

# Congregation Questions/Topics

## John 16:4-15

### Introduction

Turn in your copy of God's word to John 16 (page 848 in the Pew Bible).

Recently, we asked the church for questions and topics they would like to hear a sermon on, and from those we have chosen to do a sermon on the Holy Spirit.

- Please note:
  - This is in no way going to be an exhaustive teaching or understanding of the Holy Spirit.
    - One, that is not possible to do within one 30-minute sermon, based on all the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit.
    - Two, the Holy Spirit being the third person of the Triune God means that He is infinite, and therefore we as finite beings could never fully understand and grasp who He is.
- We have chosen to look at the Holy Spirit from what is revealed about Him from one passage.
  - This passage is John 16:4-15, where we will see a main idea that: The Holy Spirit works within the world and Christians.
  - This passage is found within a section known as the Farewell Discourse (John 13-17), properly named because it is Jesus' final teachings and farewell words to His core disciples before He is crucified.
  - The Farewell Discourse has the most extensive teaching on the Holy Spirit found within the Gospels, and we have chosen 16:4-15 as our main passage.

With this in mind, let's read our main passage.

Read John 16:4-15

### Foundation/Application

Outline:

- (1) John 16:4-6

- (2) John 16:7-15

### John 16:4-6

- Jesus' instruction to the Eleven (Judas has already left to betray Jesus) is to prepare them for what is to come after He is no longer with them, and what He knows they will experience.
  - Jesus provided His disciples with what they needed, and He still does this for us today.
  - Jesus doesn't sugarcoat or bait/switch, but provides clarity in what we as His disciples will experience and also provides clarity and help so that we can persevere and not "fall away."
  - Jesus' help comes through:
    - (1) Himself—life, death, and resurrection in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD.
    - (2) His Word—teachings, commandments, and revelations found within the Bible.
    - (3) His leaving—His ascension makes way for provision like never before.
      - Main focus of our time together this morning.
  - Jesus knows what is best, even and especially when we don't, so let's learn to trust Him fully and completely.
    - Jesus has proven Himself time and time again through His word, through the history of the church, and through our personal lives and experiences, so why would we not trust Him?
- Jesus reminds the Eleven He is about to leave, and the disciples are filled with "sorrow"/"lou-pa" (sorrow, grief, affliction), so much so they don't really know how to respond or the right questions to ask.
  - Sorrow and grief are real, especially when faced with a situation where someone you love and care for is going away (moving or death).
- It is within this context that Jesus then begins His instructions on the Holy Spirit within this passage.

## John 16:7-15

- Jesus seeks to comfort the disciples in the midst of their sorrow and grief by reminding them that He must leave so “the Helper” will come.
  - Jesus informs that this Helper is the Holy Spirit.
  - And, Jesus provides important truths about the Holy Spirit’s work in 16:7-5.
- Two important truths, which are two important takeaways for us this morning: (1) The Holy Spirit’s work within the world and (2) The Holy Spirit’s work within Christians.
- (1) The Holy Spirit’s work within the world—16:8-11.
  - Jesus reveals that a main purpose of the Holy Spirit within the world is “conviction”/”elegksei”.
    - This word in the original language comes with the understanding of convict/convince.
    - I appreciate and agree with what John MacArthur had to say—He argues the understanding of convince is best.<sup>1</sup>
    - John 5 reveals that God the Father has given Jesus, God the Son made flesh, the authority to judge, so ultimate conviction that leads to sentencing (think about conviction handed down in a court room) comes from Jesus and is the role of God the Son.
    - Therefore, this is not the role of God the Holy Spirit because His role is conviction that leads to convincing . . . convincing people of the truth, the real truth, the true truth, the biblical truth, AND convincing them of their need of Jesus Christ, the Savior.
  - I love the beauty found in the irony here:
    - In order for the world to avoid the sentencing conviction of Jesus as Judge, they must be convinced convictionally of Jesus as Savior.
    - See, Friends, Jesus will be our judge, but the question is, “Will Jesus also be our Savior?”

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, “The Gospel According to John,” in *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 1583.

- So, the Holy Spirit will come once Jesus has ascended, and when He comes, a main work within the world will be conviction that leads to convincing for three things: (1) sin, (2) righteousness, and (3) judgement.
- (1) Convincing of sin—16:9.
  - The Holy Spirit's conviction that leads to convincing is for sin.
  - Sin in this verse in the original language is used in the singular, and in this context refers to one sin particularly, as we see at the end of 16:9b, "unbelief in Jesus."
  - John 8:21-24—"21 So he said to them again, 'I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.' 22 So the Jews said, 'Will he kill himself, since he says, "Where I am going, you cannot come"?' 23 He said to them, 'You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.'"
    - All sin separates us from God, all sin condemns us and finds us guilty before God, and all sin Jesus came to forgive and redeem.
  - Alongside this, one main sin that keeps us from God and experiencing all God desires to do in and through Jesus for us is unbelief in Jesus.
    - NOT—not unbelief merely that Jesus was actually a real person, born from a lady named Mary, who lived around the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD in the Middle East, who was a Rabbi that taught some moral things and gathered some followers.
    - RATHER—rather unbelief that Jesus was who He and the Bible claim Him to be, both truly God and truly man, born

of Mary but not of Joseph, who lived around the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD in the Middle East, who was the Messiah and Savior who taught and showed God and didn't just gather followers but eternally transformed lives.

