

## The Spirit and the Word of God John 16:7-15

Franklin Church of Christ  
Edwin Crozier  
April 17, 2005  
AM Worship

### Introduction:

Is there any topic that causes more confusion today than the work of the Holy Spirit? Theories and practices abound. But what does the Bible say? In **John 16:7-15**, Jesus promised to send the Spirit to the apostles. But more than that, He explained the Spirit's job. Examine the text to learn what the role of the Spirit is and how He continues that work today.

### Discussion:

- I. "Guide you into all truth."
  - A. The NASB calls the Spirit "The Helper," while the KJV calls Him "The Comforter." Interestingly, as Jesus explained what the Spirit would do, He did not mention ushy-mushy, ethereal hand-holding. He did not talk about providing a shoulder to cry on. He said the Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth (**John 16:13**). This was more important than momentary emotional fulfillment. As Jesus taught in **John 8:32**, the truth is what sets people free.
  - B. That truth would be everything Jesus wanted them to know. The Spirit would not make up his own teaching; He would take from Jesus and give it to the apostles (**John 16:14**). Beyond that, what belonged to Jesus was actually from the Father (**John 16:15**). Before Jesus' death, the apostles could not handle the truth. After His ascension, they would be made ready to understand God's full plan. Then the Spirit would come and guide them, taking from Jesus what He wanted the apostles to know. This promise was repeated in **Acts 1:7-8** and fulfilled in **Acts 2**.
  - C. But what does this mean for us? **Ephesians 3:3-4** shows how this impacts us. The Spirit gave miraculous revelation to the apostles and prophets of the New Covenant. They wrote what they received. By reading what was written, we can understand God's will. Consider some other passages. **II Timothy 3:16-17** said the scriptures are inspired by God. **II Peter 1:20-21** explains that the scriptures are the work of the Holy Spirit. Considering **I Corinthians 2:6-13**, we recognize that the Scriptures explain the mind of God. As Jesus said, we are guided into all truth.
  - D. However, Jesus explained that the Spirit would accomplish three things as it guided the apostles into all truth. The word of God continues to accomplish those three tasks.
- II. "Convict the world of sin."
  - A. According to **John 16:8-9**, the Spirit would convict the world of sin, because the world did not believe in Jesus. This ties back to **John 1:9-11**. When Jesus, the true light, came into the world, the world did not know Him. He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him.
  - B. However, despite that rejection, Jesus made another attempt to convince us of our sins and the need for His sacrifice. He sent the Spirit to convict us. The Spirit, using miraculous gifts among His servants, convicted the world of sins. We see a great example of this in Ephesus in **Acts 19:11-20**. Through the gifts and teaching of Paul, the Ephesians were convicted their magic was sinful. Therefore, they repented and burned their magic books.
  - C. Though the Spirit no longer grants miraculous gifts, His Word remains. As **II Timothy 3:16**, says, the inspired scripture is profitable for reproof or for convicting. The scripture exposes our sins. This exposure may be painful, but it is good for us. Only when our sins come to light can we deal with them properly by the grace of Jesus. Further, **Hebrews 10:26-31** explains how important heeding this exposure and conviction are. While Jesus gave one more opportunity for us to believe following His own incarnation, this work of the Spirit is the last step in the plan. If we do not heed the message regarding sin, nothing else is coming to save us. If we turn our backs on the convicting message of the Word, the work of the Holy Spirit, we insult the Spirit of Grace and all that awaits us is vengeance.
  - D. The question then is whether or not we use God's book the way God intended. The Bible is here to convict us of our sins. Do we use it that way? We need to read it with a view to find out where we fall short. Further the Bible is here to convict others of their sins. Do we use it that way? Do we expose sin and error using the scripture or do we retreat to a corner and hope nobody notices us. Jesus sent the Spirit to convict the world of sin. The Spirit revealed the Word to continue that work. Let's make sure we use it that way.

