

The Gospel of John: Declaring Christ in a Post Christ World

Tyler Velin | May 20, 2012 | John 16:4b-15

We are nearing the end of the gospel of John, and will finish it by the end of the summer, but that also means that we are nearing the end of Jesus' life.

What is going to be drug out for a couple months for you guys is going to be a couple days for Jesus. In fact Jesus is giving an address to his apostles right now, and after he finish this address he goes to the garden of Gethsemane where he will be arrested.

So there is an urgency here to Jesus' teaching. He can smell the dirt of Golgotha and he can feel the burden of the cross and so he is injecting his disciples with theological steroids right now. He is preparing them for life after his death.

This is where our passage opens up tonight. **John 16:4b-6**

So Jesus is trying to break this news to them, but he knows that they are not going to take it well. Because Jesus knows, that the disciples know, that they don't have anything going for them except for Jesus.

Right? Matthew worked for the IRS. James and John were hicktown fishermen who let their mom fight their battles. Thomas is this conspiracy theorist doubting loser. And Bartholomew, well most of you didn't even know he was a disciple!

So Jesus was not exaggerating when he said that their hearts are filled with sorrow. And all joking aside, Jesus is their theological hero, for two thousand years the Jews have been oppressed and without their true King. For generations they have been waiting for the fullness of their salvation to come and now he is here but he is telling them that he is going to die. The one to overthrow Rome, the Lion from the tribe of Judah, dead?

They know that Jesus is the messiah, that he alone has the words of truth, but how are they going to live with Jesus in a world where Jesus is gone? What about us? On this side of the cross? Well most of us would say "Jesus now lives in our hearts," but more often than not, my heart still fails me. We need someone to not only dwell internally, but also minister to us externally. To fan the flame of Christ in our hearts.

This is what we are going to look at today: how do we find Christ in a post-christ world. But first **let's pray.**

So here we are, with sorrow filled disciples and a soon to be dead, resurrected and ascended savior. This is how Jesus gives them hope for life after his removal from earth.

John 16:7

Jesus is sending us his Helper. As we saw in chapter 14, the helper is the Holy Spirit who Christ promised to come and minister and assist us. Now most of the time, if someone important says they can't make it, but they will send us a helper, we are expecting some intern or something. But when Christ sends the helper, he is sending part of himself, part of the trinity.

In fact Jesus says it is to our advantage for him to leave and for the Helper to come. Jesus says that it is better to have the Holy Spirit everywhere in this world than it is to have the God-Man Christ somewhere in this world.

Now with that said. I think that the Holy Spirit is the most undefined and often misunderstood person of the godhead. To be honest for most of my life I thought the Holy Spirit existed to freak me out.

Anytime anyone would talk about the Holy Spirit, my mind would jump to ideas of speaking in tongues, prophecy, spirit slaying, snake handling, banner twirling, craziness.

And while tongues their interpretation and prophecy are legitimate gifts of the spirit, often the abuse of them and the presence of others leads to a polarity when approaching the Holy Spirit. On one side you have Christians who barely talk about the Holy Spirit, on others you have ones who almost make an idol out of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

But the Bible would say that both sides have a poor view of the Holy Spirit. He should not be ignored, nor should he be worshipped above the other members of the trinity.

A better definition of how to treat the Holy Spirit comes from what we are about to look at. Jesus is going to give us the Holy Spirit's goal here, his mission statement. So any ideas of who and what the holy spirit is and does should be seen first through what the Bible says about him.

John 16:8-11

The Holy Spirit came to convict. Now that doesn't sound nice does it? No one really likes conviction, because its convicting. We don't want that today because who are we to tell people what is wrong or right? Who are we to impose morals on people and try to convict them with words?

Well according to the scripture, you can suppress the moral opinions of the church all you want, but ultimately the church isn't the one convicting, the Holy Spirit is.

We all will be convicted at some point, but let me show you why this is good. Jesus himself even said it is better for him to leave so that you can be convicted, so certainly it can't all be bad.

