

The Spirit Who Convicts
John 16:4b-15
July 5th, 2026

1. Jesus is _____ but the Spirit is _____.
(16:4b-7)

2. The Spirit _____ the world. (16:8-11)

3. The Spirit _____ truth. (16:12-15)

4. Applying the Word

- a. Be _____ for the age in which we live.
- b. _____ of sin points to our need for God.
- c. _____ in creation points to the goodness of God.

Questions for Discussion/Reflection on John 16:4b-15

1. Why might some people think it is better to have Jesus next to them in the flesh than to have the Holy Spirit sent into the world? What does that reveal about our view of the Holy Spirit?
2. What reasons does Jesus give in this passage that it is to our advantage for Him to leave and send the Spirit?
3. Why would Jesus say that none of them asks, “where are You going?” when it seems like they have asked that in John 13:36 and 14:5? What does that reveal about the heart behind their question to this point? How is that reflected in their other comments?
4. As Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (vv. 8-11), how does He continue the work that Jesus was already doing in His ministry on earth? See Matthew 5:20-28 for an example.
5. How was the promise of v. 13 fulfilled in the writing of the New Testament? See 1 Peter 1:20-21 and 2 Tim. 3:16
6. Compare Jesus’ statement about the Holy Spirit in v. 13 with His statements about Himself in John 5:30; 8:28; and 12:49. What does this reveal about the unity of the Father, Son, and Spirit in the Trinity?
7. How does each member of the Trinity bring glory to one another in the following passages: John 7:18; 8:54; 14:13; 16:14; 17:4-5

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Big idea: The Holy Spirit continues and expands the work of Jesus by convicting the world and revealing truth.

Intro

A common conversation game with kids is “Would you rather?” The conversation goes like this: “Would you rather...” and then two embarrassing or painful options are presented and you have to choose one of the two options. For example, they might say, “would you rather eat an entire bottle of mayonnaise in one sitting or eat only potatoes for an entire year?” “Would you rather come to church wearing a snowsuit or a giant blue mohawk?”

What if the “would you rather” question was a choice between two good things and you had to choose the best thing? “Would you rather have Jesus in the flesh right next to you to teach you and walk with you through life or have the Holy Spirit active in the world?” Most of us would choose Jesus. Jesus says to choose the Holy Spirit.

Why? What does the Holy Spirit do that is so significant, so powerful, so precious that it is to our advantage that He goes away and sends the Spirit?

In essence, The Spirit continues and expands the work of Jesus.

1. Jesus is **leaving** but the Spirit is **coming**. (16:4b-7)
 - a. Jesus is telling them things He hadn’t told them before because He was with them before. (v. 4b)
 - i. Now that He is about to leave, He is telling them what they need to know for what’s next. He is preparing them for the future.
 - ii. (Carter) First, he has not fully revealed his departure. Throughout the Gospel Jesus speaks of his death, but it’s only now that He fully lays out His death, resurrection, and ascension.
 - iii. Second, he has not fully revealed their mission to be His witnesses by the power of the Spirit.
 - iv. Third, he has not fully revealed the world’s reaction to the message.
 - b. None asks Him where He is going (v. 5)
 - i. Peter did ask Him in 13:36.
 - ii. Thomas brought it up in 14:5.
 - iii. But what Jesus is saying is a mild correction to their responses.
 1. They have responded by focusing on themselves, their fear, their uncertainty, their sense of loss. (v. 6)
 2. DA Carson uses the example of a child planning on a fishing trip with his dad who is suddenly called away for a work trip. The child says, “Aw, Dad, where are you going?!” – it’s more of a protest and lament than an honest question about where Dad’s work trip will take him.
 3. They ask but its more about how it affects them and their sense of loss, which is what Jesus point to in v. 6.
 - c. Why is it to their advantage and to ours that He went away and sent the Spirit?
 - i. As God, the Holy Spirit did not have a beginning and was active in the OT.
 - ii. Repeated emphasis that the coming of the Spirit was something new.

