

The Holy Spirit (Part 2) – John 16:7-15

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John 16:7-15. I started this sermon two weeks ago, and I can't wait to continue. Because it's so rich in truth. Truth about the Holy Spirit and the things he does.

Review

We started with his identity. That he's the third person of the Trinity, fully God, different in role, equal in essence, and one with the Father and Son. All of which results in an amazing list of things he does. Including the characteristics from this passage.

The first of which is that . . .

The Spirit was sent by both the Father and the Son (John 16:7b; 15:26)

From v7b where Jesus said, "*I will send him to you,*" and John 14:26 where he said *the Father will send him*. Which is neither a contradiction nor a conundrum because they're one. The Son sent the Spirit on behalf of the Father from whom he proceeds. And . . .

• **It implies that the Holy Spirit is not only from God but fully God**

Of the same essence. He didn't originate from the Father; he wasn't created by the Father; he proceeded from him. Implying that he too is fully God. And yet . . .

-We often forget about him

And . . .

-Sometimes we diminish him

Living and talking like he doesn't exist, or thinking he's lesser somehow. Fully God but not quite as important. God forgive us.

We also found that . . .

• **It's a doctrine that split the church**

Due to the words "and the Son." The "filioque" clause. A Latin word that divided the church between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics. Not that all of what they had was worth preserving. Not that either had a *lock* on truth. But that they split over a point of emphasis in a creed.

• **It's a reminder to think biblically**

A reminder to let the Bible dictate your theology, not your theology the Bible. A reminder to hold loosely to man-made writings, and tightly to God's Word. Because if you take your stand on anything else, you're going to end up majoring on the minors and separating.

That's the first thought, the first characteristic from this passage.

Outline

The second comes from v8-11. I will send the Holy Spirit to you, Jesus said – [8] *And when he comes* [v8], *he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: [9] concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; [10] concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; [11] concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.* (ESV)

The point is this:

The Spirit came to convict and convince (v8-11)

Convict and convince the *world*. V8 – *when he comes, he will convict the world*. Mankind. Unbelievers. That's the *world* as John uses it. Unbelieving mankind. He came to convict us.

Now, does that mean all will surrender? All will repent? Obviously not. Some people refuse. Some people ignore him. Some people have a hard heart and don't care.

But all people have a conscience. Having been made in the image of God, all of us have a sense of right and wrong. And the Holy Spirit has come to capitalize on that and use it to convict and *convince* us of right and wrong. Get our attention and *soften* our heart. Even break it if necessary.

That's the idea of the word "convict" here. Jesus doesn't use that word in a legal sense, like a circuit court convicts a person of violating the law. Whether they agree or not.

He uses the word to say that the Holy Spirit will bring the truth to bear on our mind and heart, and convince us of it. Creating an *unavoidable* awareness of what's right and wrong. An *inescapable* sense of responsibility. An *inevitable* admission to it. Don't miss that.

• **Biblical conviction is the unavoidable awareness, inescapable responsibility, and inevitable admission brought about by the Holy Spirit**

It's not just proving us wrong, it's the powerful work of the Holy Spirit to bring us to a point of unavoidable *awareness* of what's wrong. Unavoidable. Where the issue is staring us in face no matter which way we turn.

It's not just *pronouncing* our guilt, it's bringing us to a point of inescapable *responsibility* for it. Where we can't beg off and blame it on somebody else. Or *something* else.

And biblical conviction doesn't leave our confession up in the air. It brings us to a point of inevitable *admission*. Where it's only a matter of *time* before we say it. Only a matter of *time* before we admit it.

That's *biblical* conviction as Jesus uses it. The compelling work of the Holy Spirit to convict and convince us. And the reason he came.

But Jesus didn't leave it at *that*. He didn't just say, "When the Holy Spirit comes, he will convict the world of guilt; convict the world in general. But that *he will convict the world* [v8] *concerning sin and righteousness and judgment*. Let's take each of those in turn.

First is sin. The Holy Spirit came to . . .