You see there was this church in Corinthians, and they had what we would call a sin problem. You know the standard sins, lying, cheating, swearing and drunken sex at church. So Paul wrote them a letter, it's called 1 Corinthians, and in that, he being inspired by the Holy Spirit wrote them a letter which convicted them. And made them feel badly and ugly about their sin.

In his second letter to the church this is how he addressed the convicted congregation: **2 Cor 7:8-11**

You see conviction is good because it leads to grief and because no one likes grief we seek a cure, and the cure for grief is godly repentance. For those of you who wrestle with conviction, you are blessed because the holy spirit is working on you. It is those who are not convicted who see no wrong in their life that I pray for.

Jesus says in Matthew 21:44 that if the rock of Christ falls on you, you will be crushed, and if you fall on him, you will be broken. You see everyone ends up broken. You will either be broken by the grace of Christ falling on you. You're your enemy the devil will snatch you like a lion and throw you against the wrath of Christ.

Brokenness and conviction are good, so respond accordingly.

Jesus says there are three things that the Holy Spirit will convict us of, the first one is sin. **John 16:9**. We see that implied in John 3 where Jesus says that those who love darkness avoid the light, because their deeds will be exposed. Jesus is too gracious a God to allow us to not be convicted of our sin.

The proper response to this is to respond with repentance. While Christ on earth did live with sinners, he never let sin go unnoticed. He called sin sin, but led them to repentance through grace. Now the Holy Spirit which is everywhere convicts us of sin, so that we may in accordance with 2 Corinthians 3, have the veil of sin lifted over our face and to be transformed from one form of glory to another.

You may say about this church, "You talk about sin too much," my response to you, because I am a sinner would be "because you sin too much." But seriously, we would not love you if we let you live in sin. Jesus did not die on the cross because sin could be ignored. Jesus died on the cross so that sin could be dealt with once and for all.

But the flip side of this equation is also that the Holy Spirit has come to convict us concerning righteousness. **John 16:10**. This is good because God is gracious he doesn't convict us of sin and then leave us wallowing in our own filth, but he shows us how to live rightly. This is also done through the Holy Spirit.

David proves this point in the Psalms in **Psalms 119:29-32**. It is God who teaches him the way to act, that is a beautiful thing. Do you understand that, for those of you in here who have been wrestling with longstanding sin, longstanding disputes or anger, the Holy Spirit is here to lead you to the scriptures and change your life?

Jesus is gone, we no longer can gaze upon the body of the ideal man, but through his spirit Christ is leading us to completion in him.

The third and final form of conviction that the holy spirit brings is conviction concerning judgment: **John 16:11**.

Now what does Jesus mean here when he says judgment, because he isn't condemning us for sin again, he already did that. I think another way to think about this is conviction concerning boldness. You see the world is defeated. Therefore we should realize that judgment and defeat of that world and live according.. That is not according to its kingdom, but according to Christ's kingdom, in boldness..

If you are a Christian you have no excuse to follow the ruler of this world. In the same way no one moves into a condemned house, you do not reside in the fallen rule of a condemned King.

That's why I love Paul's language in Romans 8:37, where he says "We are more than conquerors," that's because we are victors. We have won, Christ on the cross secured the victory and now we live in light of that.

I think this boldness through judgment is a pivotal piece of understanding the role of the spirit. Because Jesus is about to give us the mac-daddy of mission statements concerning the Holy Spirit and this boldness enhances it.

John 16:12-15

So here it is, the primary purpose of the Holy Spirit, those three convictions we saw, this is the end result of them. **The Holy Spirit Exists to Constantly Steer Us to the Truth of Christ.**

Did you see that language in the text: guide us into all truth, speaks not on his own authority, He will glorify me, taken what is mine and declares it to you. You see the Holy Spirit is not something to be worshipped as its own because the Holy Spirit will not allow you to worship it alone, nor is the Holy Spirit something to be ignored unless you wish to ignore Christ.