1. **John 7:39** But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
 2. **John 14:16** "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;
- d. What was the role of the HS in the OT and how is it new in the New Covenant?
- i. God created and gave life by the Spirit.
 1. **Genesis 1:26** Then God said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness;
 2. **Psalms 104:30** You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the ground.
 - ii. He empowered people for leadership and service.
 1. **Judges 3:10** The Spirit of the LORD came upon him (Othniel), and he judged Israel . . .
 - iii. He imparted creative ability to people for special tasks.
 1. **Exodus 31:2-5** "See, I have called by name Bezalel . . . ³ "I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *kinds of* craftsmanship,
 - iv. He empowered and inspired the prophets and authors of the OT.
 1. **2 Peter 1:20-21** But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation, ²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.
 - v. His work was limited to certain people instead of all believers.
 1. Came upon people at certain times for certain purposes, but isn't a blanket filling and empowering of all believers.
 - vi. His work was limited to certain kinds of ministry.
 1. Empowered for service, leadership, gave skills – same as NT
 - vii. His indwelling and empowering was limited in duration.
 1. **1 Samuel 16:14** Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul,
 2. **Psalms 51:11** Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
- e. Why did Jesus have to go to send the Spirit?
- i. It's not that they can't occupy the same space or minister at the same time. Rather, the coming Spirit would characterize the new age of the new covenant that would be inaugurated by Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection and return to glory.
 - ii. **Ezekiel 11:19** "And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,
 - iii. **Joel 2:28** "It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions.

2. The Spirit **convicts** the world. (16:8-11)

- a. "Convict" is to expose guilt, bring to light, prove to be wrong.
 - i. We use the term to talk about someone being "convicted of a crime" – they were accused, it was an alleged crime, but the headline changes after the trial and they are convicted.
 - ii. The HS gives new life through regeneration, produces fruit in the Christian, leads us into truth, and much more.
 - iii. But in these verses, the focus is on his work in the world, to the world in rebellion against God.
- b. V. 8 gives the summary – convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment – vv. 9-11 develops each of those three, but still pretty brief and may not be obvious what is meant.
- c. He convicts concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me (v. 9)
 - i. The Spirit convicts, showing people that things are not as they should be. It is a growing sense that some things are right and wrong, and we do wrong.
 - ii. The characteristic sin of the world is unbelief. It is the chief sin that Jesus has addressed throughout His ministry and the Spirit continues that work.
- d. He convicts concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father (v. 10)
 - i. The HS is picking up where Jesus left off
 - ii. Jesus exposed the false self-righteousness of the world, but when He returns to the Father, who will carry on that work of exposing? The HS
 - iii. Truly humility that compels us to come to Christ is when we realize that even our best efforts at righteousness fall far short of God's holy standard.
 - iv. **Isaiah 64:6** For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
 - v. Jesus told the religious leaders that they were like whitewashed tombs, that looked good on the outside but inside held dead men's bones. That is to expose their sin and self-righteousness that hid a messed up inner life.
- e. He convicts concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged (v. 11)
 - i. Jesus has already said that Satan is a liar from the beginning and when they oppose Christ, they take his side.
 - ii. **John 8:44** "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
 - iii. What Satan thought to be a triumph at the cross would be his downfall as the penalty for sin is paid and the fear of death is taken away.
 - iv. **Hebrews 2:14-15** Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

3. The Spirit **reveals** truth. (16:12-15)

- a. What we have seen in John is that Jesus is culmination of God's revelation.
 - i. **John 1:18** No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.
 - ii. There is a finality of the revelation of God through Jesus in that He is the peak, the pinnacle, the culmination of revelation about God because He is God.
 - iii. **Hebrews 1:1-2a** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son,
 - iv. So as the Son departs, the Spirits continues that role of guiding into all truth.
- b. Just as Jesus did not speak on His own initiative, so neither will the Spirit speak on His own initiative.
 - i. **John 12:49** "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.
 - ii. This does not demote the Son or the Spirit to a lesser nature than the Father. Rather it describes unity between the members of the Trinity. They are not giving competing messages or competing wills, but are in joyful, lockstep communication.
 - iii. Moody: The word, the Spirit, and Christ work together (v 15). The Spirit inspires the word, and the word points to Christ. Do not set at variance or in opposition the Bible and the work of the Spirit. Neither divide Christ from the Bible. He who loves Jesus will love the Bible, for the Bible honors Jesus.
- c. Primarily the apostles in mind as they write the NT but in a secondary way as the Spirit of God points us to the Word of God and works in us to understand it and apply it.

