

THE ADVANTAGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK

Mark Beard

Text: John 16:5-15

What good would there have been in Jesus leaving this world unless He was doing so to accomplish something more for us?

The key advantages of Jesus departure are found in the arrival of the Comforter (5-7).

"Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. 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." NIV

The *advantages* offered to the believer by the Holy Spirit are found in two areas.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US THE ADVANTAGE IN RELATION TO THE WORLD (vv. 8-11).

“When he comes, **he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:** in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.” (bold added)

A. The Holy Spirit will convince the world of its guilt—it is not our responsibility to make the world feel guilty.

Study notes: The key to this first aspect of the Spirit's ministry is the word "convict" (*elencho*). KJV translates it "reprove," but that rendering is not strong enough. The word is a legal term that means to pronounce a judicial verdict by which the guilt of the culprit at the bar of justice is defined and fixed. The Spirit does not merely accuse men of sin, he brings to them an inescapable sense of guilt so that they realize their shame and helplessness before God. This conviction applies to three particular areas: sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Spirit is the prosecuting attorney who presents God's case against humanity. He creates an inescapable awareness of sin so that it cannot be dismissed with an excuse or

evaded by taking refuge in the fact that "everybody is doing it." The Spirit's function is like that of Nathan the prophet, who said to David, "You are the man" (2Sam 12:7), and compelled him to acknowledge his misdeeds. David was so convicted that he was reduced to a state of complete penitence: "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight" (Ps 51:4). EBC

B. The Holy Spirit will reveal the righteousness of God to humanity—we do not have to manufacture a human substitute.

Study notes: 10 The second area in which the Spirit convicts people is righteousness. He enforces the absolute standard of God's character, to which all thought and action must be compared. Apart from a standard of righteousness, there can be no sin; and there must be an awareness of the holiness of God before a person will realize his own deficiency. There is an infinite gap between the righteousness of God and the sinful state of man that man himself cannot bridge. The first step toward salvation must be the awareness that a divine mediatorship is necessary.

The connection between righteousness and Jesus' return to the Father is not immediately clear. Probably it should be interpreted as meaning that his return to the right hand of God was a complete vindication of all he had done and consequently established him as the standard for all human righteousness. Apostolic preaching conveyed this concept. Peter's statement in Acts 3:14-15 conveys much the same idea: "You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead." Whereas righteousness had previously been defined by precepts, it now has been revealed in the incarnate Son, who exemplified it perfectly in all his relationships. John crystallized this thought in his First Epistle: "In him is no sin" (1John 3:5).

11 Judgment always occurs when an act or thought is evaluated by an absolute principle. Actions are judged by their accord with law or by their lack of conformity to it. When human sin is confronted by the righteousness of Christ, its condemnation is self-evident. In this context "judgment" refers to the condemnation of satanic self-will and rebellion by the obedience and love toward the Father exhibited by Jesus. The Cross was the utter condemnation and defeat of the "prince of this world." "Condemned" is in the perfect tense (*kekritai*), which expresses a settled state. Satan is already under judgment; the sentence is fixed and permanent. (For discussion of "the prince of this world," see comments on 14:30.) EBC

C. The Holy Spirit will bring judgment to the heart of humanity—we will not have to convince them of their need of repentance.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US ADVANTAGE IN RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE (vv. 12-15).

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 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. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. NIV

A. The Holy Spirit will guide God's people (v. 13).

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 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.

1. He will guide us into God's truth.
2. He will guide us according to the Father's will.
3. He will guide us into spiritual realities.

B. The Holy Spirit will always lift up Jesus in what He does (v. 14-15).

"He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."

1. He makes the person of Jesus Christ known to us.
2. He brings revelation to us about the teachings and nature of Christ's person.

Conclusion

We have the advantage in the work Jesus has called us to do.