

Final Words Part 4 - The Holy Spirit Will Come 04.10.11

John 16:7-15 ESV

Video: "John 16" by Radiant First Productions [1:24]

Introduction: We're examining the final words of Jesus to his disciples (and to us) in these last weeks leading to Easter. "Many Rooms." "Abide in Me." "Love one another." And today: "The Holy Spirit is Coming!" It's important that we recognize the crisis that is upon Jesus. He knows his final hours are upon him. He has dismissed the betrayer. In a few moments he will pray in the garden with such intensity that he sweats drops of blood. He agonizes over his own sacrifice, but also over the separation he and his friends, his disciples will soon experience.

In the midst of this crisis he makes time for a teaching moment. He tells them that the Holy Spirit - the Helper, the Counselor, the Advocate - the Paraclete, the ONE who is called alongside will come. **In fact he says...**

A Sense of Perspective:

The Holy Spirit - **TO OUR ADVANTAGE** that Jesus went away!
"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 go, I will send him to you." John 16:7 ESV

It is very difficult for us to read this with a proper sense of perspective. We have become accustomed to the concept of the Trinity. We find the idea of a third person of the Godhead no more or less surprising than Jesus' miraculous birth or God's speaking to Moses from the bush. It's our expectation of Christianity. It's what we've known for 2,000 years.

Today, though, let's try to put ourselves into the sandals of the disciples. They've just grown accustomed to the idea of Messiah, of Christ... of this great teacher being more than a prophet, in fact more than a man. He is in his very nature God! Peter professed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16, Mark 8:29). Martha just a few days earlier said, "Yes Lord. I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world" (John 11:27).

Yet now this Jesus, this Messiah, this Son of God, this second person of the God who earlier had proclaimed, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:7) is also saying "But now I am going" (John 16:5). There is great angst, great pathos, great sadness in this moment. It almost seems as if Evil has won and everything that is good and godly and right in this world - Jesus - is leaving.

Into this moment Jesus says, "It is to your advantage that I go away." Why? "Because the Helper will come." Jesus doesn't stop with this revelation, but rolls on as if time is short. His moment has arrived. There's no time to waste. He has to get this out now... and quickly. Sense the urgency... and the confusion... the intensity of this moment. **Jesus tells them that this Holy Spirit will have two primary works - His work in the World and His Work with Christ-followers.**

The Holy Spirit's Work in the World: TO PROVE BEYOND DOUBT

"And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment." John 16:8 ESV

ἐλέγχω - convict, bring to light, expose, convince - sense of setting right.

Consider the orderly way in which this is laid out. There are three convictions - sin, righteousness and judgment, followed by three descriptions so there could be no doubt about what Jesus had in mind. The perfect 3-point sermon!

In these three ways:

1. Sin: **NOT BELIEVING IN JESUS** .

“Concerning sin, because they do not believe in me.” John 16:9 ESV

Ultimately sin means to miss - and the biggest “miss” of all is to miss Jesus, to miss-understand Who He is and what He came to do... and ultimately to miss out on the greatest relationship made possible by His coming - the relationship between God and man.

2. Righteousness: **JESUS NOW WITH GOD** .

“Concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;” John 16:10 ESV

Righteousness means “right living.” Many had accused Jesus of not being righteous. Some religious leaders had even accused Jesus of being in league with demons (Mark 3:22). But now - soon - the ultimate stamp of righteousness will be that Jesus will be with the Father. Peter later preaches: “Jesus is exalted at the right hand of the Father” (Acts 2:33).

3. Judgment: **SATAN IS JUDGED** .

“Concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” John 16:11 ESV

Not will be someday but is now already judged. And so all that have revolted, all who rebel against God and his Son are judged.

Two Questions to contemplate:

- *What does this say to me when I want to “convict” someone?* We all have occasion to be offended, to be angry, to want to take out our righteous indignation against someone. But whose job is it to point out - to prove - to convict? We may know someone in our lives whom we wish would confess Christ and believe. We can share our witness, but whose job is it to “prove beyond a shadow of doubt?”
- *Does the Holy Spirit sometimes use me?* Balanced with this is the fact that the Holy Spirit is not just floating out there somewhere doing spiritual things. He inhabits the lives of Christ followers - you and me. He uses us - with our willing cooperation - to bring God’s kingdom to earth. And so, there are times, when he will use us to “convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment.”

The key is this: who is using who? Am I a willing vessel to be used by Christ and His Spirit? Or do I use Christ to do what I think needs to be done. Not an easy question.

Five Ways The Holy Spirit Helps the Christ Follower

1. He helps us **BEAR THE UNBEARABLE** .

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” John 16:12 ESV

Jesus is aware that there are just some pains and griefs that are unbearable. And that as much as humans would like to help other humans - there’s not much that we, in our humanness, can do to help. But The Helper can help us bear the unbearable. The Spirit of Christ could do what the human Son could not in that moment do!!!

