

The Holy Spirit at Work in the World - John 16:5-15 - Jn 47

We ended our last study with Jesus promising His disciples they will be “at odds with the world.” The closer our walk with Jesus, the Vine, the more we can expect persecution from the “system” that drives the world. Today Jesus is going to tell us that we are far from alone in this world. He has overcome the world, and we can walk in supernatural victory. And though the Prince of this world is our enemy, God is always “at work” to bring us to His ultimate victory. Jesus begins by explaining why He’s telling the disciples of their coming trials in the world.

John 16:4

“But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.”

Jesus wants us to follow Him step-by-step, and when we need to know the next step, He’ll tell us. And the next step for the disciples is understanding that Jesus is going to leave physically.

John 16:5-6

⁵ “But now I go away 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.”

This is a real indication of “where” the disciples were at. They’re in shock. They’re not “tracking” with Jesus. They’re even depressed that things aren’t going like they thought, even though Jesus had been plainly telling them this day was coming. So Jesus is going to prepare the disciples again for the greatest possible gift He could give for their victory in this world.

John 16:7

“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 depart, I will send Him to you.”

Jesus is saying it is better for US if He goes away physically so He can send the Holy Spirit to us. Because Jesus, in a physical body, can’t reach the hearts and needs of every person everywhere, but the Holy Spirit has no physical limitations. It is in the Person of the Holy Spirit that the promise of Jesus in Matthew 28:20 is fulfilled – “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

It is the Holy Spirit that brings us uninterrupted fellowship with God and who brings us victory over this world. And what Jesus is about to give us is a great summary of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world specifically, not a summary of His work in the church.

John 16:8

“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”

This is a great “summary verse” of the Holy Spirit’s work in the world. We need to first look at this word “convict.” It is the Greek word *elegcho*, which literally means *to show one’s fault* or *to convince one of fault*. It is a legal term used for the cross-examination of a witness in order to show the error of that person’s testimony. It carries the idea of convincing a person until they acknowledge the case against them. That may look pretty straight forward to us. He will convict

or convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. But as Jesus “clarifies” these 3 words, He adds a more precise meaning to each one.

John 16:9

“...of sin, because they do not believe in Me”

When we hear the word “sin,” what do we generally think of? Lying, cheating, stealing, fornication, murder... We might even think of breaking the 10 Commandments. And certainly the Holy Spirit does convict and convince us of those sins, but look closely at what Jesus says here in verse 9. “...of sin, because they do not believe in Me.” Please hear this. Your final “conviction” of sin will boil down to one question – God asking you, “What did you do with My Son Jesus Christ?” When you stand before the Holy God, there will be no question as to your sinfulness. The only thing that will save you is your faith in Jesus Christ because the moment you put your faith in Christ, He takes your sins upon Himself and puts you IN His righteousness. And THAT is how God sees you when you stand before Him. Jesus told Nicodemus in John chapter 3:

John 3:18

“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.”

1John 5:10 says

“...he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.”

That is known as “Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit,” and ultimately, that is the sin that the world will be convicted of. The only real eternal issue is this. Do you believe that God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to take your sins and die in your place, and have you accepted Him as your personal Savior? At the final Judgment, that is all that is going to matter. And if you’ve not accepted Jesus Christ as your own Savior, I pray you’ll do that today. Now in verse 10, Jesus says the second role of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of “righteousness.”

John 16:10

“...of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more”

The Holy Spirit “Convicts and Convinces” us of both Sin and Righteousness. But why does Jesus use the clarification “because I go to My Father and you see Me no more?”

Well, “I go to My Father” is speaking of His Resurrection and Ascension, which is a public display of His Righteousness. The “Righteousness” the Holy Spirit is going to convict the world of is HIS Righteousness, demonstrated by His Ascension. Jesus Christ demonstrated the Righteousness required to enter the Kingdom of heaven. So we can say, “All we have to do is be as Righteous as Jesus Christ and we can enter heaven, too. Right?” Right! Just one problem. The Holy Spirit convicts, or convinces, you of your true level of Righteousness and just how far that is from the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Don’t be fooled by one of the Devil’s top lies of all time – “All good people go to heaven.”

Isaiah 64:6 says “all our righteousness is like filthy rags.” Jesus Christ lived a perfectly sinless life, and through His Resurrection and Ascension, the Holy Spirit “Convicts” the world that only Christ’s level of righteousness grants entrance into heaven. So how can we say, “Well, I try to live by the Golden Rule as much as I can.” Are you kidding? Do you think that equals Jesus

Christ's perfectly sinless life? ONE SIN ever in your life disqualifies you from entering heaven on your own righteousness, and it's the Holy Spirit who convicts us of that.

