

# The Spirit and Salvation

John 16:8-11

## 1. Introduction.

- a. Where we've been.
  - i. There tends to be a separation made between being "Spirit-filled" and "Word-centered."
  - ii. The work of the Spirit can never be separated from the presence of the Word. The Spirit always works through His Word.
- b. Today, we'll take a look at the role of the Spirit as He relates to unbelievers (i.e., the Spirit and Salvation).
  - i. What, specifically, is the Spirit doing in this world, and how is He doing it?
  - ii. What is the Christian's role in the world, then, in light of the Spirit's work?

## 2. Setting the scene.

- a. Chapters 14-17 is commonly referred to as the "Farwell Discourse," or "Upper Room Discourse."
- b. Jesus is giving final instruction to His disciples before He goes back to the Father.
  - i. During this time, He gives the promise of the coming Helper – The Holy Spirit (14:16-17, 25-26; 15:25; 16:7, 13).
  - ii. "Paraclete" – a term derived from two Greek words; meaning, "one who comes along side."
    1. Often used in legal contexts to speak of counselor, aid, and helper.
    2. Also used to speak of one who brings comfort.
  - iii. The Holy Spirit would not only bring Jesus' teaching to the disciples' remembrance, but He would also empower them to do extraordinary work

(c.f., Peter's boldness to speak in Acts 2 in light of His denial just 40 days earlier).

3. John 16: 8-11.

a. Some definitions:

i. In both His Gospel and epistles, John uses the term "world" in a unique way.

1. The term "world (Gk. kosmos), in a technical sense, is a word that is used to refer to a structured system that operates in accordance to a set of laws. It's a fixed system.

2. When John uses "world," he is speaking of a sphere of thought, or structured system, that is opposed to God by its very nature.

a. In 1John 2:16, the world is made up of three realities. These three realities drive and control the system:

i. The lust of the flesh.

ii. The lust of the eyes.

iii. The boastful pride of life.

b. This entire system lies in the lap of the Evil one (1Jn. 5:19).

3. In John's mind, there is no neutrality. The world, by its nature, is opposed to God. Allegiance is with one side or the other.

4. This is the world (or system) from which Jesus is going; and when He leaves, the world into which He will send the Spirit.

ii. When the Spirit comes, His role is bound up with a convicting work—He will come into the world to convict the world.

1. The term "convict" is rather robust—it's a legal term.

a. Objectively, it means to expose on the basis of evidence. It carries the idea of a prosecuting attorney, who brings an indictment against a guilty party.

- b. Subjectively, it means to produce a sense of personal guilt within a person. There's a genuine sense of anxiety and terror that takes place.

b. The Spirit Convicts in three areas.

i. Sin (9).

1. Here, conviction regarding sin is not a statement that the Spirit makes you feel bad about sinning.
2. Notice, the reason the Spirit convicts regarding sin is “because they do not believe in me.”
  - a. This is a reference to the great sin of unbelief. But it's an unbelief in the person of Christ (“because they do not believe *in me*”).
  - b. All other sin can be forgiven, but this is the one sin that condemns.
3. This is why we must preach the Gospel (cf. Rom. 10:14ff.).
  - a. Jesus left this world, but He saved us to then leave us in the world.
  - b. We are called to bring an explicit knowledge of Jesus Christ to a lost, dying world. And through our preaching the Spirit brings His convicting work.

ii. Righteousness (10).

1. This is not a reference to Jesus' righteousness, but self-righteousness.
2. Convicting the world of self-righteousness was one of Jesus' main ministries. While there are many who live in denial of God, there are probably many more who have an intellectual belief in Him, but then think they are somehow okay before Him—that they're in a right standing before Him (cf. Isa. 64:6).

3. Jesus was going away (10b), but He was sending the Helper to continue His prosecuting work of pointing out self-righteousness. The Spirit, by means of the disciples, would carry on this ministry.

iii. Judgment (v.11).

1. This is not a reference, primarily, to the coming judgment. Rather, it's the idea that the Spirit convicts a person (i.e., shows them to be in the wrong) with regard to their judgement and assessment of Jesus Christ.

- a. As the knowledge of Christ comes through the preaching of the Gospel, the Spirit shows a person that their assessment and understanding of Jesus is wrong.

- b. The Spirit shows a person that Jesus is Who He truly said He was—Lord, God, and Messiah (cf. Acts 2:36-37).

2. There is irony in this verse.

- a. The Spirit shows a person they have a wrong judgement of Christ, but this wrong judgment of Christ results in a true (indeed, right) judgment of them, if they do not repent.

- b. They will be judged with the same kind of judgment that God has already judged Satan.

c. Conclusion.

- i. The term “convict” is a legal term, primarily concerned with objective indictment and guilt. As such, the Spirit functions as God’s prosecuting reality.

- ii. The way the Spirit brings about this convicting reality is through the faithful preaching of Christ’s disciples (10b).

- iii. As the Spirit works, God’s people will either function as bringers of good news, or as divine prosecutors.