

**VCBC SLG—The Gospel of John**  
**Lesson #10**  
**Upper Room Discourse#4—Chapter 16**

Recap Last three Discourses: as Christ seeks to show the full extent of His love to His disciples before His trial and death (13:1)

Discourse #1: The washing of feet—Like master, like slaves

- Setting Judas' betrayal in motion
- Predicting Peter's denial

Discourse #2: I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life—Will come back to take us to Himself

- Seen "me", seen "Father"
- Promise of Holy Spirit—another helper
- "Peace I leave with you"

Discourse #3: I AM the True Vine—Command to remain in Him and to bear fruit

- Reality Check—the world will hate them
- Yet, they are best qualified to testify (with help of the Helper)

**Chapter 16—The Work of the Helper—the Spirit of Truth**

**Introduction:**

This chapter represents the last words the Lord would give the disciples, before He turned to pray to the Father. These words primarily address two areas already talked about previously

**Vv. 1-15:** The work of the Holy Spirit, in view of their task to testify and impending persecution

**Vv. 16-33:** His going back to the Father explained in plainer language

**16: 1-16 The Work of the Spirit of Truth**

Vv. 1-4—The context: Impending persecution as they bear witness to Jesus

**“All this I have told you so that you will not fall away. 2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. 3 They will do such things because they have not known the Father or (nor) me. 4 I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you.”**

In the last chapter, Jesus has told them that the world will hate them

- A reality of being the followers of Jesus—no servant is greater than the teacher (v.20)—the same is obviously true of us today!
- Yet, they are not to leave the world, but are put in the world to testify for Jesus (v.27)

Now, Jesus elaborates a bit more about the impending persecution facing them

- The immediate persecution, as they would expect, would be from their own people, the Jews –putting you out of the synagogue—which they already knew (12:42)
- But more than that, they would be killed, which we know, would be the case of almost all 11 of them (except John???)

The reason for their action

- They thought they were zealous, serving God (as was case with Paul—see Phil. 3:6)
- Bottom line: they have not known, not just the Son, but the Father
- Still the case with present-day Jews (especially the Orthodox Jews)

The reason for telling the disciples, plainly now

- When the time comes, Jesus won't be visibly seen by them
- So, no surprises and they would remember and not fall away!

Truth of the matter:

- As much as we have been told (or we knew the “why”)
- Every time things happen that cause us dismay
- Such remembrance does not help at the moment
- We still need time to let His words sink in and eventually be able to accept and be bold
- Such was obviously the case with these disciples, especially immediately after the death of Christ—it’s always a “process”!

Vv. 5-15—The Work of the Holy Spirit

**“5 but (And) now I am going to Him who sent me. None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ 6 Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things.**

**7 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.**

**8 When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt with regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:**

- **In regard to sin, because people 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.**

Obviously, the disciples are still filled with grief, preoccupied with the thought of Jesus’ departure

- The facial expression, the tone of voice of the Lord during the Upper Room Discourse obviously conveyed sadness which was fully displayed when He reached the Garden of Gethsemane—as a result, I do not think He was chastising them, but even in His own sadness, He would seek to comfort them and to draw their attention to hope, even joy!
- As you might recall, when Jesus assured them of His return and taking them to “Myself” (14: 1-4), Thomas did argue that, **“we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”** (14:5), but that was meant to vent his frustration over not really understanding all that Jesus was saying, and not a desire to know where He was going!
- Now Jesus says, this should be their focus, even if there are lots of things they do not understand—and so He begins to tell them where He is going (more in v.17ff), but here He prefaces with the “must” of His departure and the “must” of the arrival of the Holy Spirit in His stead.

**(1) . “Unless I go away, the Helper will not come”**

This is a mystery in the heavenly realm, and more specifically it belongs to the mystery of the Triune God in that

- It appears that each “person” of the Triune God really has specific roles unique to each as Jesus would explain a bit more, in terms of the role of the Holy Spirit
- It does mean that each person of the Triune God would focus on accomplishing their unique role. However, as we shall see below that all Three are really One—so far we have learned that the Father and Son are really One, but that oneness does extend to the Holy Spirit as well

- However, as much as they are One, this points to the “Divine Economy” of the Triune God, and as far as their “inter-action” or relationship is concerned, we learn that they really work in unison.
  - Incarnation: The birth of the Son was conceived by the Holy Spirit—**“What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”** (Mat. 1:12)
  - Resurrection: The Spirit raises the Son from the dead: **“And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you...”** (Roman 8:11; Eph. 1:20)
    - And thus, Jesus **“was vindicated by the Spirit”** (I Tim. 3:16)
  - Intercession: **“The One who searches the heart (God) knows the mind of the Spirit”** (Romans 8:27)
  - Creation: **God**, (the Word and the Spirit), together, **created the heavens and the earth** (Gen. 1: 1-2)
  - Baptism: The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at baptism, led Him to the desert to be tempted (Matthew 3:16; 4: 1)
  - Post-resurrection: Jesus gave instructions to the Apostles through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2)

(2) He comes not just for you, but for the world? (Or vindicating me?)

