

## The Work of the Holy Spirit

John 16:5-15

KV 13 “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, 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.”

Last week, on Easter Sunday we witnessed the power of the resurrection of Jesus. When he had risen, he showed himself to his apostles and gave them many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and afterwards, he was taken up and ascended to heaven. A few days later, while the apostles were all together in one place, all of a sudden a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, other languages, as the Spirit enabled them. Some people thought they were drunk, but Peter and the Eleven rose up, bold and courageous as ever. Peter spoke up, raising his voice. He laid out the truths and wonders of God, the people were cut to the heart, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Imagine that in this chapel – the sound of a violent wind breaking out among us, and tongues of fire on our heads. Through this passage we will study the work of the Holy Spirit, we take a step back, before Jesus’ death and resurrection. Earlier in the night, he has told his beloved disciples that he must go away, and their hearts were filled with sorrow. He also told them that the world will persecute them. Their hearts were heavy and sad, but through this Jesus comforts them and promises to send them the Holy Spirit. This was the promise we saw fulfilled last week in Acts, and the promise is still true to this day. The Holy Spirit continues to work. Although we may not hear a violent wind and see tongues of fire, we can see the Spirit working by the effects He has on our lives and the lives of those around us. As we learn about the work of the Spirit, I pray that our eyes may be opened to see the evidence of His power. First, we’ll see the condition for the Holy Spirit to come. Next, we’ll talk about the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting the world of guilt, and finally His work in guiding us into all the truth.

### Part 1: The Condition for the Holy Spirit to Come

Look at v.7, “But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” Listen carefully when Jesus says, “I tell you the truth,” the words that come next are very important. Jesus says, “It is for your good that I am going away.” Jesus was going back to the Father who sent him, but the road back included his death, resurrection, and finally his ascension back into heaven. The disciples were overcome with grief when Jesus said he had to go away. I’m sure they shared many good times, had some good laughs, and we know that Jesus taught them the truths of God. He performed many miracles in their presence, and showed them the full extent of his love. They wanted to be with Jesus forever, but for now they could not accept that he had to go away. That’s why their sorrow overwhelmed them. But what they couldn’t see through their grief was that Jesus was working for their good – so that they may have power and life to the full, even eternal life.

The condition for the Holy Spirit to come was that Jesus had to go back to the Father, and in order to go back to the Father, he had to finish the work he came to do. He had to suffer and die, and then be raised again from the dead and finally ascend into heaven. If he had missed any of these steps or took any shortcuts, the Holy Spirit will have no effect. Think about if Jesus did not die, then our sins would not have been paid for. If Jesus did not rise again then sin and death would not have been defeated. The Holy Spirit would have nothing to work with because there would be no gospel, and no good news for all of us lost in sin. But thanks be to Jesus, because he did go to the cross and die, he did rise again, and he did ascend to heaven, and now sits at the right hand of the Father. From there, he asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit to us.

## Part 2: The Work of the Holy Spirit: Convicting the World of Guilt

When the Holy Spirit comes, he will get right to work. The first order of business is to convict the world of guilt. Look at v. 8, “When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.” The Holy Spirit will expose and reveal that the world is guilty against God, but this is so that the world would turn and seek God. When I used to take violin lessons, my teacher asked me how long I have been practicing without a private teacher. I asked him why? And he said that way he can tell how much work I he needs to do to correct all my bad habits. When I tried to learn violin my own way, I developed some habits that prevented me from playing beautifully. But by having a teacher, he showed me what I was doing wrong, and helped improve my playing. We are all guilty against God, because we were born as sinners, but we really need the Holy Spirit to help us see that. In v.9-11, Jesus becomes specific about sin, righteousness and judgment in order to give us understanding, and it is through understanding we can have conviction.