- The first people could come to on their own or through human help, but the second they cannot . . . the first can be easier to be convinced of, the second takes a miracle.
- The Holy Spirit is necessary because we cannot be convinced of true belief in Jesus as Messiah and Savior and overcome our sin of unbelief on our own or through the world or other people.
  - It takes conviction that leads to convincing that comes from the Holy Spirit and a miracle only He can do to move us from unbelief in Jesus to belief.
  - We cannot do this for ourselves and we cannot do this for other.
  - Yes, we have responsibility to repent and believe, and we have responsibility to evangelize and share the gospel, but the ultimate responsibility of convincing and leading people to a saving knowledge of Jesus is the Holy Spirit.
  - Question—Christian, how are you praying for the Holy Spirit's help, and how are you trusting in the Holy Spirit to provide?
    - Do your responsibility and trust the Holy Spirit to do His.

- A work of the Holy Spirit within the world is conviction that leads to convincing as it comes to sin.
- (2) Convincing of righteousness—16:10.
  - The Holy Spirit's conviction that leads to convincing is for righteousness.
  - God is righteousness, the final standard of righteousness, and we cannot know righteousness without Him.
    - Jesus came to testify to God the Father's righteousness, to make a way for people to experience this righteousness, and to live out/model this righteousness.
    - We can know righteousness when we know God, and we can know God by and through Jesus.
    - Left to ourselves and the world, we are stuck in our unrighteousness to either find hopelessness toward righteousness or find falsity in self-righteousness.
  - When Jesus ascends and returns to the Father, how will the world be convicted in such a way as to recognize their unrighteousness and be convinced that true righteousness is only found in God through Jesus?
    - Through the Holy Spirit, who will be sent by Jesus and will come.
  - Our unrighteousness leads to God's judgement, and our self-righteousness leads to God's judgement.
    - Only the true righteousness of God leads to God's absolution.
    - What Jesus did while on earth as it came to convincing people of their unrighteousness and need for God's

righteousness, this will continue through the Holy Spirit.

- Praise be to God for Jesus sending the Holy Spirit because without Him, what hope would we have of becoming righteous before God?
- A work of the Holy Spirit within the world is conviction that leads to convincing as it comes to righteousness.
- (3) Convincing of judgement—16:11.
  - The Holy Spirit's conviction that leads to convincing is for judgement.
  - The context Jesus uses speaks of the ruler of this world (Satan) and his judgement.
    - In the original language, “judged”/”\_\_\_\_\_” is written to mean an action already completed that also has ongoing, present results.
    - At the cross, Jesus proved to be the serpent crusher (Gen 3:15), claimed victory over Satan, and judged him and found him lacking.
      - As the ruler of this world, Satan is on borrowed time because upon Jesus' second coming, Satan will be finished once and for all.
      - John MacArthur—“While Christ's death looked like Satan's greatest victory, it actually was Satan's destruction.”
      - Friends, Jesus not only won the battle, He also wins the war.
    - The ruler of this world has been judged and found guilty, which means eventually those who follow Him will be judged and found guilty as well.
      - That judgement sentencing continues to today and will not change in the future.

- The Holy Spirit seeks to convict the world so as to convince it of the guilt and condemnation of its ruler and thus itself, and its need for Jesus as Savior to provide justification before God, to be declared right when guilty was the verdict.
  - Also, because the ruler of this world provides poor and ungodly judgements (concerning Jesus, life, eternity, etc.), those who follow and are led by him have poor and ungodly judgements as well.
    - This is especially true as it comes to their judgements about Jesus and who He is and what He does.
    - Therefore, through conviction that leads to convincing, the Holy Spirit seeks to help the world realize their poor and ungodly judgments, especially about Jesus, so they can experience Him as Lord and Savior AND not judge and executioner.
  - A work of the Holy Spirit within the world is conviction that leads to convincing as it comes to judgement.
- So, from 16:8-11 we see the Holy Spirit works to convict the world so as to convince it concerning sin, righteousness, and judgement.
- **(2) The Holy Spirit's work within Christians—16:7, 12-15**
  - Jesus reveals main works for the Holy Spirit within Christians is “Helper” and “truth.”
  - **(1) “Helper”—16:7.**
    - Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the “Helper”/“paraklatos” in 16:7.
      - In the original language, this word meant “helper, intercessor, comforter.”
      - Jesus knew that His disciples at that time, and every disciple since then until

His second coming, could not follow Jesus on their own.

