

The coming of the Spirit

Jesus is talking to a group of dispirited and confused disciples. They are getting the gist of his message – that he is leaving them- and they are grieving.

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. (John 16:5,6)

Jesus has already comforted them by saying that they should not be troubled (John 14:1) because he is going to prepare a place for them but now, he focuses on the coming of the Holy Spirit. He will even say that “It is for your good that I am going away.” (Jn 16:7) because *Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.* (John 16:7). Why is having the Holy Spirit (the Counsellor) a greater advantage than having the physical presence of Jesus?

- 1) He will not have done his job if he stays with them.
- 2) The Holy Spirit can ensure that Jesus’ work is continued.

That will involve

- a) knowing who Jesus is.
- b) knowing all the truths Jesus has revealed to them.

What will happen after Jesus dies?

1) With respect to deciding who Jesus is:

The Counsellor will continue the trial of the world. Jesus’ presence has put the world on trial. “...He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him...” (Jn 1:9-11) This trial will continue through the witness of the disciples. The Counsellor will secure a conviction beyond the death of Jesus. The three key judgement points are about:

- 1) sin – not sins but sin – ie sin as it fundamentally is.
- 2) righteousness – what is right in the covenantal relationship between God and humans.
- 3) judgement – God’s actual judgement not someone else’s version of it.

The world’s verdict on each of these is

On sin that believing in Jesus would be a denial of their God. Jesus is a dangerous rebel opposed to God.

On Righteousness being in relationship to God means rejecting Jesus and his teaching on what is right.

On Judgement Jesus’ death indicates God’s judgement of him. “Cursed is he who hangs on the tree”

The verdict of God revealed by the Counsellor (When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt. (Jn 16:8)

On sin Sin is not believing in Jesus.

because men do not believe in me. (16:9)

On Righteousness God has pronounced his view of what is right. It is Jesus who is with God not the world.

because I am going to the Father. (16:10)

On Judgement It is Satan not Jesus who is condemned

the prince of this world now stands condemned. (16:11) Jesus’ death condemns Satan

2) With Respect to knowing the truth

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. (Jn 16:13)

The Paraclete will do more for the eleven disciples and others that knew Jesus. They are confused and not ready to hear or understand all that Jesus had to say. The Paraclete will lead them into all truth – ie bring them further along the way that Jesus has already been leading them in. He doesn't reveal things that Jesus has not already revealed, rather the Holy Spirit will give them a fuller understanding of what Jesus has shown them.

He will announce things to come

Eg a) understanding Jesus' death not as defeat but as necessary to complete his work. Jesus' death leads to a new creation.(Jn 1:1-5)

b) he will explain the process of Jesus' glorification.

c) he will re-announce God's final judgement about sin, righteousness and judgement.

In summary, he will confirm what Jesus has said

The Holy Spirit does not teach new truth. – he passes on what he received from Jesus.

He passes on a word already given but now filled with divine power.

This empowers the continuation of Jesus' work.

We are getting a bit more of a glimmer of the combined work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Spirit will not present himself but "speak what he hears" from the Father as Jesus did. ¹⁵*All 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.*" (Jn 16:15) There is a unique relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It guarantees that the early Christians would understand Jesus' full revelation, that they would be "lead into all truth" (Jn 16:12).

This is a promise to the disciples. They had heard Jesus and witnessed his works. *"But, when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth."* (Jn 16:13) They would pass on the truth to other disciples and so it would be known by successive generations. The Spirit enables Jesus' work to continue.

What does that mean for us?

1) There are lots of ways to argue for the truth of the Christian faith.

- a. Historical
- b. Philosophical
- c. Experiential
- d. Presuppositional
- e. Evidential

But believers believe because the Holy Spirit has shown them that a relationship with Jesus is a relationship with the Lord of the universe who has provided access to God and release from judgement. In other words, he has shown us that the world is wrong.

2) The truth the disciples received is the truth that we have received. When we read about what Jesus said and did, we hear the truth about

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| a. his death | he is victorious |
| b. his resurrection | he is vindicated |
| c. his ascension | he is exalted at the right hand of the Father. |

Indeed, we know all that we need about the present and the future because we know the one who controls all of it and he knows us.