• **Convict and convince us of sin and unbelief (9)**

That's v9. [8b] *He will convict the world . . . [9] concerning sin, because they do not believe in me.*

The Holy Spirit convicts the world concerning *sin*, including the sin of unbelief, in that he brings the truth of it to bear on our mind and heart. Once again, creating an unavoidable *awareness* of our sin, an inescapable sense of *responsibility* for it, and an inevitable *admission* to it.

Or to say it another way, the Holy Spirit convinces us of the *presence* of sin in our lives, convicts us of our *guilt* for it, and leads us to *repentance*. And if you've experienced such conviction, you know what I mean.

It's like a weight sitting on your chest, isn't it? A nagging thought you can't get rid of. A sense of regret you can't shake. An overwhelming awareness of wrongdoing that pierces your soul.

That's not to say you can't ignore it. At all. But oh be careful. Because if you do, if you do deny the conviction of the Holy Spirit, if you do refuse to take responsibility – you'll *quench* the Spirit and become increasingly *calloused* to his conviction. Comfortably *numb* to his work. So that it would take the weight of an *elephant* to get your attention. The thrust of a *sword* to pierce your heart.

Ignore the conviction of the Holy Spirit at your own peril. Because your sin will take you further than you ever thought, and the consequences will be worse than you can imagine.

That's the first part of v9. [8b] *He will convict the world . . . [9] concerning sin.*

But what does that have to do with unbelief? Because the two are related in v8-9. Linked by the word "because." [The Holy Spirit] *will convict the world . . . [9] concerning sin, because they do not believe in me.*

The world doesn't believe in Jesus because they don't think there's any *need* to. They don't believe they have a *need* for a Savior. Especially those who are self-absorbed and self-sufficient. Which is the vast majority.

So the Spirit *starts* by convicting and convincing us of our sin and guilt. Our sin and its consequences. Bringing us to the realization that we need to be *saved* from such things.

He starts by convicting us of our sin, because *apart* from sin, there's no *need* for Jesus. No need for a Savior. Apart from sin there's nothing to be saved from. No bondage and no punishment. No death in need of life, and no hell in need of heaven.

But there is. There *is* bondage. There is condemnation. There is suffering. There is death. For all eternity.

So the Holy Spirit starts by convicting and convincing us of our sin and sinfulness. Our sin and its consequences. Our sin and unbelief. Showing us our need for a Savior beyond a shadow of doubt, and leading us to believe in Jesus for all eternity.

How about it? Is that you this morning? Is the Holy Spirit convicting you? If so, are you convinced? I hope so. Because it's the first reason he came. And I'm going to give you an opportunity to pray with me and do something about that conviction before we're done.

But first, is the second reason he came. To . . .

• **Convict and convince us of the need for righteousness (10)**

The other side of the coin. V10 – The Holy Spirit *will convict the world . . . [10] concerning righteousness* [Jesus said], *because I go to the Father, and you will see me no*

longer. Concerning righteousness, in that he convinces us of the need to live in a godly manner. A God-honoring way.

Or to put it in the terms of our definition, the Spirit convicts us concerning righteousness by bringing the need for it to bear on our mind and heart. Creating an unavoidable *awareness* of such need, an inescapable sense of *responsibility* for it, and an inevitable *admission* to it.

Or to say it another way, the Holy Spirit convinces us of the *lack* of righteousness in our lives, convicts us of our *guilt* for it, and leads us to *repentance*. Just like his conviction regarding sin. Two sides of the same coin.

But just like v9, what does the *second* part of v10 have to do with the first? The Holy Spirit *will convict the world . . . [10] concerning righteousness* [Jesus said], *because* [there it is again] *I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer.* What does the absence of Jesus have to do with our righteousness?

Everything. Because Jesus is no longer present to model it. No longer in person to show us what it means to live a godly life. To be holy as God is holy.

We have a record of it, for sure. Living and active. But we don't have him. We don't have the Lord. We don't have a living, breathing standard of perfection to imitate; and follow.

So he sent the Spirit which is even better. Like Jesus said in v7 – *I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away.* It's better. Why?

Because the Spirit can be everywhere at once. The Spirit can reside within us. The Spirit can prompt us simultaneously to do completely different things. The Spirit can speak to us uniquely at the same time.

In the absence of Jesus, and his living, *breathing* standard of righteousness, the Spirit inspires us to even more. Convicts and convinces us of the need for *more* righteousness.

Third, the Spirit came to . . .

• **Convict and convince us of the certainty of judgment (11)**

That's v11 – The Holy Spirit *will convict the world . . . [11] concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

The Holy Spirit will convict the world concerning judgment, in that he will convince them that God's punishment is real. And certain. And terrible. And convict them that they're facing it for all eternity.

No more wondering, no more questioning, and no more doubting. Only an unavoidable *awareness* of their condemnation. Only an inescapable responsibility for it. Only an inevitable admission that they deserve to be judged.

And why, one more time? Why does he convict us concerning judgment? *Because the ruler of this world is judged.* (11b) Satan.

The Holy Spirit is here to convict unbelievers of judgment, because even Satan himself is suffering it. The *leader* of unbelievers. Whether you think of him that way or not.

If Satan is judged for *his* sin, the one whose power and influence *far* exceeds ours, then those *under* his influence will be judged. If the greater is judged, the lesser will be judged. If *he* didn't escape, the world won't escape.

It's the third reason Jesus gave for the Holy Spirit's coming.

And when he brings his conviction to *bear*, it's unmistakable.

I'll never forget the couple I was counseling in that respect, nearly 25 years ago now. She was emotionally spent and full of pain, and he was emotionally clueless and full of anger. And while they were finally willing to sit down with me, it wasn't going well. She was crying, he was digging in his heels, and nothing was getting through. Especially to him.

And all of a sudden, Galatians 5 popped into my mind. So without a word I turned to **Galatians 5:19**. And when I got there, I turned my Bible around, and asked him to start reading out loud. Slowly.

[19] Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, [20] idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger . . . and then he broke down. Thoroughly convicted. Nearly crushed by it.

So I waited a minute, and then asked him what he was thinking. And he said, "That's me. *Fits of anger.*" And I said, "God bless you for your honesty, but there's more. Can you keep reading?"

[20b] . . . fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, [21] envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. [All works of the flesh. Sin.] I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21) And all the air left the room. *Those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Not those who occasionally stumble in these things. Not those who do these things and repent of them. But those who do such things as a way of life. Those for whom such things are the norm. Unacknowledged, unconfessed, unrepented, and unforgiven. You won't inherit the Kingdom of God. You won't be saved.

I said, "Joe, is that you? Is anger the norm in your life and marriage? He nodded. "Are you ready to confess that to God and repent?" "I am."

So we bowed our heads and I started by leading him with a few phrases to repeat after me, and then told him to go ahead and pray on his own. At which point he not only confessed his sin of anger, but asked God to take over his life completely. To save his soul and make him whole.

I'm here to tell you that only the Holy Spirit can change somebody's mind like that. Only the Spirit can convict and convince somebody's heart like that. And if he's doing it in yours right now . . .

• **Repent and believe**

Repent of your sin and believe in Jesus, right now. Don't wait and don't ignore him.

Admit you're a sinner in need of a Savior, and believe that Jesus is the one; the one who died for your sins and rose again for your life. And repent of your sin by asking God to forgive you and committing to turn from it. Receiving his Spirit into your life and heart to live his way from now on.

If you're convinced and convicted, if there's a weight on your chest and a piercing in your soul, pray with me right now to repent and believe.

Prayer – In the quietness of your heart, say something like this:

"God, I *admit* it. I'm sinful and self-absorbed. Prideful and hopeless. Angry and impure."

"But I *believe*. I believe that Jesus is my Savior. I believe he died for my sins and rose again for my life. I believe."

"So I *repent*. I'm sorry for my sin, and I'm done with it. Please forgive me and help me to live for you. I repent."

"And I *receive*. Come into my life and seal me with your Spirit. I want *your* life, full and forever."

"I admit, I believe, I repent, and I receive."

Let's sing this together as a prayer. Right where you're seated. (*Spirit of the Living God*)

Prayer – Father, thank you for convicting and convincing. Of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. And thank you for saving those who just prayed. Fill them with your Spirit as we just sang. And spur them on to follow your lead.

You Are Loved