

## **Session 1 The Conviction of the Spirit (Jn. 16:9)**

*“Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)*

### **I. EQUIPPING THE HEART TO STAY STEADY IN PERSECUTION**

- A. The purpose of Jesus’ instruction in Jn. 13-17 was to equip His followers to walk in victory under the growing global pressure. He taught His disciples that in dialogue with the Godhead our hearts will be filled with peace and joy to keeping us from falling away under pressure.
- <sup>11</sup>***“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you...” (Jn. 15:11)***
- <sup>17</sup>***“These things I command you, that you love one another.” (Jn. 15:17)***
- <sup>1</sup>***“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not...stumble (fall away).” (Jn. 16:1)***
- <sup>33</sup>***“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace...” (Jn. 16:33)***
- B. In Jn. 13-17, one of Jesus’ aims is to equip the heart to stay steady under pressure. Jesus exhorted the disciples two days earlier that the church was to not be troubled in light of unfolding global eschatological pressures that point towards the end of the age drawing near.
- <sup>6</sup>***“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Mt. 24:6)***
- C. I believe there is a connection between Jesus’ exhortation not to be troubled (Jn. 14:1, 27) and the call to joy (15:11), love (15:17), peace (16:33) and avoiding stumbling in our faith (16:1).
- D. Christians enduring persecution in end-time prophecy is a sober reality (Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 21:16-19; Jn. 15:18-25; Rev. 6:9-11; 11:7; 12:11, 17; 13:7, 10; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4).
- <sup>9</sup>***“He opened the fifth seal; I saw...the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God...”***
- <sup>11</sup>***“They [were to] rest...until the number...who would be killed...was completed.” (Rev. 6:9-11)***
- <sup>6</sup>***“I saw the woman [Harlot Babylon], drunk with the blood of...the martyrs of Jesus.” (Rev. 17:6)***
- E. In Jn. 16:1, Jesus states that the reason why He taught His disciples Jn. 15:18-27 was to help them make sense of the true condition of the world and context in which they would witness. Not agreeing with heaven’s perspective concerning the condition of the world will be a source of stumbling for many. Presently, there are growing seeds of this in this generation.
- <sup>1</sup>***“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.” (Jn. 16:1)***
- <sup>3</sup>***“...for that Day (Second Coming) will not come unless the falling away comes first.” (2 Th. 2:3)***
- F. Jesus further develops the idea of the darkness of the world as something that will manifest with religious fervor and will result in state sponsored violence against the followers of Jesus. The idea of the world hating the saints is a subject that many believers don’t consider much nor factor in the possibility of this being part of our future. Yet Jesus (Mt. 5:10; 10:21-23, 34-38; 24:9; Lk 12:49, 53; 21:16-17) and the apostles prophesied this is coming (Acts 14:22; 1 Pet 2:21-23; 4:14-17).

## II. CALLED TO WITNESS TO A HOSTILE WORLD

<sup>1</sup>*“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. (Jn. 16:1)*

- A. Jesus wants us to know the true condition of the world so that we can relate with unbelievers properly as a loving witness, as well as properly understanding and interpreting what is happening around us in the culture of our country as well as the nations of the earth.

<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... (Jn. 15:26-27)*

- B. In John 13-17 Jesus envisions, calls, and equips the Church to engage with God in order to walk fully in five components of the love of God He wants to us to experience and express.
1. *God’s love for God* (Jn. 13:3; 14:31; 15:9; 15:12; 17:23-24, 26)
  2. *God’s love for us* (Jn. 13:1, 23, 34-35; 14:21, 23; 15:9, 12; 16:27; 17:23)
  3. *God’s love in us towards Him* (Jn. 14:15, 21, 24, 28; 15:12, 17; 16:27; 17:26)
  4. *God’s love in us towards another* (Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12, 17)
  5. *God’s love in us for hostile world through the apostolic witness* (Jn. 13:35; 14:12; 15:18-27; 16:8-9)
- C. In Jn. 15:18-21, Jesus is emphasizing something significantly underemphasized which is the condition of depravity in the unbelieving world. If we are not careful, a slow but growing perception will take root. It is the perception that suggests that unbelievers want Jesus and if we would only just package our messaging rightly, they will respond. It is true, the witness needs adjusting; it is also true that the resistance towards Christ is due to the rebellion of the humanity.
- D. To identify the world primarily through the lens of brokenness instead of deeply sinful will produce a friendship with the world that is further hindering and diluting the gospel witness. This friendship is an embracing of the world’s value system concerning the human condition, ignoring the hostility.
- <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. (Jn. 15:19)*
- E. The embracing of the world’s value system has created a culture where the expectation for life is according to the culture related to money, honor and comfort. The disciples were challenged with this dynamic. When Jesus spoke of His departure (cross) and their persecution (cross) it brought anger (Mt. 16:23), anxiety (Jn. 14:1) and sadness (Jn. 16:6) to their hearts.
- <sup>6</sup>*But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. <sup>7</sup>Nevertheless I tell you the truth ... the Helper ... if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup>... 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 ... <sup>11</sup>of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. (Jn. 16:6–11)*
- F. In Jn. 15:18-16:11, Jesus teaches about the condition of the world and our need for the engagement and activity of the Spirit to break through. The world is under the influence of a veil of darkness.

### III. THE CONVICTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

<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.” (Jn. 15:26)

- A. Paul makes it clear there is a demonic veil on the minds of humans to hinder their perception of the gospel. The influence of evil in the world is such that we are not merely broken but are slaves of evil. It required Jesus to come and give His life as a ransom, which is required to free captives. The Bible paints a dire present picture of the condition of the world. If it was not for the intervention of Jesus on the cross, His resurrection, and return, humans would utterly be destroyed.

<sup>22</sup>And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:22)

<sup>3</sup>But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup>whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe. (2 Cor. 4:3–4)

- B. There is a supernatural veil of darkness over the nations that no amount of human ingenuity can remove. The veil requires the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit to pierce it. In the days of Charles Finney, there was a realm of conviction that rested over a 100-mile radius in New York. At one point there were 500,000 converts over the course of eight weeks because of conviction.

- C. The Spirit testifies about Jesus to the world, confronting the veil of darkness by releasing the light of God in the heart and minds of the world, giving them opportunity to respond to the gospel.

<sup>8</sup>... 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 ... <sup>11</sup>of judgment ... (Jn. 16:8-11)

<sup>25</sup>Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid... (Acts 24:25)

<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. (Jn. 16:14–15)

- D. The Spirit’s primary interaction with the world is by conviction. He comes with correction.

1. **Sin:** The core issue in the human heart is the issue of faith. Unbelief is the root cause of sin in the human heart. The Spirit’s main agenda is to confront the world with Jesus’ glory.
2. **Righteousness:** When Jesus speaks of going to the Father, He is referring to the finished work of the cross which accomplished righteousness for those who believe in Christ.
3. **Judgment:** The enemy and this age have been defeated, and God will manifestly shake things until Rev. 11:15.

<sup>8</sup>For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. <sup>9</sup>But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. (Heb. 2:8–9)