**When He comes, He will convict (*ellencho*) the world of guilt with regard to**

- **sin and righteousness and judgment:**
  - **In regard to sin, because people 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.**

While the word “*ellencho*” can be variously translated, the main idea appears to be one of refuting or proving someone to be wrong, it is interesting to note the three aspects of the work of convicting or proving highlighted by Jesus. However, we need to ask, whether this work of convicting refers to the “**world**” as a whole, **or** does it refer also to **individual persons** (sinners)?

I think, while the Holy Spirit does convict us, individually in reality, this particular statement seems to echo 15:26 in which Jesus says, **“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who goes out from the Father, He will testify about me...”**

- As we know, the Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus (as previously noted) by raising Him from the dead, thereby proving that
  - By not believing in Him, the people sin
  - By going to the Father, proving that He was not punished by God for His sin, but rather, He is the Righteous One, accepted and received by the Father (I Tim. 3:16’s “vindicated” means vindicated as righteous!)—so not being able to see Him is a “must” for His vindication!
  - The prince (or ruler) of this world, meaning Satan, stands condemned
    - His scheme completely failed
    - His power thwarted
    - Jesus has defeated sin and Satan with His death and His resurrection!
    - Done deal!

- And, of course, the Holy Spirit continues His work of testifying for Jesus
  - by filling the apostles and enabling them to perform miracles (just as Jesus did) and preaching in power and in boldness (throughout the Book of Acts)

Note: if this statement is primarily aimed of convicting individuals for repentance, I would assume that it should include the convicting of people with the Love of God which the Holy Spirit certainly does! So, I believe this statement primarily deals with the important role of the Holy Spirit to vindicate the Son!

(3) He comes for you (of course)

**12 “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 the 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.**

**14 He will glorify me because it is from me that He will receive what He will make known to you.**

**15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take what is mine, and make it know to you.”**

Obviously, the Lord loves to teach much more to His disciples

- But as they were, and before His death and resurrection
  - they would not have understood meaningfully, and
  - they would not be “able” to bear
    - Of course, the Holy Spirit would be the One who “guides us into all truth”
    - But, still
      - There is always a time and place to be taught and be able to understand
      - There is also a time and place (based on stages of our lives, even for the Spirit to show us our flaws to be worked on, our shortcomings to improve and our sins to repent from)—The Spirit knows how much we can take or bear!

The work of the Spirit concerning us

- As previously mentioned by Jesus
  - He will be with us forever (14:16) which of course includes
    - Giving us new birth—born of the Spirit (John 3:5) & justified (I Cor. 6:11)
    - As a deposit or guarantee of our heavenly inheritance (Ephesians 1:14)
    - Affirming us as God’s children—calling Him *Abba* Father (Romans 8:16)
- Guiding us into all the truth—How?
  - **“Teach you all things”** (14: 26a)
  - **“Remind us of everything I have said to you”** (14: 26b)
    - So primarily, the Spirit guides us into the Truth through the Word (i.e. the Bible)
    - Without reading, understanding and hiding the Word in our hearts, we are void of the primary means through which the Spirit would guide us!
    - That I believe is the meaning of v.16  
**“The Spirit will take what is mine (He is the Word), and make it know to you.”**

- Other work of the Holy Spirit
  - As we testify about Jesus, “The Spirit of your Father” will *speak through you* (Mat. 10:20)
  - **Enabling** those being filled to prophesy (Luke 1: 67; Acts 11:28, 19:6)
  - **Reveals** “future” (Luke 2:26—Holy Spirit reveals to Simeon...)
  - **“Moves”, “instructs” or “stops”** one into action (Luke 2: 27; Acts 8:29, 13:2, 16:6)
  - Enables some to speak in *tongues* (Acts 2:4)
  - **Emboldens us to speak** the Word of God (Acts 4:31)
  - **Encourages** us (Acts 9:31)
  - **Gives warnings** (Acts 20:23—to Paul about suffering in Jerusalem)
  - **Appoints** (Acts 20:28—as overseers etc.)
  - **Give gifts** (I Cor. 12)
  - **Pours God’s love** into our heart (Romans 5:5)
  - **Be led and governed** by the Spirit (Romans 8:6)
  - **Put to death our misdeeds** by the Spirit (Romans 8:13)
  - **Helps us in weakness**—through groaning and interceding (Romans 8:27)
  - **Peace, joy and hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15: 13)
  - **Sanctified** by the Spirit (Romans 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2)
  - Works of *miracles* by the power of the Spirit (Romans 15:19)
  - **Searches** all things, especially our heart (I Cor.2:10)
  - **Discernment and judgment** through the Spirit (I Cor. 2:15)
  - Spirit gives *freedom* (II Cor. 3:17—the power not to sin)
  - **Yielding fruit** of the Spirit (II Cor. 6:6: Gal. 5)’
  - **In Fellowship** with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14)
  - We **wait** through the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:5)
  - Spirit of **wisdom and revelation** (Eph. 1:17)
  - Spirit (gives) **unity**? (Eph. 4:3)
  - Spirit grieves over our sins (Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30)
  - **Sing, praise, pray** in the Spirit (Eph. 5:19, 6:18)
  - The **Spirit of Grace** (Heb. 10:29)
  - **Prophecies/words** in Bible, authors carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21)
  - **The Spirit speaks (through words) to the churches** (Rev. 2, 3)

