

Empowered by the Spirit

John 16:1-15

July 2, 2023

This paragraph continues the transition from the disciples loving relationship to Jesus (13:31-15:17) to the world's hateful relationship to the disciples (15:18-16:33). In this section, Jesus instructs the disciples concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the world and the empowerment and guidance He will provide for believers.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of sin and self-righteousness and to guide the church in life and ministry. The Spirit is also an agent of the love of God for the world and a source of security and empowerment for the church.

1. The Coming Hour (1-4a)

- a. Jesus instructed His disciples concerning the world's hatred and persecution so that we don't stumble (1).
 - i. "These things" refers to the hatred of the world that the disciples would soon face.
 - ii. "Offended" (Skandalis hate) can be translated "stumble" or "go astray"
 - iii. The purpose of this section is to prepare His disciples to stand strong in the face of the world's hatred.
 - iv. These words are intended to strengthen and encourage us in the midst of the world's persecution.
- b. Jesus reveals the motive of the world's hatred (2).
 - i. The world will excommunicate the disciples of Christ from their religious institutions.
 - ii. The world will even try to kill the disciples of Christ as an act of service to God.
- c. Jesus reveals the core reason for the world's persecution (3).
 - i. These religious zealots will persecute the followers of Christ because they don't have a personal relationship with God through Christ.
 - ii. Since these religious zealots have rejected the Son of God, they have also rejected God the Father (cf. 15:21).
- d. Jesus concludes this section by restating that the reason He has spoken these things is to remind them so that they aren't turned away from the faith by the world's persecution (4a).
 - i. Tragically, the hour that Jesus is redeeming the world, is the same hour that the world is persecuting Jesus and those who follow Him.
 1. Jesus' crucifixion was the beginning of the world's persecution of Jesus and His followers.
 2. Now that Jesus has ascended into heaven, the world attacks Christ by attacking His followers.
 - ii. Remembering Jesus' teaching about the world's persecution and Jesus' provision to prevail in the midst of it is the key to staying true to the faith during those trying times.

2. The True Object of Faith (4b-6)

- a. Jesus refrained from teaching His disciples about this persecution to this point, because He was with them (4b).
 - i. The disciples are now on the cusp of a dramatic transition and expansion of the ministry of Christ.
 - ii. Since Jesus is about to be crucified, He is preparing His disciples for ministry *in* Christ, which is much different than ministry *with* Christ.
- b. Jesus' departure is imminent, and yet His disciples are not curious as to where He's going (5).
 - i. "But now" suggests that a change is imminent (cf. 13:33)
 - ii. Jesus is returning to the One Who sent Him, which is His Father (1:33; 4:34; 5:24, 30; 6:38, 39; 7:16, 18, 28, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29; 9:4; 12:44, 45, 49; 13:16, 20; 14:24; 15:21; 20:21).
 - iii. Yet, the disciples have not inquired about the meaning of this One Who sent Him, and Jesus rebukes His disciples for this negligence.
 1. The disciples are only concerned about themselves.
 2. They aren't really interested in where Jesus going or to Whom.
 3. In the transition that is about to take place, the disciples of Christ must be preoccupied with God and His will rather than being preoccupied with themselves.
- c. Jesus rebukes His disciples for experiencing grief rather than joy (6).
 - i. Since the disciples have been self-absorbed, they are filled with unbelief, grief and fear (cf. 14:27).
 - ii. When we love God as we ought, we discover that love for God produces faith, peace and joy (14:28-29).
 - iii. The disciples could not understand how Jesus' departure could be a good thing, so they acted in unbelief and were filled with grief.

3. The Ministry of the Spirit (7-15)

a. The Spirit's Conviction of the World (7-11)

- i. Jesus emphatically shifts from the persecution the disciples will face to the Spirit Who will empower them (7a).
 1. "I tell you the truth" is very similar to Jesus' emphatic statement, "Verily, verily, I say unto you" which highlights the transition to His teaching on the Holy Spirit, the Comforter/Advocate.
 2. This is the fullest depiction of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in this Gospel.
- ii. It is to our advantage that Jesus should go away, so that the Comforter can be sent to us (7b).
 1. The transition from Jesus to the Comforter is advantageous for us as disciples.
 2. The departure of Jesus actually magnifies His presence and ministry!
- iii. The Paraclete will convict the world (8).
 1. He will convict/reprove the world of their sin.
 2. He will confront the world with its sin and prove its guilt.
 3. The mission of the Paraclete is to convict the world of its guilt before God.
- iv. The Paraclete will convict the world of its sin of unbelief (9).
 1. God is good to reveal our sin to us so we see our need of a Savior.
 2. Without the conviction of the Holy Spirit, sinners do not recognize lack of faith in Jesus as sin.
- v. The Paraclete will convict the world of its self-righteousness (10).
 1. The world's righteousness is insufficient as Isaiah makes clear, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).
 2. Romans 10:3 "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 3. The world refuses to believe in Jesus because they refuse to admit that their righteousness is insufficient.
 4. The world proved that it chose its own righteousness over Christ by crucifying Him.
 5. Christ won the victory over sin, but he departed; His disciples will no longer see Him, but His presence will still be with them continuing His ministry of convincing the world of their need for Christ's righteousness.
- vi. The Paraclete will convict the world of its faulty judgment (11).
 1. The Paraclete will convict the world of judging by outward appearances (cf. 7:24).
 2. The Paraclete will convict the world of its faulty judgment, because the ruler of this world has already been judged.
 - a. If the ruler of this world has already been judged, how much more the world he rules?
 - b. The ruler of this world has already been defeated and judged by God by means of the cross (cf. 12:31-33).

b. The Spirit's Guidance of the Church (12-15)

- i. Jesus transitions from the Paraclete's ministry to the world to His ministry to believers (12).
 1. This concludes all the disciples needed to know about the Paraclete's ministry to the world.
 2. What follows is what we need to know about the Paraclete's ministry to us.
- ii. The Spirit of Truth will guide believers in all truth (13).
 1. Just as Jesus is the Truth (cf. 14:6), the Spirit of Truth will guide believers in all truth concerning this world and God Himself.
 2. This guidance is not new truth, but into the truth already expressed through the Son of God.
 3. This guidance is not merely intellectual, but actual as the Psalmist writes, "Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day" (Psalm 25:5).
 4. The teachings the Spirit are the teachings of Christ; to distinguish them is to divide God against Himself.
- iii. The Spirit of Truth will bring glory to Jesus (14).
 1. Just as the Father is made known by the Son, the Son is made known by the Spirit.
 2. Disciples of Jesus bring glory to Jesus by seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and bringing forth fruit (cf. 15:8).
- iv. The Spirit of Truth receives all that He has from the Son, Who received it from the Father (15).
 1. The Spirit guides us into the truth, a life-giving endowment from our Father.
 2. The Paraclete then is the ministerial office of our Trinitarian God in the world around us both to convict the world and guide the church.

Conclusion:

1. Have you allowed persecution to turn you away from following Jesus?
2. Are you allowing the Comforter to comfort and encourage you in your ministry in this hostile world?

3. Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to use your witness to convict the world of their sin, righteousness and judgment?
4. Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you in the understanding and application of truth in your day to day life?