When I read this I was amazed at the last two verses **14-15**. The holy spirit takes all that is Christ's and declares it to us. Do you realize the wonder of that? This isn't some higher knowledge revealed only to those in Christ, but this is a Biblical wisdom and a godly discernment that comes only from Christ.

You see when we sinned, our world became inverted. Our eyes became darkened to the things of Christ. Our hearts became calloused to the idea of grace, and even upon conversion we still struggle with going back to our old ways. But now the Holy Spirit has come and it declares to us things in order to reframe our world in light of Christ.

The Holy Spirit is our divine tour guide through the jungle of life. It declares to us pitfalls and traps which so easily entangle, and instead shows us routes of safety and teaches us survival skills. It equips us for everything this life throws at you.

Right now whatever you are going through the Holy Spirit is desiring and laboring in you to center your eyes on the cross through this. It is declaring to your inner being truth and slowly swaying you to view the world not in terms of the shallow truth, but in terms of God's truth.

Now perhaps some of you in here are like: "I don't know what this guy is talking about, no one is declaring anything to me, my life is just a mess." Well let me encourage you in here today who feel like the Holy Spirit is not working and that your circumstances are too loud for the word of God to be heard amidst it. **John 16:12-13.**

So here we have Jesus telling his disciples that he has more to reveal to them, more truth and also the big picture of things to come. Wouldn't that be neat if God did that for all of us? Just spoke to us truth

and declared to us things to come. Can you imagine the hope and the peace that would come knowing that God took you by the hand said, listen to my voice, see my plan, you're going to be alright? Well here is the thing, that truth that Christ had to reveal, that's the rest of the New Testament, and that declaring of things to come, we see that in Revelation (A book not intended to scare and cause us to scour the newspapers, but a book written to give us hope).

Look here **2 Peter 1:19-21**. Our scripture was written by men carried along by the Holy Spirit. If that is true then the primary place to look to have truths declared to you is the Bible.

Look at what **Hebrews 4:12** says about the Bible. You want to be pierced changed altered restored and renewed look to the scriptures.

You want to experience Christ, encounter him in his scriptures. You want to follow Christ well, listen to what the Holy Spirit is declaring to you.

Now here is the kicker. The holy spirit exists to steer us to the cross of Christ, but there is an additional purpose, and this is where that boldness comes in.

Look at **Acts 1:8**. You see the Holy Spirit declares Christ to you, so that you may declare Christ to others.

You see when God appeared to Moses and told him to go call out Pharaoh, he used some lame excuse about not knowing what to say and not being able to say it if he could, look at what God said to him **Exodus 4:12-13**

God said he was going to give Moses the words to speak, and that wasn't enough for Moses. I am telling you in here today, do not make the mistake of Moses. God has sent himself as the Holy Spirit to declare to us the things to say and discernment as to when to say and I tell you that is enough. We need no other tool for evangelism.

The Holy Spirit declares, the Holy scriptures equip, the blood of Christ works. So if you want to be one who is "in the spirit," declare Christ.

Let the Holy Spirit declare to you truth in the office. Let him season your conversation with salt. Let the Holy Spirit shape your parenting and drench it with grace. Let the Holy Spirit speak in love to your friends because true love gives life.

Let the Holy Spirit show you that this world reenacts gospel stories daily and those can be used as spring boards into evangelism. Let him teach you gospel centered words in daily conversations like "grace" "hope" "blessing" and "repentance." Let him give you the boldness to ask a co-worker or family member, how can I pray for you today.

Let the Holy Spirit work in us in power because he has declared Christ so vividly for us that it is only natural for us to vividly proclaim Christ and the hope of his coming Kingdom to others.

The Holy Spirit is the world's greatest seminary, the Holy Scriptures is the world's greatest resource,

the world is the greatest mission, and the blood of Christ really works. Declare it.