- They needed someone to help them, to come alongside them, to intercede on their behalf because on their own they were not strong enough, smart enough, gifted enough, courageous enough.
- Jesus knew that His time on earth was quickly approaching, so this could not be Him.
- Also, Jesus as truly human, was confined to one place at one time.
  - He could not be everywhere at all times with all peoples.
- Therefore, it was for the disciple's advantage that Jesus should go, so that the Holy Spirit could come and continue the work and ministry of Jesus, and do so in a way Jesus could not while He was on earth.
  - Sidenote—I have always found 16:7 so fascinating and such an underemphasized verse.
    - Jesus was the promised and long-awaited Messiah, the one the prophets and people throughout the OT longed and desired to see.
    - His disciples during His earthly ministry gave up everything to follow Him, and would have done almost anything at that time to keep Him with them.

- We today would give almost anything to merely catch a glimpse of Jesus.
  - Yet, Jesus said it was to our advantage that He go away so that He could send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, and so the Holy Spirit could come.
  - Jesus, being who He is, what does that mean about the Holy Spirit and who He is?
  - The Holy Spirit is not some slouch, not JV, not second-rate, so let's not think of or treat Him as such.
- Mainnote—Jesus on earth was limited through His humanity, but the Holy Spirit being truly God without the humanity, is not confined by these same limitations.
  - Therefore, He can be and is omnipresent, meaning everywhere at all times.
  - He is not limited by space, but can be fully, in all His parts, in multiple places at the same time.
  - Therefore, Jesus may have only been able to help, intercede, and comfort this group at this time because He was in that area, but the Holy Spirit can help, intercede, and comfort all peoples



- God is truth, the final standard of truth, we know what truth is because of God, and that which is in line with God is truth and that which is not is false.
- You can deny that all you want, you can debate that all you want, but it doesn't make it any less reality.
- If you want to know truth, you must know God and what He has revealed through His Word, both the Word made Flesh as Jesus and the Word written down as the Bible.
- Therefore, the truth the Holy Spirit will guide us to is not our own truth or a truth of the world, but He will guide us to the one and only truth, and that is God and God's Word (both made flesh and written down).
- Lies and falsities keep us hopeless, keep us desperate, keep us enslaved, but the truth, oh Friends, the truth provides us hope, satisfaction, and freedom.
- Jesus reveals in John 8:31b-32, 36—"31b If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free . . . So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."
- The Holy Spirit not only leads us to the truth so we can experience freedom that comes through salvation in Jesus, but so we can experience transformation that comes through sanctification in Jesus.

- Church Family, we don't just need the truth one time, we need the truth all the time.
- And we need the truth for our personal relationship with God, we need the truth for our evangelizing the lost, we need the truth for our discipling the saved, we need the truth for our covenanting and ministry within the local church, and we need the truth for so much more.
- III—Oprah.
  - It is like gifts Oprah used to give out on her talk show.
  - “You get a car, you get a car, everybody gets a car . . . You need the truth, you need the truth, everybody needs the truth.”
- Also, as the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit guides Christians “into all the truth.”
  - Important to note—the Bible records not only the definite article “the” but also the word “all.”
  - “All”/“pasan” (each, every, all, whole) is important because it reveals to us that the Holy Spirit is not limited as it comes the truth or His guidance into it, but is exhaustive.
  - Being God, the Holy Spirit has the attribute of omniscience, meaning “all-knowing.”
    - He won't guide us to the truth and then be lacking as it comes to it.

- We need to realize that we cannot find the truth and we cannot understand the truth without the Holy Spirit.
  - Why?
  - A connection to 16:11 where the current ruler of this world (Satan) has been judged and is leading other toward judgement as well.
  - We live in a world where the current ruler (Satan) is known as “the father of lies” (John 8:44)
  - Under Satan’s leadership, we cannot be led to the truth because he is not the truth and does not know the truth.
  - III—Showing around Fort Knox.
    - I can’t take you to Fort Knox and show you around because I don’t know that place, but Dennis Dumont can because he was stationed there and currently works there.
  - Jesus came as the way, the truth, and the life, and when He ascended, it is now the responsibility of the Holy Spirit to guide people to the truth, and He both can and is able to do so.
- “Ignorance is not bliss,” especially as it comes to the truth about your life and eternity.
  - Ignorance will not be an acceptable excuse before Jesus on judgement day
  - III—A Few Good Men.

- Jack Nicholson’s character in the movie “A Few Good Men” is famous for the line, “You want the truth . . . You can’t handle the truth.”
    - Here is the reality—we can’t handle the truth either, but the Holy Spirit can, and He knows exactly how to guide us to it and what to do for us with it.
  - A work of the Holy Spirit within Christians is the Spirit of truth that guides them into the truth, and all of the truth.

### Challenge/Conclusion

Friends, the Holy Spirit works within the world through conviction that leads to convincing as it comes to sin, righteousness, and judgement, AND He works within Christians as their Helper and as the Spirit of truth that guides them to all truth.

During our time of invitation/response, and as you go out and spend time with God this week, I want us to reflect on the following questions:

- Main Reflection—Non-Christian, is the Holy Spirit convicting you, and if so, what are you going to do about it? . . . Christian, are you trusting and relying upon the Holy Spirit, or are you ignoring and forgetting about Him?
- It was better for us that Jesus leaves so that the Holy Spirit could come.
  - Let us start treating Him and trusting in Him appropriately.