

The Holy Spirit, 1

John 16

by Charles B. Hodge Jr.

It has never been easy to say good-bye. Saying good-bye always hurts, especially with special, seemingly indispensable people. Even Jesus in the flesh was not permanent. No one is. The church is not built upon men. In John 13 Peter was stunned to learn that Jesus was leaving. His entire world collapsed. John 16 promises the Holy Spirit, the single most important promise to Christians. He is to be who Jesus was and do what Jesus did.

I. BALD-FACED HONESTY

“They will make you outcasts from the synagogue; but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. And these things they will do, because they have not known the Father, or Me. But these things I have spoken to you, that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you” (16:2–4).

Jesus was brutally honest. To follow Christ is tough! Christianity is not a *prosperity gospel*; it is no bed of roses. The apostles would be put out of synagogues. This is a threat to us. Most of us do not even know where the synagogue is! But this was the end of the world to a faithful Jew. He lost his family, his nation, his job, and his church. He was made to be a “Gentile.” Christians will even be killed. If you think “scabs” are persecuted by the union, try getting kicked out of the synagogue!

We have taught some truth on the Bible heroes; we also have failed to teach some. For example, with Daniel, we teach that faith rescued him from the “lion’s den.” *We fail to teach*

that it was that same faith that put him there! Faith causes persecution. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were delivered from the fiery furnace *by faith*; but they were also put in the fiery furnace *because of faith*.

Jesus also said some bad actions came from sincere motives. The persecutors thought they were serving God. They were religious obstructionists. Jesus did not excuse them. They did not know God or Jesus. They were so steeped in their traditions that they did not know God. Religion can be a barrier to Jesus. Jesus promised purpose, power, peace, . . . and problems. He was honest with us.

II. THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT

“And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 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; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall 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” (16:8–15).

Familiar Scriptures must be read more closely. We need to update our hermeneutics concerning 16:8–11.

“He will convict the world concerning sin,” Jesus said (16:8). The world is corrupt and rot-

ten! But the Spirit is not here simply to stipulate sins. The world is condemned already (John 3). The purpose of John is faith (20:30, 31). The Spirit has come to convict us concerning "sin"—a non-faith in Christ. You will be lost in the judgment without faith in Christ. Read verse 9! The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ.

"He will convict the world concerning righteousness," He said (16:8). Notice the word is not "unrighteousness." This is our logical assumption! This is not the bad (evil) in man but the goodness of God (Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10). The gospel is still God's power to save. Romans 3:21–31 is the heart of the heart of the heart! Propitiation and reconciliation is the grace of God. God loves me; Jesus died for me (1 Timothy 1:15–17).

"He will convict the world concerning judgment," He said (16:8). This is not the final judgment. Read verse 11. "Satan is judged and defeated." This is a reference to the cross. In John 12:32, 33 Jesus talked about being lifted up on the cross.

The Holy Spirit comes to the church, not to the world. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is through us. The Holy Spirit does not float in and out. Christians are captivated, activated, and motivated by the Holy Spirit. We are not to *use* the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is to *use* us!

III. OUR SORROW TURNED INTO JOY

"Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned to joy. Whenever a woman is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she remembers the anguish no more, for joy that a child has been born into the world. Therefore you, too, now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy away from you" (16:20–22).

The key to the strength of Jesus is His relationship with the Father. The key to us is our relationship with the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the apostles in Acts not to move until the Holy Spirit came.

Jesus is the Master with illustrations. Joy does not displace sorrow; joy is no substitute for sorrow. The same thing that caused the sorrow causes the joy. A mother delivers a child with intense pain; however, she forgets the pain with the joy of receiving a child! The same baby that caused the pain is the giver of the joy. Our problems produce our joy. If there is no pain, there is no gain. If there is no cross, no crown.

IV. DIRECT ACCESS TO JESUS

"I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again, and going to the Father" (16:28).

Jesus was here physically; His presence now is just as real! Although absent physically, Jesus is still present.

The Holy Spirit could not come until Jesus left. Jesus left to go to the Father. The coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 is proof that Jesus left and is with the Father. Jesus revealed the Father to us; He equally revealed us to ourselves. Prayer is answered because Jesus is with the Father.

Judaism is a *what* religion; Christianity is a *who* religion. The Farewell Discourses end with triumph: "... In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (16:33).

CONCLUSION

Joy keeps us going.
Love keeps us going.
Faith keeps us going.
Peace keeps us going.
The Holy Spirit keeps us going.

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