4. Applying the Word

- a. Be ***grateful*** for the age in which we live.
 - i. It's the age of the New Covenant, of the Spirit living within us.
 - ii. D.A. Carson, "Before the triumphant inbreaking of God's saving reign, before the inauguration of the new covenant, millions ignored the claims of the true God. Pentecost transformed that limitation, and millions have been brought to happy submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and to growing obedience by the power of the Spirit whom He bequeathed."
 - iii. Jesus says it is to our advantage that He sends the Spirit, but what He emphasizes is not the personal indwelling of the Spirit to comfort and encourage us, although that's true, but the work of the Spirit to convict and to reveal, bringing more and more people to saving relationship with God.
 - iv. The advantage is gospel expansion – 100's of millions turning to the living God in saving faith. There are followers of Jesus on every continent, across thousands of languages. Christianity is incredibly diverse ethnically, spreading far beyond it's geographic and cultural origin.
- b. ***Conviction*** of sin points to our need for God.
 - i. The Spirit convicts people of their need.
 - ii. The Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment.
 - 1. That's an apologetic argument from human sin and need.

2. How do I know God is real and that I need Him? I can't deny my own sin, my own inability to do what's right. I can't deny the moral code written into the universe and on my own conscience, but I also can't fully follow it.
- c. **Gladness** in creation points to the goodness of God.
- i. Scripture also makes an apologetic argument from God's goodness and blessing.
 1. **Acts 14:15-17** and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. ¹⁶ "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; ¹⁷ and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."
 2. What was His "witness"? doing good to us, satisfying us with food and with gladness.
 3. When someone who is agnostic about God, enjoys a meal with friends on a patio in the summer time and leaves the night with a glad heart, it's a little taste of the goodness of God pointing us to God's reality.
 4. Someone recently compared it to the little pink spoon you get at an ice cream shop to sample the flavor. It's just a taste of the full cup to come. Likewise, God gives us a little taste of His goodness, even when we are far from Him as a witness to His reality and goodness.
 5. When the Spirit convicts that some person about their inability to do what's right, that also points to God's reality and our need for His mercy. In that way, He is pointing him to Jesus, the creating God who made His heart glad with food and the saving God who died for Him.
 6. The world is full of undeniable brokenness and beauty. Christianity explains both.

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Enduring Joy
John 16:16-33
July 12th, 2026

Big idea: The disciples' grief at the death of Christ will be replaced by lasting joy after the resurrection. That joy will come from answered prayer, clear understanding, and confidence that He has overcome the world.

Intro

In these chapters of John, we are given a very transparent view of the disciples.

They are slow to pick up on what Jesus is saying – He is going away.

They are troubled.

Grief is starting to well up and will overtake them when Jesus is taken away from them.

Jesus is patiently and thoroughly teaching them over the course of 4 chapters. What He says to them, applies to us.

As He wraps up His teaching before turning to prayer in chapter 17 and then the series of events that result in the cross and resurrection resume in chapter 18, He gives them three facts that encourage enduring joy.

Three facts that encourage enduring joy

For the disciples, they were future promises. For us, they are present realities that we often overlook.

1. Jesus **returned** from death. (16:16-22)
 - a. "A little while" – 7 times the phrase is used in this section
 - i. No longer see Me...you will see Me
 1. Two options – death and resurrection, ascension and return
 2. Death and resurrection makes the most sense
 - a. Their grief turns to joy
 - b. It is truly "a little while" for both – He would die the next day and rise three days later
 - c. New access in prayer follows after they "see Him" – which makes sense after His resurrection but doesn't reflect well a future reality after his return.
 - b. Clearly they still don't fully understand
 - i. Repeated emphasis on His departure in ch 13-16
 1. **John 13:33** "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. .

