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The Holy Spirit's Work

JOHN 16:5-15

Introduction

1. In chapters 14-16 of John's gospel Jesus reveals more to us about the Holy Spirit than anywhere else in the gospels.
2. Because Jesus knew the disciples mindset and what lay ahead for them, He sought to reassure them that He would not leave them alone.
3. He knew that following His resurrection He would have a little over a month with them before ascending back to His Father.
4. He also knew that He was going to give them the responsibility of taking the good news of salvation to the entire world.
5. And He knew the hardships and persecution they would face, not to mention the struggle to understand everything which He had taught them during the previous three years.
6. For this reason, He promised them a Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom He also called the Spirit of truth.
7. Tonight, as we look at Jesus' description of the Holy Spirit's work, I hope you will stop to consider all that our Lord set in place so that you and I might be here together as Christians, studying the very word inspired by that same Spirit.

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I. Jesus' Impending Departure

A. THE DISCIPLES REACTION

"But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where

are You going?" "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart." (John 16:5–6, NASB95)

1. Earlier, after Jesus had told the disciples that He was with them "a little while longer" and that where He was going, they could not come, Peter had asked "Lord, where are You going?" (John 13:36).
2. Then, in chapter 14:3-4, we find Jesus telling them "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. And you know where I am going."
3. It was then that Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" (John 14:5).
4. When Jesus said, "none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?', He seems to be indicating that none of them *really* asked thoughtful questions about where Jesus was going and what it meant for them.
5. However, one thing was certain, the disciples were filled with sorrow because of the things which He had said.
6. It is because of the disciples deep grief over their impending loss that He speaks the following words of comfort.

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B. THE NECESSITY OF JESUS' DEPARTURE

"But 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 go, I will send Him to you." (John 16:7, NASB95)

1. Through His O.T. prophets, God had promised that the sending of His Spirit would characterize the age of the kingdom of God.
2. In Isaiah 32:15-18, God spoke of a time when "the Spirit would be poured out upon His people from on high . . .

"Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high,
And the wilderness becomes a fertile field,
And the fertile field is considered as a forest.

Then justice will dwell in the wilderness
And righteousness will abide in the fertile field.
And the work of righteousness will be peace,
And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.
Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation,
And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;"

(Isaiah 32:15–18, NASB95)

3. On the day of Pentecost, after the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, Peter would tell the people that what they were seeing and hearing was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy:

"'And it shall be in the last days,' God says, '
That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind;
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
And your young men shall see visions,
And your old men shall dream dreams;
Even on My bondslaves, both men and women,
I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit
And they shall prophesy."

(Acts 2:17–18, NASB95)

4. Before the Holy Spirit could come, Jesus had to complete His work — His death, burial, resurrection and exaltation.

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II. The Holy Spirit's Continuing Work In The World

"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;" (John 16:8, NASB95)

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A. HE WILL CONVICT THE WORLD CONCERNING SIN

“concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;” (*John 16:9, NASB95*)

1. The Holy Spirit's coming would result in the world being convicted of three things: sin, righteousness and judgment.
2. Remember, when Jesus speaks of the world, When Jesus speaks of the “world,” He is speaking about “a system of values and goals from which God is excluded.”¹
3. The first thing which the Holy Spirit would expose would be the world's sin.
4. Jesus said the reason the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin was because those who cling to it's values and goals do not believe in Jesus.
5. If they believe in Jesus, they would believe what He said about their sin and guilt and turn to Him.
6. Their unbelief brings two things:

- a. Condemnation

“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (**John 3:18, NASB95**)

- b. Willful ignorance of their need.

7. Because of its unbelief, not only will the world not receive life, but it cannot realize that it walks in death and *needs* life.
8. In this convicting work of the Holy Spirit we see God's grace because it is designed to bring men and women of the world to the realization of their need, causing them to turn to Jesus, and stop being the world.

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B. HE WILL CONVICT THE WORLD CONCERNING RIGHTEOUSNESS

“and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me;” (*John 16:10, NASB95*)

¹ Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985.

1. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of its righteousness.
2. The problem with the world's righteousness is that it is totally inadequate when compared to the righteousness of God.
3. In a prayer which the prophet Isaiah prayed over 700 years earlier, he said, "all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment" (Isaiah 64:6).
4. Throughout his gospel, John reveals the righteousness of God in the person of Jesus Christ.
5. Through His light, He exposed the darkness of the world for what it was.
6. In his nighttime meeting with Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, Jesus said, "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." (John 3:19–21, NASB95)
7. In Matthew 5:20, Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, had said to the crowd, "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."
8. Now, however, Jesus is going back to His Father. Who will continue to convict the world of its false righteousness?
9. The Holy Spirit would work through Jesus' followers, empowering them to live lives in such conformity to Christ that they have the same impact on the world as He had when here.

Slide 7**C. HE WILL CONVICT THE WORLD CONCERNING JUDGMENT**

"and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."
(John 16:11, NASB95)

1. The judgment of which the Spirit convicts the world is its spiritual blindness which it displayed in its judgment or treatment of Jesus.
2. Earlier, Jesus had told a crowd in Jerusalem, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24).
3. Jesus' judgment is "just" or "right" (John 5:30) and "true" (John 8:16).

"... My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 5:30).

"... My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me" (John 8:16).

4. The world's judgment has its origin in the one who was a liar from the beginning, whose children uphold his values (John 8:42-47).

"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

5. Through the cross, Jesus triumphed over Satan and through the continual proclamation of His salvation, the Holy Spirit exposes the world's false judgment.

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III. The Spirit's Work In The Apostles

"I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."
(John 16:12, NASB95)

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A. HE WOULD GUIDE THEM INTO ALL THE TRUTH

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak"

(John 16:13a-b, NASB95)

1. There is so much that Jesus wants to say to His disciples, but it is more than they will be able to retain.
2. So it is that the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus calls “the Spirit of truth” will “guide [them] into all the truth.”
3. Earlier in John 14:26, Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit “will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”
4. In the prologue to this gospel, John had said of Jesus that He was “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).
5. In John 14:6, Jesus had referred to Himself as “. . . the truth.”
6. Jesus is the full expression of God’s truth, the Word which became flesh and dwelt among us.
7. Just as Jesus spoke the things of His Father (John 8:38), so the Holy Spirit spoke to the disciples the things which the Son gave Him to speak.

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B. HE WOULD DISCLOSE TO THEM WHAT WAS TO COME

“. . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.” (John 16:13c, NASB95)

1. In Acts 20:22-23, the apostle Paul told the elders from Ephesus, “And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.”
2. In 1 Timothy 4:1-3, Paul shared with Timothy something which the Holy Spirit had explicitly told him about “the later times” when “some [would] fall away from the faith.”

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C. HE WOULD GLORIFY THE SON

“He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. “All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.” (John 16:14–15, NASB95)

1. Ultimately, the Holy Spirit would glorify Christ by disclosing to the apostles that which He had received from Christ.
2. That which the Father gave to Christ, was given to the Holy Spirit who disclosed it to the apostles.
3. Thus, the Holy Spirit glorified the Son who in turn glorified the Father.

Conclusion

1. Tonight, those of us who are Christians are the recipients of this work which the Holy Spirit began in the apostles and continues through us.
2. The Scriptures which we have in our possession were “given by inspiration of God” through the Holy Spirit.
3. As the apostle Paul told Timothy, they are “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,” so that you and I, as men and women of God “may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
4. Tonight, is the Spirit of truth, through this word convicting you of . . .
 - a. Sin in your life which keeps you apart from God.
 - b. An inadequate righteousness which makes you think you are good enough to get into heaven when, in reality, you need the righteousness of God.
 - c. False judgment through which you reject the things of God.
5. If so, let me encourage you to respond to that conviction by turning away from the sin in your life, confessing Jesus Christ as God’s Son and letting Him wash away your sins through baptism.