2Corinthians 5:21 says that through our faith in Jesus Christ, "He became our sin and we stand in HIS righteousness," and there is NO OTHER WAY to get to heaven. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of Righteousness by pointing to Jesus Christ as the only standard acceptable to God! Now in verse 11 is the Holy Spirit's third job in the world.

John 16:11

"...of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."

Again, when Jesus says "convicts the world of judgment," maybe we think of that final day of reckoning, the Judgment Day. But His "Clarifying Statement" here in verse 11 shows a different focus. Jesus is talking about a person and a judgment that has already occurred. When Jesus refers to the "Ruler of this world," we know exactly who He's talking about. During the temptation, Satan took Jesus high up a mountain and offered to give Him all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would simply bow down and worship Him. The point is, Jesus didn't dispute Satan's ruler-ship of this world.

In Luke 4:6 Satan says

"for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish"

Who delivered the world to Satan? MAN DID! The earth, and all the glory in it, was created as the Lord's. The Lord gave dominion of the earth to man. Man gave dominion of the earth to Satan through Adam's sin. Then Jesus Christ came to Redeem the earth and US back to God.

1Peter 1:18-19 says

"We were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold . . . , but with the precious blood of [Jesus] Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

And where did this Redemption occur? AT THE CROSS! God's judgment against the "Ruler of this World" came at the Cross! It was at the Cross that Satan's power was broken. His grip on this world was crushed at the Cross.

Turn to Colossians 2:13-15

¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the un-circumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."

Jesus Christ has already defeated the Principalities and Powers and Rulers of darkness of this age. They were disarmed at the Cross. The Ruler of this world has been judged, and the power He had over us in sin has been broken because of Jesus Christ's perfect sacrifice on our behalf. And it is the Holy Spirit that convinces us we don't have to live under the rule of sin any longer. Jesus Christ has made a way for us to be free from the bondage of sin and to walk in the newness of life. Because of the judgment against sin that came at the Cross, we can be set free from sin's bondage in our lives.

The question is, “Then WHY do we still feel “Bound” by sin?” Because the judgment at the Cross disarmed the “Power” of Sin, but it DID NOT disarm our WILL!! If we continue to choose sin, we are giving sin power over our lives that it has no right to because Jesus Christ has already judged sin on our behalf. The Witness or conviction of the Holy Spirit is Judgment has been brought on the ruler of this world on your behalf. All you have to do is to choose to walk in His Victory! And by the way, it’s the Holy Spirit that IS your power to walk in Christ’s Victory moment by moment in this world. Now THAT is a powerful 3-punch knockout! The Holy Spirit “Convicts” the World of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment, and if you’re saying right now, “I don’t fully understand. I need more information. I need more guidance,” then Jesus has a Word just for you.

John 16:12-13

“¹² I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

¹³ 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.”

Turn back to John 14:26

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”

Jesus says the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, will guide you into all truth and will teach you all things. In fact, it is impossible for us to “receive” the truth or guidance of God without the Holy Spirit. Paraphrasing, 1Corinthians 2:12 says, “We have received the Holy Spirit that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” Verse 14 says, “The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God because they must be spiritually discerned.” If a person studies the Bible long enough without the Holy Spirit, what they’ll end up with is A CULT because, if we apply our own logic and understanding to the Bible, we end up distorting God’s Word to match our Understanding. And that is why you don’t need the latest, greatest, “power recipe” for Christian Success. You just need to sincerely pray and earnestly study God’s Word, and the Holy Spirit will teach you. That is also why every cult is based on some other writing, because if a person comes to the Bible with faith, it will always lead them to Jesus Christ alone.

In addition to convicting or convincing the world of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment, the Holy Spirit also leads the world into God’s truth. He doesn’t force us, but the moment we put our faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit is there to lead us into all truth. There’s one more thing for today the Holy Spirit does in the world.

John 16:14-15

“¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

The Holy Spirit is in this world to bring glory to Jesus Christ, which is very cool because that’s why we’re in this world also!! And how does the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus Christ in this world? By declaring the things of Christ to the world. And how do we to bring glory to Jesus Christ in this world? By declaring the things of Christ to the world. To “declare” means *to show* or *be a witness*. To show the world the things of Christ means simply to walk in obedience to the Holy

Spirit because it's the Holy Spirit living in us who reveals Jesus Christ to the world, thereby bringing Him glory. So as we are controlled by the Holy Spirit, we will be "Declaring" Jesus Christ to a lost world! And THAT is what we're hanging around here to do!

I pray the Holy Spirit:

- 1) Convicts you of your need to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior;
- 2) Convicts you of your need to "put-on" the Righteousness of Jesus Christ;
- 3) Convinces you that you are more than a Conqueror in this world, that your enemy has been judged, and Jesus has won your victory;
- 4) Will guide you into all truth, according to God's Word; and
- 5) Will live through you to bring Glory to Jesus Christ on this earth.

THAT is a "summary" of the Holy Spirit's role in this world.