2. **John 14:18-19** "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.
 3. **John 14:28** "You heard that I said to you, I go away, and I will come to you. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.
 4. **John 16:5** "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, Where are You going?
- ii. Still so contrary to their expectations of the Messiah and His kingdom.
 - iii. V. 18 has the sense of, "they continually kept saying" – what is this? We don't know what He is talking about.
- c. At the cross, they will weep and lament while the world rejoices.
- i. **Luke 23:27** And following Him was a large crowd of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him.
 - ii. The people mocking Him "rejoiced" in making light of Him. The religious leaders who sought his death saw it as a victory.
- d. "But" – marks a strong contrast – their grief will be turned to joy.
- i. Analogy of a woman's pain in childbirth followed by joy in her child
 - ii. Fitting analogy – their grief and pain will be very real. Their lives will appear to be shattered as their friend, their leader, their Messiah hangs on the cross in defeat. But that will be replaced by incredible joy when He returns from the grave. The joy will be all the more prominent because of the depth of pain.
 - iii. A woman in childbirth feels great pain and commonly thinks or says something like, "never again! This will be an only child!" And then she's snuggling a new born and getting the first smiles from a 3 week old and the joy of her baby eclipses the pain of the birth. The pain was still there and still real, but it has somewhat dimmed even in her memory with a baby in her arms.
 - iv. Matt Carter: Sorrow and joy are not two random emotions that happen to appear in this order chronologically. The sorrow must take place if the joy is to come. There's no skipping sorrow to get to the joy. Most ladies would love to skip nine months of pregnancy and an excruciating labor and just hold their newborns in their arms (v. 21), but it doesn't work that way. You don't get the newborn without the morning sickness, swollen ankles, and contractions. Jesus tells the disciples they can't get the joy without experiencing the sorrow.
 - v. The disciples will experience sorrow – they will see Jesus arrested and in terror will briefly try to fight back. They will follow along with the unjust trials. They will hear the whip hit his back. They will see him hang on the cross. His

lifeless body will be taken down, wrapped in cloth, and tucked into a tomb behind a rock on a Friday. Saturday will be a dark day. But with the rising of the sun on Sunday morning, they will find the tomb empty, and will embrace their friend in a resurrected body.

- e. Their hearts will rejoice and no one will take their joy away
 - i. His resurrection proved that what He said was true, that death is no longer an undefeated enemy, that our sins have been paid in full, that the sufferings in this life are the closest we will ever get to judgment.
 - ii. Mark Dever, “Christian, your sufferings are the last gasps of the judgment you’re being delivered from.”
 - iii. The more real that truth is for us, the more present our joy will be.
 - iv. Joy in other things can be taken away – a car can be crashed or turned in to a lemon, a relationship can go sour, money can run out, a job can be lost, health can turn quickly into sickness.
 - v. But joy in the resurrected Jesus who conquered sin and death is unquenchable.

2. The Father **answers** prayer. (16:23-28)

- a. Another repeated theme in the upper room discourse
 - i. **John 14:13** "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
 - ii. **John 15:16** "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.
- b. In His name – based on His character, nature, substitutionary death – consistent with His goals and values.
 - i. There’s a new privilege as we are united with Jesus to ask in His name.
 - ii. Loren’s analogy of being given a company credit card and told, “buy anything you need” but the implication is, anything you need for the business, for the job, for the company. The name of the company is on the card.
- c. Think about your prayers – if you put them in two categories – those that are for your comfort and those that are for the mission for which God has you here on earth – which category do they fall into most often? If God answers this prayer, will it contribute more to my comfort or my mission? (adapted from Carter)
- d. He will speak to them in plain words not figurative language
 - i. Partly fulfilled in this conversation as they say in v. 29 – now you are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech.
 - ii. Looking ahead after the resurrection where they realize with great clarity then what he meant by “going away” and being 3 days and nights in the grave

just like Jonah was in the belly of a fish and the temple torn down and rebuilt in 3 days (his body).

