

The Final Days of Jesus
HOLY SPIRIT 301

Friday, March 20

Reading: John 15:26 – 16:11

John 16:7 *But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 When He comes, He will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in Me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see Me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.*

Having warned believers about the world's hatred, Jesus now tells us several ways the Holy Spirit helps believers live in this hostile world. First, He POINTS PEOPLE TO CHRIST (15:26-27). He does not draw attention to Himself but always exalts the name of Jesus. As believers, our witness must be the same. We don't point people to ourselves or our church. We point them to the only One who can save them – Jesus Christ. We can only do this through the power of the Spirit within us (see Acts 1:8).

Second, the Holy Spirit GIVES COURAGE TO BELIEVERS (16:1-7). Jesus warned His followers ahead of time that they would be persecuted and even killed for His name. He did this so they would trust Him and not fail when persecution came. The Spirit would also give courage to persevere in the dark hours ahead. They were grieved at Jesus' words because they did not understand the great benefit His going away would give them. The cross provided for their salvation and His return to heaven would send the Spirit to live in them and give them the courage and power to spread the good news.

Third, the Spirit CONVICTS UNBELIEVERS (16:8-11). He convicts them of their wicked hearts and the sin that controls them and keeps them from accepting Christ as Savior. He convicts them of their need for the righteousness of Christ revealed in His life, death, and resurrection. Christ's perfect standard shows unbelievers their need for His righteousness in their lives. And the Spirit convicts the world that they stand condemned before a holy God. Satan was defeated at the cross and those who reject Christ stand in judgment with him. This conviction of the Spirit is what leads people to repentance and faith in Christ.

LESSON ONE: "They Will Think They are Offering Service to God." While not reported in the public media, we know that many of our brothers and sisters in Christ are suffering and dying for their faith. In Muslim countries it is illegal to convert to Christianity. They believe they are serving Allah by killing Christians. This is nothing new. Satan has always had his "religions" to persecute the true followers of Christ. Spend some time today praying for Christians who are suffering and dying around the world. Put yourself in their place. Would you be able to stand if that persecution happened to you?

LESSON TWO: "He Will Convict the World." We sometimes get discouraged when we share our faith but see no results. This passage reminds us that it is our job to witness. The message of the church is not political activism or social reform. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are to give the gospel. It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict and convert the soul. Are you allowing the Spirit to speak the gospel through you? Are you actively sharing your faith and leaving the results up to God?