

Introduction: (Read John 15:26-16:16) - This is the 3rd of the 4 (παράκλητος) *paraclete* passages in John 14-16 – 14:16-17, 26; 16:7. In this passage Jesus reintroduced the paraclete or the Holy Spirit into His teaching as He prepared His disciples for His departure (cf. 14:16-17, 26 – In 14:16-17, 18-20). Up to this point Jesus has spoken of the paraclete or the Spirit as the One Who would dwell in the disciples – the believer – and mediate Jesus’ presence with them profoundly and intimately. He would effect the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son in the Christian. This is the basis of the promise of Jesus in 14:1-3 (cf. Ephesians 1:13-14) and it is sweetly expressed in 14:21, 23. In addition, it is the Spirit indwelling the believer which makes possible and fruitful the “abiding” in Jesus and the fullness of His joy as the experience of the believer described in 15:1-11. ***This joy returns to the discussion of the impending grief of the disciples due to Jesus “leaving” as recorded in 16:16-19, 20-24.***

In 14:26 Jesus alludes to the ministry of the Spirit in the disciples or the believer ***as He reminds them of the things Jesus taught them and continues Jesus’ teaching.*** This is the focus of today’s passage – the ministry of the Spirit in and through the believer.

****Jesus Promises That After He Goes to the Father He Will Send the Holy Spirit Who Will Empower Them for the Ministry to Which He has Appointed Them*** – 15:26-27 – There are 4 descriptive phrases Jesus uses to give emphasis to how He wants us to understand (ὁ παράκλητος) the Spirit and His coming.

*****First, Jesus qualifies the coming of the παράκλητος/Spirit when He describes Him as the One “Whom I will send to you from the Father”*** – Jesus is making reference to His leaving to the Father through the cross and resurrection, unto His exaltation to glory, **as the necessary foundation for and a prelude to the sending of the Spirit to live within believers.** Jesus made this point earlier in 14:26 and there is much more to say about this in 16:5-8. Jesus alludes to this promise with its implications for the disciples’ ministry in Acts 1:7-8 and Peter explains it better in Acts 2:29-36.

*****Second, Jesus emphasizes how His disciples are to understand the character of the Spirit and His ministry when He describes Him as “the Spirit of truth”*** – This is a carry-over from His initial promise of the παράκλητος/Spirit on this last night before the cross recorded in 14:17. It is picked up again in 16:13. There is more to say about Jesus’ qualification of the παράκλητος as the “Spirit of truth” when we look more closely at 16:8-15.

However, if you consider Jesus’ final qualifying statement of the Spirit in 15:26 (ἐκεῖνος μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἐμοῦ - “He will testify about me”) and view it in light of what He said in 14:26 and goes on to say in 16:13-15 we can safely say in summary that Jesus will send the Spirit to continue His mission to His disciples and through His disciples – teaching/testifying of Him to the disciples and leading them into all truth and bearing powerful witness through His disciples, to the world, unto His glory.

****Third**, *Jesus is profoundly uniting His disciples to His Father and Himself, in both relationship and eternal mission, by the Spirit by highlighting that the Spirit proceeds from the Father – 15:26b and 26c-27 – This may hint at the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father (and perhaps the Son) now sent to the believer to unite them to the Triune God and to empower them for an “eternal” mission – the mission of the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit – from before the foundations of the world. It seems Jesus is not simply speaking about what takes place in the context of time – the present moment and the days etc. to follow. Jesus, it seems, is speaking of the eternal relationship of the Triune God – including the Spirit’s place in that relationship (cf. Ferguson, “Lessons from the Upper Room,” 138-9 – economic vs ontological Trinity). **Ferguson is correct when he writes**, “Jesus is pointing the disciples back to a ‘time when time was not.’ In this night of crisis, He is drawing back the curtain on the mystery of the Trinity....Here, in this dark hour, Jesus is casting an anchor for His disciples into the very heart of God.”*

****Fourth**, *It is clear from these παράκλητος passages that by the Spirit Jesus passes the baton of ministry, given Him by the Father, to the Church – Believers – 15:26b-27; cf. Acts 1:7-8; also 14:26; 16:7-11. Much is said about this in 16:7-11 but it is important to note two relatively obvious things from this short verse – **First**, the Spirit who testifies of Jesus to us will bear witness to Jesus through us. This is non-negotiable! We cannot know His glory, His joy in fullness and our fellow man’s spiritual poverty and brokenness and remain silent!! **Second**, ironically yet predictably – it is that very testimony which will illicit the hatred of the world.*

Why is Jesus telling the disciples these things – about the coming persecution and the promised Spirit?