- e. But it's not that He asks the Father on our behalf but that we ask the Father directly in Jesus' name.
 - i. He isn't a reluctant wish granter who needs to be persuaded by His Son.
 - ii. "for the Father Himself loves you."
 - 1. This is why we can be bold in prayer and come to God directly.
 - 2. Do you have a hard time repeating the simple phrase, "God loves me"? Some Christians do. Maybe because it has been sentimentalized or misused to justify sin because after all, "God loves me" and would want me to be happy. It might come from theological reasons – we recognize the Bible's teaching on our own depravity so it's easier to think of ourselves as a wretched worm than to think, "God loves me."
 - iii. Because you have loved Me
 - 1. The believer is folded in to this relationship of love between Father and Son. He loves us and draws us before we ever loved Him (1 John 4:19). We believe in Jesus and love Him and follow Him. He loves us with a richer, deeper experience of love.
- 3. Jesus **overcame** the world. (16:29-33)
 - a. The disciples seem like they are starting to understand – "now You are speaking plainly!" and they say we believe that You came from God.
 - i. This has been Jesus' teaching from the beginning and there have been deepening moments of belief for the disciples.
 - b. "Do you know believe?"
 - i. It's a question but it reflects uncertainty or lack of confidence in their belief because of what He says next.
 - ii. Do you really believe? You will be scattered and leave Him alone.
 - 1. Mt. 26:56 records this as they all fled after His arrest.
 - 2. Peter famously denied even knowing Jesus.
 - iii. That doesn't seem to contribute to their joy to be told about how they will fail, but it is honest and factual and it contrasts with Himself.
 - iv. We need to come to grips with our own failures in contrast with His steadiness.
- c. He will not be alone because the Father is with Him.
 - i. The unity of relationship between the Father and Son means that He is not truly alone.

- ii. Because Jesus' life is a model for us, there is an example for us in this as well.
 - iii. We may feel alone and abandoned by people, friends, churches but the Father is with us. More accurately, the Triune God is with us since the Spirit is sent to dwell in us and will never leave us.
- d. The words are meant to give us peace.
 - i. Which words? The immediate teaching about His resurrection and answered prayer, but also this whole teaching from chapters 13-16 since this concludes the teaching portion.
 - ii. Mediate on these chapters when you feel like your life is in turmoil and you need peace. Mediate on them especially when you are being opposed for the gospel and experiencing some tribulation.
- e. Our peace is "in Me" – it comes from being united to Jesus in vital fellowship, like the branches connected to the vine as we abide in Him.
- f. In the world we should expect tribulation.
 - i. It means to suffer, to have trouble, to expect persecution, to have affliction. It literally means "pressure" or "pressing together."
 - ii. That feels like an apt description for persecution but also the "normal" hardships in a broken world. We feel lots of pressure, things pressing down upon us.
- g. We can take courage – why?
 - i. Is it because we are by nature optimists? Some of us are, but he isn't talking about a personality trait.
 - ii. It can be translated "never lose heart" and means to have confidence and firmness of purpose in the face of danger or testing.
- h. Our confidence or firmness comes from the truth that Jesus has overcome the world.
 - i. His death and resurrection – still future but spoken of with such certainty its as if it has already occurred - has rendered the world's opposition pointless. He experienced the worst the world could throw at Him – a painful, humiliating death – and He overcame it. He prevailed against it or had victory over it. It's a promise that evil will not ultimately win, even if we experience the hard edge of tribulation.
 - ii. I'm grateful for the time and place in which we live. We have great freedom and prosperity, it's not perfect but compared to history, we live in a great time, and compared to global standards, we live in a great place.

- iii. But those things could be taken away. Tyranny could take away our freedom and our rights. We have brothers and sisters in Christ who in China right now that are imprisoned and haven't seen their family in 9 months.
- iv. It might not even be "persecution," it might just be a turn in prosperity – a financial collapse or even just a turn in your own health.
- v. But we can have peace and be of good courage, because Jesus has overcome the world.
- vi. Corrie Ten Boom, who experienced great hardship under Nazi forces in WW2, famously wrote, "If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. If you look at God, you'll be at rest."

4. Applying the Word

- a. Be **honest** about hardship.
 - i. Suffering people in the Bible encourages us to be honest about our own suffering.
 - ii. Persevering doesn't mean pretending, but I think we act like that sometimes.
 - iii. Instead, we need to acknowledge it when life is hard and then speak truth to our own hearts.
- b. **Consider** what you are building your joy upon.
 - i. "If I only had _____, I would be happy."
 - ii. If your joy is like a meter that goes up and down, what causes it to go up and down for you?
- c. Build your joy upon Jesus, who **conquered** death and the world.

ENDURING JOY

John 16:16-33

1. Jesus *returned* from death. (16:16-22)

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Mark Dever, “Christian, your sufferings are the last gasps of the judgment you’re being delivered from.”

2. The Father answers prayer. (16:23-28)

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John 15:16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

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