III. "Convict the world of righteousness."

- A. According to **John 16:8, 10**, the Spirit would convict the world of righteousness because Jesus was going to the Father and we would no longer see Him. The point being that Jesus was the incarnate revelation of what righteousness is. While on the earth, men could simply look to His life and actions to learn righteousness. However, He is no longer physically here.
- B. We can still learn about righteousness, however, because Jesus sent the Spirit. The Spirit, using miraculous gifts, trained the world in righteousness. A great example of this can be seen in **Acts 15**. Some of the early Christians thought people had to be circumcised in order to be righteous before God. After much debate, Peter, Paul and Barnabas stood up and told of the work of the Spirit in their ministries and James referred to Old Testament passages revealed by the Spirit that demonstrated circumcision was not a requirement under the New Covenant. The Spirit had trained these men in understanding righteousness.
- C. Though the Spirit no longer grants miraculous gifts, His Word remains. Again, **II Timothy 3:16-17** explains that the inspired scripture trains us in righteousness and will equip us for every good work. **Hebrews 5:11-14** demonstrates this as well. Our senses will be trained to discern between good and evil by focus on the word of righteousness. Further, **I Peter 2:1-3** explains that we will grow in respect to salvation if we long for the word as a babe longs for milk. No wonder Paul commended the Ephesian elders to God's word in **Acts 20:32**. The word revealed by the Spirit is what builds us up in righteousness and helps us receive our inheritance.
- D. The question then is whether or not we use God's book the way God intended. The Bible is here to convict and train us in righteousness. Do we use it that way? We need to read it with a view to find out how we need to change to be more like Jesus Christ. The Bible should never be a reference book to learn about dead people and distant events. It must be a life-changing book always, constantly purifying us and refining us as we allow it to be our guide for life and righteousness. Further, The Bible is here for us to convict and train others in righteousness. Do we use it that way? Do we use the scriptures to teach people how to serve and worship God or do we retreat from our convictions hoping no one will ask us why we do what we do? Jesus sent the Spirit to convict the world of righteousness. The Spirit revealed His word to continue that work. Let's make sure we use it that way.

IV. "Convict the world of judgment."

- A. According to **John 16:8, 11**, the Spirit would convict the world of judgment because the ruler of this world has been judged. This ruler of the world refers to Satan, our great enemy. Jesus reminds us of what He said in **John 12:31-33**. The ruler of this world would be cast out and judged when Jesus was crucified. The point being that judgment concerning sin and righteousness is certain because Jesus came and died. It reminds me of a game Marita and I play—Pente. There come points in every game in which we know the game is over, one of us has won the game and nothing can be done about it. However, we always play it out to the bitter end to see exactly how it all pans out. While that illustration pales in comparison to the contest between God and Satan, the fact is in the crucifixion, God won and Satan lost and nothing will ever change that. Right now, Satan is simply trying to see how many of the playing pieces he can capture before he finally has to surrender the field.
- B. Jesus sent the Spirit to convict the world that judgment is coming on those who choose sin over God's righteousness. The Spirit, using miraculous gifts, convicted the world of judgment. A great example of this can be seen in **Acts 13:6-12**. When Paul miraculously brought God's judgment upon the magician, Elymas, Sergius Paulus believed.
- C. Though the Spirit no longer grants miraculous gifts, His Word remains. This word informs us of the coming judgment. How many passages demonstrate the contrast between those who choose to ignore the Spirit's conviction regarding sin and righteousness and those who are convicted and repent? In **John 5:28-29**, Jesus' words about the coming judgment are recorded. **II Thessalonians 1:5-10** describes the coming judgment as does **II Peter 3:10-13**. Remember the passage we read earlier from **Hebrews 10:26-31**. Interestingly, Jesus said in **John 12:48**, that the word He speaks is what will judge us. Remember that the Spirit only revealed the word of Jesus. Judgment is coming; we must be prepared.

D. The question then is whether or not we use God's book the way God intended. The Bible is here to convict us of judgment. Do we use it that way? We need to read it with the view that this book contains the words of life and if we reject them we are asking for death. Further, the Bible is here to convict others of judgment. Do we use it that way? Do we let people know that judgment is coming or do we keep our mouths shut, afraid they will accuse us of judging them? The next time someone asks, "Are you judging me?" Tell them, "Absolutely not. I am simply using the Spirit's word to convict you that judgment is coming." Jesus sent the Spirit to convict the world of judgment. The Spirit revealed His Word to continue that work. Let's make sure we use it that way.

**Conclusion:**

The Spirit came to reveal the freedom-bestowing truth. He revealed that truth through the apostles and prophets and they wrote it down. Now we need to read it, understand it and live it. God's Book was given to convict us of sin, righteousness and judgment. We must not put it aside. We must use it and we must use it God's way.