

# *The Gospel of John*

## Believe and Live!

### Lesson 17

John 16:1–33

### The Role of the Holy Spirit

Chapter 16 reveals the last of Jesus' teaching before being arrested and tried. His heartfelt focus is upon the One who will come after Him, who will continue to teach and lead the disciples after He is gone.

#### *At a glance* ~ **Read John 16:1–33**

As you read these verses for the first time, imagine yourself in the disciples' sandals. What part of the Lord's teaching would you cling to as your anchor of hope? Why?

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In the closing verses of chapter 15 and the opening verses of chapter 16, Jesus forewarns of the impending persecution His followers will face. He prepares them for the world's hostility with several statements: 1) The Helper—the Holy Spirit was coming; 2) they would bear witness of Jesus because they had been with Him from the beginning; and 3) the persecution would be fierce, but Jesus would be with them.

1. Why does Jesus warn of everything that is about to take place? v. 4
  - a. Why didn't He tell them initially what they would have to face?

Think of the difference His presence meant to the disciples; no matter what happened, Jesus was there with them. Now, before He is taken away from them, Jesus wanted His followers to know that in the world they would indeed face persecution and trials, but they were to stand strong in the knowledge that He was with them and would overcome!

2. Where does Jesus say He is going? How do the disciples feel about this news?  
vv. 5–11

- a. Why is it to their advantage that He goes away?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Of what three things would the Holy Spirit convict the world?

### *Look closer ~*

The *world* John speaks about repeatedly in his gospel account refers to the populace of unbelievers inhabiting the planet. John first mentions the Holy Spirit's work with them in verses 8–11. We'll consider each one separately for a moment by adding a personal perspective. Keep in mind that God's strategy is for the Holy Spirit to use the *church—the example and influence exerted through the body of believers*—to convict the unsaved world of God's love.

- *Convict the world of sin* – The first role of the Holy Spirit is to point out mankind's basic sinful nature. Before coming to Christ, each and every human being is living in rebellion against God. God wants the world to know how much He loves us and wants us to experience the fullness of joy and abundance He created us to have with Him. When and how did *you* first experience His conviction?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *Convict the world of righteousness* – It isn't possible for us to make ourselves right with God; the only way to holiness—or “wholeness”—is to come to Christ. He gives us His Spirit, who in turn places us in right standing with God. What can you say about the *inner beauty* you now have before God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *Convict the world of judgment* – The prince of this world, Satan, stands already judged! Those who were previously enslaved by him can find freedom, peace, and joy because of what Jesus Christ has done! What difference does this assurance have on your perspective today?

3. What are some of the ways the Holy Spirit uses believers to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment?

Standing in the shadow of the cross and facing the most horrific experience possible, Jesus voices His concern for His disciples in verses 12–15: *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”*

4. Once again in verse 13, Jesus confirms that the Holy Spirit is coming. What will He do?

- a. On whose authority does He speak?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What is the goal of the Holy Spirit? vv. 14–15 How does He accomplish His goal?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. Personal: What has He declared to *you* this week?

Jesus is referring here to what would shortly take place in the book of Acts, when the Holy Spirit moved powerfully upon the believers to form the church and begin to evangelize the world. Under the inspiration of the Spirit, these individuals began to set pen to parchment and wrote what we today call the New Testament. In it we have the the guide book for a relationship with the living God!

*Take a closer look* ~ John 16:33

(Memorize and meditate on the memory verse each time you open your lesson.)

***“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”***

What does this verse reveal to you about Jesus? How does this revelation of truth encourage you today?

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## *In focus* ~ (Key words) **Helper/Counselor**

Look up these words using the resources you have on hand (Bible translations, dictionary, concordance) and write a definition.

*Helper/Counselor.* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Gospel of John provides more information about the person and purpose of the Holy Spirit than any of the other three gospel accounts. Take time in your study this week to research the other references John records, noting anything new you learn about Him. As you have time you may want to do a word search throughout the New Testament.

1:32–33 \_\_\_\_\_

3:5–6 \_\_\_\_\_

4:23–24 \_\_\_\_\_

6:63 \_\_\_\_\_

7:37–39 \_\_\_\_\_

14:16–17 \_\_\_\_\_

14:26–27 \_\_\_\_\_

16:7 \_\_\_\_\_

16:8–11 \_\_\_\_\_

16:13 \_\_\_\_\_

16:14–15 \_\_\_\_\_

20:22 \_\_\_\_\_

## Sorrow to Joy

### *Outlook* ~ **Read John 16:16–24.**

In these verses, Jesus makes a series of statements the disciples find difficult to understand. He is preparing them for His death, resurrection, and departure. He knows they do not comprehend but, in a few days, they would be able to look back and remember what He said to them and believe.

1. What has Jesus said that confuses them? vv. 16–19

2. As they are weeping over what is about to transpire, what will the world's response be? v. 20

a. But Jesus knows the outcome—what does He promise them? v. 20

b. What illustration does Jesus use that every mother can relate to? v. 21

Childbirth is one of the most intense forms of pain there is and yet, once the baby is born, the mother's pain is replaced with the joy of the little life she holds in her arms! Her joy replaces the earlier pain; but the same thing that caused her pain was the same thing that brought her joy. The meaning behind Jesus' words is that the horror and agony of the cross would be replaced by the joy of the Savior's sacrifice upon that cross, bringing salvation to everyone who believes!

### *Selah ~*

What does Hebrews 12:1–2 say about this joy that Jesus anticipated? His joy was *you*; and He was willing to endure unspeakable agony to have you with Him in eternity! Think about that for a moment . . .

In verses 23–24, Jesus links the promise of the Holy Spirit with answered prayer: *“And in that day [Pentecost] you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”* God does not promise you a rose garden or to be delivered out of all your trials now, in the present; but He does promise to be with you, to answer when you call, and to give you His peace for your trials. And with the assurance of His presence you can have fullness of joy!

- ❖ What is it that you need most from Him right now? Write out your request below. Then, knowing He is listening, keep on asking until the answer comes!

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In the closing verses of chapter 16, Jesus explains the basis for the believer's prayer relationship with God. Read through verses 25–33 carefully for review.

3. Before, Jesus' followers had to ask Jesus to pray for them; but now, we have direct access to the Father if we do what?

The disciples announce that they understand and believe but Jesus knows what is still ahead for them before they actually possess their faith and are willing to die for Him. It will take time and the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost for their understanding to move from their heads to their hearts!

4. In the midst of your hardest times and all that the world hurls at you, what is it that Jesus wants you to clearly bear in mind above everything else? v. 33

5. Personal: Have you ever heard a hard word from Jesus? Did it cause you to doubt His love for you? Or were you able to trust Him—to look back on His faithfulness and know that no matter how difficult your present circumstances, He has your best at heart?

### *Selah ~*

God wants you to come as you are and simply lay yourself at the feet of Jesus, lay hold of His presence and call on His name. Remember the cross—all that He endured for you. And remember too that the tragedy of the cross became the joy of your salvation!

### *More like Jesus ~*

Are *you* becoming more like Jesus? Absolutely! Every time you open the Word and spend time getting to know Him more intimately, you partake in the life-long process of drawing near—going deeper—bearing fruit—becoming more like Him. As you close your lesson today, determine to put into practice what you've learned by noting it below.

- Recite your memory verse \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Reflect on a lesson you received \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Respond with prayer and praise to God \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# *Notes*