

John 16:1 **“All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. ²They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. ³They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. ⁴I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you. NIV¹**

Chapter 15 and these verses are actually inserted in the overall passage about the Holy Spirit covering chapters 14 through 16. The reason for this teaching was that the disciples were reeling from the news that their Master was going suffer and die from the sins of the world ([Matt 16:21 - 27](#)). He also told them that He was going away and that they could not follow Him (ch [13:33](#); [14:3](#)). Compound this news with His announcement that one the 12 was going to betray Him ([John 13:18 - 30](#)) and that Peter was going to disown his Master ([John 13:31 - 38](#)), it is no surprise that they were greatly troubled. So in the midst of His discourse on His death, resurrection and ascension, He encourages them that they will have a Comforter - the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of His parenthesis about their relationship with Him was that they might not go astray - (*gk = aor, subj, pass, skandolisthete*) or become scandalized² by their breaking off from their calling and relationship with Him.

It is also in this passage that we see the power that the Holy Spirit will give the disciples to live above their sinful natures

They were to face very difficult times but Jesus was not going to leave them as orphans ([see ch 14:16 - 18](#)) but would come back to them in the Person of the Holy Spirit. This close relationship between Jesus and His disciples in the Person of the Holy Spirit was referred to by Paul in [Romans 8:9 - 11](#) where the Holy Spirit and the presence of Christ are used interchangeably. It is also in this passage that we see the power that the Holy Spirit will give the disciples to live above their sinful natures, which was at the time not evident.

¹ Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

² Historical aorist, passive meaning that they would receive this scandal from the world for “wimping out.” The subjunctive goes along with the tone of the 3rd class conditional clauses in previous verses.

The Work of the Holy Spirit.³

John 16:5 **“Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’⁶ Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief.** NIV.

If we carefully read how the dialogue was going on we see there was a bit of back-chatter going on between the disciples. They were in shock! They were not keeping up with what Jesus was teaching as evidenced in chapter 14's comment “show us the Father..” etc.. The whole purpose of these following verses along with the teaching in chapter 14 was to reassure them (mostly afterwards) that they would know Jesus and His teachings in a more personal and clear way. So why weren't they asking for more clarification? They were in emotional meltdown, and Jesus knew that. Grief here (*gk = lupe*) is emotional pain - “...are filled...” is in the perfect tense - a completed action - they were completely overcome with this emotional pain. *Lupe* was used in the Classical Greek to depict deep sorrow that permeates the mind to the point that the body is affected. Proverbs 31:6 was translated by the LXX using this word to for those who had “bitter distress of heart” ([Amplified](#)), “heavy hearts” ([KJV](#)). In our section it is used to depict the pain of childbirth ([vs 21, Amplified](#)).

I'd like to make some application to our present day. We may behave in a similar way when we are in emotional meltdown. It could be that we have lost a loved one, or that we have learned that we have a serious medical condition. It is during this time of shock that we are sometimes a bit “thick-headed” when it comes to God's comfort and His word.

The reassurance we receive here is that Jesus is patient, loving and very caring with us. He can wait patiently while we sort through our grief or loss.

The reassurance we receive here is that Jesus is patient, loving and very caring with us. He can wait patiently while we sort through our grief or loss. We may not acknowledge it but He does care for us always.

Later on Peter, having suffered great emotional distress for having denied Christ and having gone through the loss of His Hero - Messiah tells all believers down through the ages that we will go through great sufferings and trials and that our hearts will be overwhelmed with heaviness of heart and sorrow (1 Pet 1:6 [Amp](#), [KJV](#), [NIV](#), [NASB](#)). But he encourages us to cast our anxieties on Him for He cares for us (1 Pet 5:7 [Amp](#), [KJV](#), [NIV](#), [NASB](#)). But let's not forget Peter's word of encouragement in 1:6 - that we will have comfort in our emotional distress. That's the power available to the believer in Christ.

Finally the question begs, why do we not go to the Lord with our questions? It seems to me here that the Lord expected questions from His friends and perhaps not too “spiritual” questions - maybe the WHY questions. Do we forget prayer in our difficulties? When we are in our darkest moments do we forget the most effective

³ I'm using the outline as given in the New International Version.

resource we have to deal with our fears and heartbreaks? Prayer? **Jesus encourages intimacy with Him. First in the form of asking - “ask what you will and it will be done unto you.” Second, in the form of knowledge. Jesus is teaching in this section that we will share in intimacy by knowing what He knows** - in fact this is to be the basis for our friendship with Him - to know His thoughts and to obey them.

16:7 **But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.** NIV.