Verse 9 says, “in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me.” This is the basis of sin: unbelief in God. Unfaithfulness to God. Rom 1:21 says, “For although they knew God, they neither glorified him nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.” It is safe to say that many people you know do not believe in God. There are also more people who know God, but they do not give glory to him, or give thanks to him. This is the foundation to sin, because when we do not believe in God, our thinking becomes useless, and our hearts become dark. Jesus warns his disciples in 16:2-3, “They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.” When we don’t know God, our thinking has the potential to become twisted and perverted. There is a saying, “Absolute power corrupts absolutely,” and we can see how twisted some dictators become when they have unlimited power. In North Korea, people still worship statues of their eternal president Kim Il-Sung, though he lays dead frozen. We hear about the complicated relationships of Hollywood celebrities. But also, for those of us here and not so famous, we all have secret sins in our hearts. The root of these sins in our hearts comes from unbelief in God.

Jesus continues in v.10, “in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer.” Righteousness is to have perfect virtue, honor, goodness, morality, etc. It is simply to be right before God – to be sinless, blameless and guiltless. In short, to me, it sounds like to be righteous, you must be perfect. Rom 3:10 says “There is no one

righteous not even one,” which comes from Psalm 14:1-3, which reads, “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.” And we would generally agree with this, as the saying goes, “Nobody’s perfect.” But we want to be perfect. The problem comes when we try to make our own righteousness, and we make our own rules to be righteous. The Jews had many external customs and rules they followed so they might look righteous externally, but inwardly they were as corrupt as before. In Luke 11(37-54), Jesus was invited to a Pharisee’s house to eat. The Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised – then Jesus revealed their hypocrisy. He said, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.” Although they gave a tenth of their offering, they neglected the justice and love of God. He told the experts in the law that they loaded people down with burdens they can hardly carry, but they will not lift one finger to help them.

All this is to say that there is no one righteous, and there is nothing that we can do by our own abilities to be righteous. The Holy Spirit reveals our inability and weakness to be righteous, so what other choice do we have? Look again at v.10, “in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer.” Where can we get righteousness? We can get righteousness in Jesus. We know he is righteous because he went to the Father. The Father is righteous, holy and perfect, and the fact that Jesus went to Him shows that He also was. The centurion made this confession at the cross of Jesus, “Surely this was a righteous man. (Luke 23:47)” Isaiah 45:24 says, “They will say of me, ‘In the Lord alone are righteousness and strength.’” In Jesus alone is righteousness and strength. Now how can we get it? See v.10b, Jesus says, “where you can see me no longer.” The righteousness which is in heaven cannot be seen, but it can be attained by faith. Rom 1:17 says, “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’”

Some people have asked, why did Jesus have to live 33 years here on this earth? Couldn’t he have just saved the world in a day, or maybe a week? But Jesus had to be born, grow up, and live into adulthood so that he could live a complete and full life, righteously. When he went to the cross, he exchanged his fully righteous life for our sin stained life. God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21). That is where faith comes in. He laid down his perfect life for us, so that by faith we can claim it. By the Holy Spirit’s power, and not our own, we are born again by the Spirit. We have a new life, and we put to death the old life we once lived. Our new life we live by faith in Christ Jesus.

The last point on which the Holy Spirit convicts the world of guilt is judgment, look at v.11, “and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.” There will be a judgment day at the end of the world, when Christ comes again – where those in Christ will be justified in Him, but those who do not know Christ will be judged guilty. Rev 20:15 says, “If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” There will be a judgment day for all of us, where each one of us will give an

account of himself to God (Rom 14:12). The prince of this world is Satan, who is the devil. When Jesus rose from the dead, the power of Satan was destroyed, and now he stands condemned. All of us at one point lived under his power when we followed the ways of this world (Eph 2:2). Jesus has come, God has revealed his righteousness and Jesus displayed his great glory when he rose from the dead. The Holy Spirit was poured out powerfully amongst the apostles and works among Christians today. The world has no excuse to deny and disobey God, but the spirit of the ruler of the world is now at work in those that are disobedient. Because the prince of this world now stands condemned, those who follow him will also be condemned on judgment day. 2 Cor 6:2 says, "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." If you have not put your faith in Jesus, now is the time. Do not stand guilty with the world, but put your faith and trust in Jesus, call on his name, because when judgment comes, it will be too late for you.