***Jesus Is Telling the Disciples These Things so that They Will Not Stumble** – 16:1-3 – Perhaps we should consider the look on the disciples’ faces when Jesus finished “saying these things.” It must’ve fractured their Kingdom hopes...So Jesus does a couple of things in summary. I really want you to hear these words of Jesus as spoken with clear concern and deep love and compassion for His disciples – a love, concern and compassion that was on display in His prayer in **John 17:11-19** and continues this day for all of those who love Him and are left/sent into this world to bear witness to Him. These are not easy words for Him to speak to those He loves!!

1. - 16:1 - He gives His reason for teaching them what He’s taught them (**Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε**). He doesn’t want them, or you and me, to stumble when the world responds to us as it did to Him. Knowing what is coming really helps to fortify us against its difficulties – the suffering it brings.

2. – **16:2-3** - He wants them to understand that this rejection is **inevitable and may be incredibly severe**, because those who persecute them/us do not know our Father as their Father and as a result they cannot know Jesus, whom you and I love – who is our very life – and to

whom we testify. They do not see His glory – He who is the incarnation of the glory of God – they do not long for His glory as you and I do (cf. 14:22-24).

Note: Ferguson notes - in 16:1 Jesus answers the question – “Why are you telling us about the persecution that’s coming?” In 16:4 He answers the question, “Why now - why are you only now telling us about the coming persecution?”

In 16:1 He begins to prepare His disciples for persecution by saying *Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε*. Jesus introduces this text, where He revisits His departure, by saying *ἀλλὰ ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἡ ὥρα αὐτῶν μνημονεύητε αὐτῶν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἶπον ὑμῖν*.

***Jesus Returned to the Topic of His Departure as a Necessity for the Coming of the Spirit – 16:4-11 – Note:** 16:4b - *He did not tell them before because He was with them*. While He was with them He protected them (cf. **John 17:11-19**). But now He was going to leave them. They needed to understand that the cross was a gospel necessity and that they served a crucified (and risen victorious) Savior and just as they would bear His life and glory, they would bear His cross. They could not understand at that moment but they soon would be reminded by the Spirit and would come to understand that to share in His glory is to share in His cross (cf. Romans 8:16-17; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Philippians 1:20-21; Peter 3:13-18).

I want you to consider the tenderness, the gentleness that seems to me to fill up these words.

****Jesus reasons with them about the need for His departure – His going to the Father – 16:5-7 – 16:5 - νῦν δὲ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐρωτᾷ με· ποῦ ὑπάγεις; -** Whenever He spoke of His “going” He has always implied that it was the purpose of His coming (cf. 12:27-28; 17:4-5). His “going” to the cross and through the cross to the Father, completes the purpose of His “coming” or being sent from/by the Father (“It is finished” and “Father – Into your hands I commit my spirit”). **However**, His announcement, rather than prompt a sense of excitement and wonder by its glory, or even prompt curiosity and anticipation – it has proven to be confusing and has caused their hearts to be troubled – to fear (cf. 14:1, 27).

- 16:6 - *ἀλλ’ ὅτι ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἡ λύπη πεπλήρωκεν ὑμῶν τὴν καρδίαν* – There is another *ἀλλ’ ὅτι ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν* here introduced as the cause of grief – so much so that Jesus looks upon the faces/hearts of His disciples and sees hearts **which have been filled with grief**.

Jesus knows that His words about what lies ahead are causing the disciples to grieve – “it has filled your hearts with grief.” He also knows that though His call on them will give them “joy unspeakable and full of glory” in this life and a life to follow in the family of the Triune God in which they will experience His extravagant love, kindness, and pleasure for all eternity that, up to this point, was known only among the Father, Son and Spirit – His call on them will also put them at odds with the world they know. It is a hard calling for a time – it is the way of the cross!! They will no longer hope in what is seen but they will realize it is temporary and that their hope

rests in what is unseen (cf. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**)!! Moreover – they are commissioned to call others to that hope – that life!! That is a hard calling but a glorious one!!

- 16:7 – (ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω ὑμῖν, συμφέρει ὑμῖν ἵνα ἐγὼ ἀπέλθω.) The way Jesus addresses them here is almost as if He says to them – “Look at me - you must listen to me and know that I am telling you the truth no matter how much your soul resists what I am saying. **It is better for you that I go.**”

While everything in them is screaming, “I don’t understand!! Don’t leave us Lord!!” - Jesus gives them two contingencies to explain to them the incomprehensible and unacceptable “truth” of what He says.

1. ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ ἀπέλθω, ὁ παράκλητος οὐκ ἐλεύσεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς – “If I do not go...” The work of redemption which I came to accomplish will be left undone if I do not go!! The work itself is not complete until I am seated at the right hand of the Father!!

2. ἐὰν δὲ πορευθῶ, πέμψω αὐτὸν πρὸς ὑμᾶς and “But if I do go...” In addition, if I go then I can send the Spirit so that the work can continue through you. You can then be my witnesses!!

***Jesus would now tell them why it was necessary, indeed better, for the Spirit to come than for Him to remain – 16:8-11 – This is an explanation of what Jesus said earlier (cf. 14:15-20, 26; 15:26-27). As you are listening to these words hear them in the context of the whole and finished work for which Jesus was **sent** by the Father – the work of redemption, of the gospel – which required both the way of His profound coming and returning.*

Note: Jesus makes a summary statement about the Spirit’s work in the world and through the disciples, which has primary application to the disciples and in principle application to all who believe in Jesus – in whom the Spirit dwells.

Jesus said that when the Spirit comes He will convict the world **of guilt** (16:8a - Καὶ ἐλθὼν ἐκεῖνος ἐλέγξει τὸν κόσμον). Though some translations do not include the word “guilt” it is implied in the word “convict” – it has the idea of to bring to light, to reprove or to bring someone to the point where they recognize wrongdoing.

It is important to consider that, though this may portend the final judgement, it is not a reference to the final judgement. Rather, Jesus is speaking of the work of the Spirit that both continues His work and vindicates Him as sent from the Father to speak the Father’s words and do the Father’s works (cf. 15:20-25). He “goes to the Father” and is seated in glory victorious, the work finished and the Spirit bears witness to the exalted Jesus and convicts the world – calling them to repentance. ***He will convict the world of guilt in three areas.***

1. In regards to sin – because they, the world, has not believed in Jesus. Each of these three works of conviction makeup an invitation to repentance and grace extended through believers. The Spirit will convict the world of its refusal to believe in Jesus and receive His offer of eternal

life and relationship with the Father. The Spirit will continue to call those in the world away from sin, from their lost condition – from alienation from God – from the curse and death!!

2. In regards to righteousness – because Jesus has/is going to the Father. The Spirit will convict the world by His vindication of Jesus’ words and works – “then you will know that I am.” Carson, Kostenberger, Ferguson – this is effectively a re-trial of the case the world and the enemy brought against Jesus. He will be vindicated in us and through us by the Spirit. This is made clear in 16:13-14.

3. In regards to judgement – because the ruler/prince of this world has been judged – ***now stands condemned***. This is the point made earlier in 12:31; 14:30-31. Paul makes this point in Ephesians 1:18-23 and by implication in Romans 5:12ff (cf. also The author of Hebrews in 2:14-18 and John in 1 John 3:8).

Kostenberger and Ferguson both make the point that this is the very work on display in Peter’s sermon in Acts 2:14-41 – esp.22-41.

Note: Jesus now tells His disciples that the Spirit will come not simply as the Spirit who convicts the world but the Spirit illuminates the disciples.

****Jesus Will Send the Spirit to Illuminate the Disciples by Continuing to Speak to Them from the Heart of Jesus – to Bear the Mind of Christ to Them – 16:12-15***

*****Jesus refers once again to the Spirit as the Spirit of truth who will serve as a guide into all truth – 16:12-14 – Jesus has much more to say to, to teach His disciples but He cannot say it now. The Spirit will guide the disciples into the truth that Jesus has left unsaid. He will not be speaking independently – rather He will take what He hears from the ascended Jesus and speak it to the disciples – His purpose is to glorify Jesus – to lift Him up.***

*****Jesus presents this ministry of the Spirit as a continuation of Jesus’ ministry of speaking the words of the Father and doing the works of the Father – 16:15***

This takes place in the preaching, teaching and writing work of the disciples – as we have already seen. However, it continues in you and me today – with the important difference seen in that we do not receive new revelation. We are guided into the truth of God’s word and given His wisdom by the Spirit – the mind of Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; Romans 8:5-11).

“Jesus is pointing the disciples back to a ‘time when time was not.’ In this night of crisis, He is drawing back the curtain on the mystery of the Trinity....Here, in this dark hour, Jesus is casting an anchor for His disciples into the very heart of God.” By the Spirit Jesus has brought us into the life and love ***and redemptive work of the Triune God!!***