³⁴ For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: “The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, ³⁵ Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

God is going to crush the enemies of Christ.

Acts 2:36-41 (NASB)

³⁶ Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.” ³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, (That is the work of the Holy Spirit inside.) and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what are we to do?” ³⁸ Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And verse 40: ⁴⁰ And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on urging them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!” (More judgment.) “So then those who received his word were baptized; and that day there were added – ” how many? “ – three thousand souls.”

You get the Holy Spirit’s results when you share and preach the Holy Spirit’s message.

He is Lord.