We’ve had much teaching on this passage. The Counselor⁴, the Holy Spirit is depicted as someone who is called to be alongside the disciples. The Classical Greek used this word to depict those who would defend someone in court. In the LXX this word is used in the well known

passage in Isaiah 40, “[Comfort ye, comfort ye...](#)” Job’s friends were “miserable comforters” - *parakletes* according to some LXX versions commentaries. In John’s passages - his gospel and his first epistle the thought is someone who is in a

The point is that as long as Jesus is physically with them, it is the plan of God that the Holy Spirit will not assume this role (of Counselor, Comforter).

spokesperson or a helper role. There is more to the use of this word - but it is not in the scope of this lesson. The point is that as long as Jesus is physically with them, it is the plan of God that the Holy Spirit will not assume this role. After Jesus’ ascension the Holy Spirit will, indeed be the Comforter for all believers.

⁸When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; ¹⁰in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. NIV.

This passage can be a bit difficult. Let’s have a go at it. It divides naturally into three parts. The Holy Spirit will convict the world:

- In regard to sin
- In regard to righteousness
- In regard to judgement.

We really need to keep in mind to whom Jesus is speaking, namely, the disciples. With that in mind, this is further encouragement for their benefit - not some all inclusive doctrinal thesis.

In regard to sin: the disciples will be given the Great Commission after His resurrection. They will have a tremendous responsibility to make disciples all over the

⁴ Parakletos - Para = alongside kletos = one called or invited = to be invited to be alongside. Lit. Jesus has invited the Holy Spirit to be alongside every believer.

world - a daunting if not impossible task. But not without the power of the Holy Spirit. Just before Jesus ascension He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they would be endued with power to preach the gospel (read [Acts 1:8](#)). The fact is that men are actively refusing the call of the gospel (present, active, linear, men keep on NOT believing in Christ). **So it is not the responsibility of the disciples to somehow argue or convince sinners to receive Christ as Savior. No. That is the task of the Holy Spirit!** They are to make the commitment to preach the Gospel. Paul says this preaching is the wielding of the very omnipotence of God, Himself (read Romans 1:18, [Amp](#), [NIV](#), [NASB](#), [KJV](#)).

In regard to righteousness: this is really an important element in the Christian experience - the righteousness of the believer. Note that this ministry begins *after* the ascension of Christ. Jesus notes that this ministry of the Holy Spirit is directly related to Jesus position in heaven; "...**because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;**.." Peter make comment on this in 1 Peter 1:8, 9 **"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: ⁹Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."** All this wonderful relationship with the Father would not be possible except for our position in Christ, having received His righteousness ([Rom 3:24 - 26](#), [1 Cor 1:30](#)) and beneficiaries of His High Priestly ministry at the right hand of God ([Heb 4:14- 16](#); [5:1 - 10](#); [Rev 8:3](#)). This is all thrilling to me for I know all too well my frame and am comforted to know that He is there at the right hand of the Father interceding for me.

In regard to judgement: oh! This is so wonderful. Satan has lost the battle for our souls! There is nothing he can do to pluck us out of Christ's hands ([John 10:27 - 29](#)). There is nothing Satan can do to separate us from His love ([Rom 8:35 - 39](#)). In the final battle, Satan and his evil cohorts will be cast into the lake of fire, forever ([Rev 20:10 - 14](#))! Satan was judged and defeated at the cross!

So where does the ministry of the Holy Spirit enter into the picture? Satan is judged - he no longer has power over the sinner, if the sinner will heed the call of the gospel. Paul said of the sinner (including himself, the chief of sinners - [Eph 2:1 - 3](#)) that the Satan is working in the hearts of the sinners, but that doesn't have to be the case any longer. When Jesus said that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, would take up residence in the heart of the believer (read [Rom 8:1 - 10](#)) - that introduces a revolutionary change in the heart of the believing sinner. Now, because Satan has been judged we no longer have to be slaves of the sin nature (read [Rom 6:9 - 14](#)). Now, because Satan has been judged, we no longer have to fear death (read [Heb 2:14 - 15](#), also [1 Cor 15:54 - 57](#)).

When Jesus said that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, would take up residence in the heart of the believer ... that introduces a revolutionary change in the heart of the believing sinner.

John 16:12 “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.
¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. ¹⁵All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. ¹⁶“In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.” NIV.

This is the processive work of the Holy Spirit. That is, He proceeds from the Father to speak the Father’s truth - in fact, an absolute attribute is assigned to the Holy Spirit here that He is the Spirit of truth - similar to other absolute attributes such as God is Love. Note that the Holy Spirit will always speak not of Himself but of what He hears [from the Father] and that He will bring glory to Christ taking what is Christ’s and making it know to the disciples. This is no small matter! When Paul said that we have the mind of Christ ([1 Cor 2:16](#)) he was teaching that we had the capacity to *think* like Christ and to *know* like Christ. Even though he later qualifies this knowledge as incomplete.⁵ That is a subject that should be developed later.

Note that the Holy Spirit will always speak not of Himself but of what He hears [from the Father] and that He will bring glory to Christ taking what is Christ’s and making it know to the disciples.

So we continue on with the work of the Holy Spirit. Next time, Lord willing, we will look at the joy that comes from the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

⁵ [1Cor 13:12](#).