A look at the above rather exhaustive list

- It is obvious that the Holy Spirit is the one that takes the initiative
  - We are to follow, obey and be led
- The only active action on our part is to have “fellowship” with the Holy Spirit which, in my opinion, is how we “remain in Christ” through the Spirit
- As for the gifts of the Holy Spirit
  - We are never asked to pursue, as they are given at the Spirit’s own prerogative (1 Cor. 12:11)
  - If we ever wish to pursue or desire, the Apostle Paul urges us to pursue or desire (not those talented gifts) the “greater gifts” which he lists as “Faith, Hope and Love” (1 Cor. 13:13)

What about being baptized by the Holy Spirit

**“For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 1:5)**

**“Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:28)**

**“For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)**

- It appears that according to the Apostle Paul’s understanding, this term is simply referring to the believers’ baptism that ushers us into one body in Christ.

What about being filled with the Holy Spirit?

- The truth is
  - When being filled with or by the Holy Spirit is mentioned
  - A lot of time has to do with
    - The performing of some miracles
    - The emboldening in preaching
    - The speaking in tongue or prophesying
  - All these are, again, the initiation or prerogative of the Holy Spirit

But when we are “told” to be filled by the Spirit

- We are told to lead a life under the control of the Holy Spirit
- Such a Spirit-filled is readily recognizable
  - As with the Seven deacons chosen in Acts 6
  - **“Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom...They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 6: 3, 5)**
- Such is the teaching of Paul when he urges us in Ephesians 5: 18-21  
**“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,**
  - **speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.**
  - **Singing and making music from your heart to the Lord,**
  - **always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
  - **Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”**

This is how we should pursue being filled with the Holy spirit

More on the Holy Spirit—Jesus is using the same language He uses to describe His relationship with the Father and applies to the Spirit’s relationship with Him:

**13“He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what he hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come.”**

**“14 He will glorify me because it is from me that He will receive what He will make known to you.**

**15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take what is mine, and make it know to you.”**

- Just like the Son: Jesus was basically saying all these about Him and the Father about His work on earth:
  - **“He (the Son) testifies to what He has seen and heard,”** (John 3:32)
- But the Holy Spirit will tell what is yet to come—How?
  - Through the writings of the Apostles and
  - In Revelation
- He will glorify the Son
  - **Jesus replied, “If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me.”** (John 8:54)
  - **After Jesus said this, He looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.”** (John 17:1)
- **“All that belongs to the Father is mine”**

Just as the Son speaks and does what He has seen and heard from the Father, the Holy Spirit also speaks what He hears; and all that belongs to the Father is the Son’s and the Holy Spirit will take what is the Son’s (which is the Father’s) and make it known to us:

So just as the Son and the Father are One

- So are the Son and the Holy Spirit and thus the Father are One!

Final thought about the Holy Spirit:

While the work and role of the Holy Spirit are found throughout the books of the gospel and the epistles, the nature and attributes of the Holy Spirit are far less described as those of the Father and the Son.

I believe, all that we need to know about the Holy Spirit have been given in the written revelation of God, and whatever being given is enough for us to believe in, to relate to and be in fellowship with Him—How?

- Through obeying His instructions, guide, admonition that He prompts, speaks and reveals to us
  - Through the Word
  - Through His inner peace and/or impression
  - Through His use of circumstances and people
- Through accepting or receiving of His encouragement, comfort
- Through trusting and drawing from His power
  - As we learn to pray for in the Spirit
- And through fellowship with Him
  - We learn to hear His groaning and
  - Be touched by His grieving for us, for the church, and for the world

However, should we be granted unusual experiences like

- speaking in tongues
- seeing visions
- performing miracles (of healing etc.)
  - just give thanks, and
  - do not use it as a gauge of our spirituality, nor
  - seeking to repeat or deepen such an experience!