The Holy Spirit exposes the world's guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment, to open our eyes and turn us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that we may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified in Jesus (Acts 26:18).

### Part 3: The Work of the Holy Spirit in Guiding Us into All Truth

Continuing on, Jesus tells his disciples, "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear." Here we see how compassionate and tender Jesus was to his disciples, being considerate of their current state of mind. He gives them another word of encouragement, and a promise in v.13, can we all please read that together: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, 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." The second major work of the Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth. He will not lead us astray, he will not lead us down a false path, but we can be assured because he will guide us into all truth.

So what is the truth? Jesus says in John 17:17, "Sanctify them by the truth, your word is truth." Our best source of truth and wisdom is our Bibles, the word of God. He guides us into the truths within his word, and the Bible teaches us truth. It teaches us about the history of the universe, the history of the world, the history of the nations. It teaches us about life, and has wisdom from the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. It teaches us about things that are yet to come, like heaven, and eternal life, even eternal judgment. But most importantly the Bible teaches us about God, and about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16)."

But we don't just gain an intellectual knowledge of the Bible – the Holy Spirit makes the words of God come alive. He makes the words of God a reality in our lives. Soohyun's testimony key verse at the conference was Gen 15:1, "After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.'" These aren't just historical words, but for some of us that heard it, we experience that God is our shield, our protector, and also our great reward. More valuable than silver or gold is that we can have God himself in our hearts. Mary was moved by Exodus 13:21, "By day the Lord went ahead of

them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night,” to her God was her guide: and to us we can see that God guides us into truth just as this pillar does, both day or night. I remember one of the Easter messengers becoming angry with Sh. Bob over something, but he said that he was studying Matthew, maybe it was 5:22 “But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment,” and by the Holy Spirit he was able to control the anger he felt. The word of God truly becomes our truth for life, and it becomes and necessary as our daily bread. The Holy Spirit, through the knowledge of the truth, helps us to control ourselves and live rightly before God.

Ultimately, all truth, all real truth, leads to an increasing knowledge about God. Paul said in Phil 3:8 “What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” Paul was the author of almost half of the New Testament, yet he still considered that to know Christ was a surpassing greatness, it was better than anything, ever, and there is no limit to what we learn about God. When we study the word of God diligently, we begin to see his character, the great authority and power he had, but also his great love, patience and mercy toward his people. Jesus says in the next chapter, John 17:3, “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” Knowing God is equivalent to eternal life.

Finally we see the Holy Spirit’s purpose in all this – look at v.14, “He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.” The Holy Spirit brings glory to Jesus Christ. He does not speak on his own; he only speaks what he hears. Here you can gain some insight about the Holy Spirit – that he’s a person, hence the use of he, and that he also has a free will. He can choose to speak on his own, but does not. John 7:18 says, “He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.” The Holy Spirit works in accordance with Jesus and with God the Father. The Spirit also searches all things, even the deep things of God. Here we see too, that the Holy Spirit is also God. No one knows what is in a man’s heart except the man himself, in the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God (1 Cor 2:10-11). The Spirit testifies about Jesus. When we have the Spirit of God, we can confess that Jesus is Lord with a saving faith, and praise God for all that he has done.

The work of the Holy Spirit is to expose the sin of the world with regard to sin, righteousness and judgment, and to guide believers into all truth. Although you may not hear a violent wind or see tongues of fire, the Holy Spirit still works among us today. You can see the evidence when He convicts you, or someone you know, and you can see the evidence through your changed life, and your desire to know God and grow in the knowledge of the truth. This seemed to be a sorrowful time for the disciples, but Jesus had to go away so that he could send them a gift that was promised here – the gift of the Holy Spirit. If you have never received this gift, ask God in heaven. Luke 11:13 says, “If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Ask God for this priceless gift, and he will be pleased to give it to you! Thank God for his Son Jesus Christ who died and rose again, so that we may receive the Holy Spirit.