The Apostle Paul would later write:

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.” Romans 8:26 NIV

There is a communication line with God that goes beyond words. It includes emotions and understanding that goes to the core of who we are and who we are becoming. There were great difficulties in store for Jesus’ disciples - a grief that both he and his followers would share, but a grief TOO GREAT to bear at that moment.

Have you been there? Are you possibly there now? Is there something going on in your life that try as you might you just can’t really adequately explain - even to those closest to you? Know that Christ’s Spirit hears your cry - even when words cannot express!

2. He guides us **INTO ALL TRUTH** .

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.”

John 16:13a ESV

Anyone ever get confused by the Bible, or by preachers/teachers trying to explain the Bible... or by individuals who believe one thing or another. Every hear something that just doesn’t add up in your mind? Wouldn’t it be great if you had an app on your phone that would be a truth detector? Just feed the words into the phone and out would pop “Truth” or “Not”! Jesus tells us that we do have something like that, but it’s not limited to a phone. In fact “It’s” not an “It” at all. It’s a “He.” The Holy Spirit. He will guide you - direct you - into all truth.

In fact The Holy Spirit is even better. Not only is He a truth detector, but He will teach you how you can be one too... how you can remember all the things that Jesus taught and have them at the tip of your mind just when you need them most:

The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you.”

John 14:26 GNT

This isn’t some mystical, magical power we’re given. We must cooperate with God’s Spirit. We must read God’s Word and work to remember. Here’s the great thing though: God’s Spirit give us the desire to know and to remember Jesus’ truths, which we might not have had the internal ability or desire to know before.

3. He translates from **DIVINE** to **HUMAN** .

“...for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak.” John 16:13b ESV

It’s easy for us to get tripped up with the Trinity. How could there be 3 persons, yet one godhead? Surely we will never know all the details, but Jesus does give us one thing. This Holy Spirit doesn’t just saying anything that’s on His mind. He doesn’t just speak on His own authority. Rather what He hears from God the Father and Son, He speaks to you - so that you might understand it. This is not just a one-way conversation. He also translates from Human to Divine. Even when you don’t have words (v.26) and when we need someone to plead for us:

“And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God’s own will.”

Romans 8:27 NLT

Illustration: SciFi Universal Translator. We really have one. A Translator Who speaks Divine and Human: The Holy Spirit.

4. He applies God's truth to **OUR DAILY LIVES**.
"... he will declare to you the things that are to come." John 16:13c ESV

Our first reading of this sounds like predicting the future, prophesying what God is about to do. And it may be that. But it could also be something simpler and more helpful on daily basis. The Holy Spirit NOT ONLY teaches us / reminds us of all truth (#2), but also applies God's truth to our daily situation. I have this particular problem, opportunity, challenge - how do I respond? How do I honor Christ? What would be in the will of the Father? The Helper helps us w/ this.

The Apostle Paul later writes that this is one of the distinguishing marks / differences between the Christ-follower and everyone else:
"Those who live as their human nature tells them to, have their minds controlled by what human nature wants. Those who live as the Spirit tells them to, have their minds controlled by what the Spirit wants."
Romans 8:5 GNT

When we think of "mind control" we think of losing our freedom, losing ourselves. The truth is just the opposite. We want to be the person who God has created us to become. We cannot find ourselves by ourselves. And we cannot live out the Christian life alone. We must be connected to other Christ-followers and connected to the Spirit.

5. He brings **GLORY TO CHRIST**.
"He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me."
John 16:14 NLT

Whenever you wonder whether or not the little voice in your head is your own mind or the mind of God's Spirit, ask yourself this question: "Will this bring glory to Christ?" God's Spirit will never tell you to do something that doesn't bring glory to Christ. Everything He is about, every word He ever speaks is always in accordance with the Father's will and bring glory to the Son.

Conclusion: Six times we are told in the Bible that God will NEVER leave us or forsake us. Yet here - on this terrible Thursday evening, Jesus was saying the very opposite: I must leave you. This, he says, is really good news, not bad. The disciples would all receive the Holy Spirit in a powerful, upper room experience after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension. All of the really powerful stories of the first church, the Requel Church, in the book of Acts comes about because of the power of the Spirit of Christ living through them. Peter preaches his greatest sermon and thousands initiate their faith in Christ. Peter and John heal a beggar, stand up to the Council of Jewish leaders. We're told that "many signs and wonders" were done. Paul comes to faith because of the Spirit of Christ - he never met the physical Jesus. He writes 1/2 of NT!

Here's my concluding question for you: What is the Spirit of Christ accomplishing within you? Is your Christian life characterized by the ongoing comfort and confirmation of the Holy Spirit? Do you welcome his Presence into your life?

Congregation Sings: "Welcome In This Place" by Hillsong

Communion and Prayer