

The Spirit in the World

John 16.4b-15

A few days before, crowds shouted ‘Hosanna!’ and the disciples thought the kingdom was near! Now Jesus is going away, and tells them they will be hated by the world! Jesus *will* go, but they *won’t* be alone! The Spirit is coming! And *that* is to their *advantage* (and ours)!

Alone, in danger, but not alone! (16.4b-7)

From Jesus with them, to Jesus being gone...

From triumph to tribulation!

In sorrow...a promise of help!

The Spirit Convicts the World (16.8-11)

Of sin: It’s against God (hopeless condition)

Of righteousness: The need to be right with God

Of judgment: On all who side with Satan

The Spirit Helps Jesus’ Followers (16.12-15)

He will guide you into all the truth

He will disclose what is to come

He will glorify Jesus Christ



1. Try to imagine the thoughts racing through the minds of the various disciples *before* Jesus tells them about the ministry of the Spirit. Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, and His Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem was just a few days earlier! Everything was going so well – perhaps the kingdom was at hand! Then the Passover meal started, and everything changed: Jesus washed their feet; Judas left to betray Him; Jesus said He was leaving them, and taught about life after He was gone. Confusion turned to fear when He revealed that the world would hate and even kill them! If you had been a disciple at this moment, how would you feel?
2. Jesus says that it is to the disciples’ “advantage” (and therefore ours as well), that He goes away, and the Spirit comes (7). Do you think Christians today understand the great advantage that is ours having the Holy Spirit? Why or why not? What ministries of the Spirit that Jesus identifies in John 16 have you witnessed or experienced?
3. In Acts 19.1-7, Paul meets believers in Ephesus who hadn’t received the Holy Spirit. They believed in the promised Messiah, but had not even heard of the Holy Spirit (2b). But receiving the Holy Spirit was a significant reality in the early church: It was observed on the Day of Pentecost and in Cornelius’ household! Notice Paul’s question to these people: “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (2a). Receiving the Holy Spirit, whose impact was spelled out by Jesus in John 16.7-15, is important evidence of faith in Jesus in the early church! Can you imagine asking someone professing faith in God today, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”? We (like Cornelius’ household; Acts 10.44-47) receive the Spirit the moment we believe in Jesus, but usually fail to grasp its importance! While all Christians are saved by grace through faith in Jesus, notice how significant the advantage of receiving the Holy Spirit was in the early church! What Jesus had revealed to His disciples in John 16 – the Spirit’s conviction of the world, and guiding, teaching, and glorifying Christ in Christians’ lives, was *clearly* vital to Christians’ lives in the early church! Is it vital to your Christian experience today? Do you recognize and appreciate the Spirit in you?