We always pray for revivals

But such a prayer or a phenomenon does not exist the NT

Because it is entirely His prerogative and is not dependent on us! **(Pause)**

## 16: 16-33: The “Little While” pericope—explained in plainer language

16 Jesus went on to say, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.”

17 At this, some of his disciples said to one another, “What does He mean by saying, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father’?” 18 They kept asking, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand what he is saying.”

It is likely that, after the meal, they were cleaning up and packing, and that gave the disciples a chance to confer with one another

- perhaps, they might understand that Jesus has to go back to the Father, because this was quite a central message during the supper, and that was the reason for their troubled hearts—they would no longer see Him
- and yet, He now says, after a little while (not at the time of Resurrection of the Last Day) they will be seeing Him again—so what does He mean?

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask (*question*) him about this, so he said to them, “Are you asking (*seeking*) one another what I meant when I said, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me’?”

This is His answer:

20 Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

- (i) “See me no more”:
  - obviously referring to the time of His death that He has already predicted
  - and it will be a time of weeping and mourning for the disciples—in fact, as we know, it is a time of devastation—not only fear, but heart-breaking despair!
  - but the disturbing truth is: **“While the world rejoices.”**
    - How can the world rejoice over the killing of its Creator God?
      - The world, under the prince of darkness rejoices that the One who exposes their sins is being put away (for good, so they thought)
      - The world does not want to feel guilty, restraints, absolutes, moral obligation (especially sexual purity), submission to authority, and accountability!
      - We, as Christ’s ambassadors, are being treated likewise!
- (ii) “Will see me, after a little while”
  - Obviously referring to His post-resurrection appearance when
  - Grief will turn to joy—One cannot imagine the joy of Resurrection Sunday
    - Jesus likens the experience to giving birth
    - Where the pain is unbearable

- The Joy is unforgettable!
  - “no one will take away your joy.”
  - While we did not experience that dramatic turn of event
  - We can testify that the joy of salvation in Christ
    - Nothing can compare
    - Nothing can take away!

**23 In that day you will no longer ask (question) me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.**

**25 “Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. 26 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28 I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”**

**(iii) “In that day”**

It appears that “that day” refers to the His post-resurrection appearance (given the immediate context)

- Note that two different words translated by most versions as “ask”, in fact
  - The disciples have been questioning the meaning of “little while” which Jesus has explained, especially when He only talked about His being raised from the dead before, and now He makes clear that instead of going straight back to the Father, He will show Himself to them first and that would turn their grief to joy.
    - And from then onward, they do not need to question Him anymore (all will be made clear); and
  - Then He repeats the previous promise about “asking the Father in His name”
    - Context of the 1<sup>st</sup> time (in ch. 14) is the performing of greater works than He: “**And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.**” (14:13)
    - Context of the 2<sup>nd</sup> time (in ch. 15) is the obeying of His command to love one another that will allow them to remain in His love and His Word: “**Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.**” (15:16)
    - Now is the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, and the context “in that day”—after His resurrection—and the emphasis appears to be
      - “You have loved and believed in me”
      - “I do not need me to ask the Father on your behalf
        - You have direct access to the Father
        - But just use my name!

**Note: “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.”**

▪ It’s true of the disciples—presumably, even when they were taught to pray by Jesus, they did not invoke His name, presumably because of His very presence. But now, with His departure back to the Father, they are taught to pray to the Father still directly, but invoking the name of the Son!

(iv) Jesus speaking plainly

29 Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech.

30 Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God."

31 "Do you now believe?" Jesus replied. 32 "A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

Question: the question I have is:

What has Jesus just said that is different from before?

Didn't He still use figure of speech about the birth pain of a mother?

Answer: I believe, this version of NIV puts v.31 in a question form correctly in that

- As much as they now declared that they believe Jesus has come from the Father (v.30)
- Their faith would be put to a severe test and they would scatter, deserting Jesus on His own (all alone)—not really an act of "belief"!
- The "plain" language (v.25) still awaits "in that day", not really now
  - So, it is not really the use of figure of speech which has caused them disbelief or doubt
  - But rather, after witnessing the fulfillment of the prophecies of His death and resurrection and as they "recalled" these words, all have become clear and plain as John says,
  - **"After He was raised from the dead, His disciples recalled what He had said. Then they believed the Scriptures and the words that Jesus has spoken."** (John 2:22)
  - Of course, it is the Holy Spirit that helps them recall and understand, guiding them into all truth!

**33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome (*Nike*) the world."**

As much as "Nike" is a commercial brand, it really helps remind me that Jesus has overcome the world (of sin and Satanic control & influences) and likewise, we are asked to be "overcomers" like Him (Rev. 2-3)

- Not in fear and anxiety
- But like Jesus—with calm and peace
  - After all, He now dwells in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, and
  - All that is His, is ours too
  - **"For He Himself is our peace"** (Eph. 2: