

## John Ch 16:1-15

“The Help Of The Holy Spirit”

Vs1-4

Ch 16 is another one of those unfortunate ch breaks, and probably it would've been better to wait until after vs 15 of ch 16 to place a break there because that's where the flow that we've been following seems to have a nice resolve.

But vs 1 begins, (read). You recall that there in about the middle of ch 15 the tide turns from the subject of love, to hate. and Jesus makes it clear that if you and I are diligent about abiding in Him, if we're leading fruitful lives that are full of love and self sacrifice that we're going to be the objects of the world's hate. I don't know what it is about us as people but we tend to be idealist (generally speaking). and We think that if we lead good, upright and honest lives that people will appreciate and respect us for it. Yet the bible is clear that if there are Christ like qualities to your life, you're going to be the object of the world's persecution. You hear of those stories of people finding large sums of money, and of those who actually have the honesty to turn it in, it's like they become targets of animosity. People sending them hate mail, telling them how foolish they are for turning it in, and they're just harassed because they did the right thing.

There've been accounts of people literally having to move from the vicinity in which they live over things like that because things get so out of control over the matter that they literally fear for their safety. and So as much as you and I want to think that everyone would think the world of the person who's caring, compassionate, self-sacrificing, pure of heart, and has all the nuances of the nature of Christ in them, the fact is there are only 2 types of people in this world, those who will accept Jesus Christ and those who will reject Him. There is no middle ground, Jesus said, *“He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”* Matt 12:30 So when it comes to one's position concerning Christ, we can't claim neutrality. and So when you're bearing witness of Jesus Christ as vs 27 of ch 15 says that you will do, people around you will respond in 1 of 2 ways, they'll accept it, or they'll reject it.

When they reject it, often times you become the object of their ridicule, the punch line to their jokes, and sometimes even hostile animosity, and Jesus is saying here, “I'm telling you this in advance so that you won't be made to stumble.” So that you'll have the fortitude to follow through in your commitment to Me when times are tough and people are turning on you. So that you won't fall *into* the trap of wondering why everyone seems to hate you when all you're trying to do is lead your life set apart to Christ and share His love and grace. Because the fact is that as you lead your life in a Christ like manner, and you're being a witness of the *love* of God, sharing the *Word* of God, Jesus said in vs 22 of ch 15 that, “now they have no excuse for their sin.” and Because of that people are going to turn on you, and come against you, try and snuff out the light that you're shedding on their lives, now the Holy Spirit will be there to *help* you (Jesus said) but don't be deceived it'll be *heavy*.

Jesus is telling us this so that we won't stumble, or be offended when it happens, so that we won't freak out and wonder what's happening and say, "Hey, nobody told me this was going to happen, if this is what following Christ is about I'm out of here." and I love the Lord for that, He doesn't pull punches, most people try and call you to their cause by showing you how appealing it is, make it look attractive to you. But Jesus says, "If you're going to follow Me, there's a cost, and people are going to hate you for it. So know that in advance, before you sign on." Yet how often people sign on, only to stumble when persecution comes.

When Jesus was teaching on the parable of the soils, He mentioned 4 different types of soil that the seed of the Word of God is sown into, and in that parable you well know that the soil represents the various conditions and positions of the human heart. and He said, *"Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away."* Mark 4:5-6 The seed never really was allowed to burrow down deep and establish a good root system. and When He went on to explain the parable to His disciples He said, *"These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble."* Mark 4:16-17 Did you notice the word, "when" there? It's not an "if" it's a "when," your commitment to the Word of God in your life makes persecution inevitable.

Remember this vs from last week, *"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."* 2 Tim 3:12 But Jesus has warned us of this in advance so that we might be prepared for it when it comes, so that we won't be "scorched." What's the key in being prepared? A deep root system, to have a soft and pliable heart, one that allows God's word to sink deep down in there and establish itself.

The Psalmist wrote of the man who would be blessed and he said, *"...his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper."* Ps 1:2-3 So there's a big key in being rooted in the word of God and allowing the word of God to be rooted in us, Jeremiah said, *"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit."* Jer 17:7-8 So when it comes to being prepared for persecution, if you're one who's trusting in the Lord, who's confidence is the Lord, you're rooted in His word and His Word is rooted in you, then when the heat of persecution comes, you won't be burned. You won't be made to stumble, you won't fear when heat comes, nor will you cease from yielding fruit.

Now here in vs 2 Jesus goes on to amplify the very real threat of persecution that will come upon those who are His own. and In the context of what He's in reference to for them it will surface in #1 Excommunication, and # 2 Execution. Now when we read of excommunication it doesn't mean much to us, but for the Jew of that day it was an atrocious type happening, it would almost be like you having your United States citizenship revoked. and Suddenly every viable tie you have with this nation is taken from you, whether it be legally buying and selling, it would be the end of your business, your ability to make a living and everything else. and The point that we need to see here is that being a follower of Jesus Christ is going to cost you something, salvation is free, but the pathway of discipleship will cost you.

That's why Jesus in Luke's gospel ch 14 took the time to press and express the need to be willing to take up your cross if you're going to follow Him and be His disciple. and He spoke of the necessity of counting the cost; following Jesus isn't something that we're to take lightly and not consider soberly. Because mark my words the time will come when there'll be a price to pay, (emotionally, relationally, physically, or whatever) and if you're not prepared you'll become the laughing stock when you buckle under the pressure and blow your witness. Now grace is available (obviously), but that's why Jesus said what good is salt that's lost its savor, it's no good; men trample it under foot. But out of His love, Jesus forewarns us, so that we won't be stumbled when times of tribulation visit our lives.

He says here that the time will come when those who kill you think they do God a favor. Of course the militant Islamic, thinks that by strapping a bomb to himself, or ramming a plane into a skyscraper and killing you infidels is a special service to God, and a 1 way ticket to Heaven.

Think of Saul of Tarsus, he was sort of like the Osama Ben Laden of his day. Not in the sense of wanting to kill anyone who wasn't into Judaism, but in the sense of reigning terror into the hearts of Christians and thinking that as he had them put to death he was doing God a favor. Why? Vs 3 tells us because they don't even know the God they claim to serve. Last week I told you that it's not you that people hate, it's Christ in you, if you were of the world they would love you, but because you're not of the world because Jesus has called you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. and In the same manner when persecution comes, you need to know that you're not the one being persecuted, oh you may be absorbing the punishment physically, but it's Christ in you that they're persecuting. Remember when Jesus said that the day would come when He would separate the sheep from the goats, and He would begin to deal with them regarding the fruit of their lives be it good, or be it bad.

In either case when it came to the various physical practicalities that was done unto the believers be it good or bad He said, "*Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.*" Matt 25:40

In Acts 9 we read of Saul (who would soon become Paul the apostle) “*Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ Then the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.’”* Acts 9:1-5 Now Saul never laid a hand on Jesus (physically speaking) in a malicious way, yet Jesus said that as he persecuted His disciples, he was persecuting Him. Why? Because he didn’t know Him, as soon as the Lord got his attention what were the words out of his mouth? “Who are you Lord?” He didn’t know that God he claimed to serve, but as soon as he came to know the Lord, the persecution stopped.

So that’s why you and I become the objects of persecution, because people don’t know the Lord, and they love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. But Jesus said, “*...do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*” Matt 10:28 So persecution may come, but we’re not to fear man, but rather fear God, man may kill the body, so what, now no one looks forward to that, but when it’s over it’s over. But what happens after the body is destroyed is forever, so better to fear God and suffer (if need be) on this side of eternity, than to fear man, live the good life now, but then suffer forever on the other side of eternity.

Vs5-7

Again we note the fact that the Holy Spirit is referred to in a masculine gender, in a personal way, not a general impersonal way. Jesus doesn’t say, “If I depart I will send *it* to you.” But rather, “I will send *Him* to you.” The Holy Spirit isn’t just some type of “force” that mystically fills the earth, but rather even as the Father is a person, the Son is person, so the Holy Spirit is a person as well.

But as Jesus is speaking to them here about His departure, He realizes that this whole concept of Him leaving them physically is difficult for them to grasp and it’s even more difficult for them to see how it could possibly be to their advantage. You know when someone we love is about to die, perhaps their bodies wracked with cancer, or some other breakdown of the body has their life in its clutches (taking for granted that they’re right with the Lord) we know that it’s to their advantage for them to depart. Because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, it’s far better to go than to remain. But when they’re dying we can’t see how it would be to *our* advantage for them to go, we want them to stay, but we resolve that for them to go is best for *them*. But Jesus is saying here that His departure wasn’t for *His* advantage, it was for *their* advantage.

I want you to see here how He's calling upon them to believe in Him in the midst of something going on that they don't understand. He's saying, "I know you don't really get what I'm saying, and because of that sorrow has filled your heart, but I'm telling you the truth it's to your advantage that I go." and Perhaps you're in the midst of a happening that you don't really understand, listen, the Lord's not seeking to confuse you, or somehow punish you, perhaps sorrow has filled your heart over the matter. But Jesus would have you know that ultimately He's going to work it out to your advantage, and listen, you may not get the privilege of even seeing it work out to your advantage on this side of eternity. But it's the Rom 8:28 principal, "*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*"

Of course His immediate departure was to their advantage because apart from the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ there would be no remission of sin, apart from the work of the cross there would be no salvation. He, "*...was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.*" Rom 4:25 and So it was to all of our advantage that He go away, but specifically in the context, He's referring here to His departure to Heaven, but as He said earlier He's not going to leave them orphans, He has a plan that will work out to their benefit.

That plan is to send to them the Helper, or the Holy Spirit, and I love the fact that He's referred to as "The Helper." Because that's 1 of His objectives, to help you be the witness of Jesus Christ that you've been called to be. The bible tells us that He helps us in our weakness, He helps us in our prayer life, "*Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*" Rom 8:26-27 I don't always know how to pray in a given situation, but the bible teaches that as we're at a loss for words, not knowing what to say or how to say it, that the Holy Spirit takes that, and fashions the perfect prayer on our behalf before the throne. He intercedes for us according to the will of God.

I for one am glad that He helps me in this way, vs 26 of John 14 tells us that the Holy Spirit opens our understanding to God's Word, He brings to our remembrance God's Word in time of need, He's our Helper. and It's to our advantage that He be with us, in us, and upon us, so there's a very real *personal* advantage to the Lord's physical departure. But there's also the obvious *global* advantage. Jesus said, "*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*" Matt 18:20 Now in the flesh that's a promise that would be impossible for Him to fulfill. He can only make good on that in the Spirit, if He were still physically on this earth, there would be a select few Christians who were overjoyed, those whom He was with. But for the overwhelming majority of us, we would have the profound awareness that Jesus *wasn't* with us at all!

So it's to our advantage that His physical presence depart that His presence by the Holy Spirit might be made available to us all. Not too mention the bible calls us to live by faith, and the just shall live by faith, but if Jesus were on CNN every night then we'd have the overwhelming temptation to walk by sight, not by faith. So there's all sorts of personal and global benefits to Jesus going to be with the Father and sending the Holy Spirit to us. (Which by the way we see the trinity in this passage again, Jesus going to Him who sent Him, but He will send the Spirit, so all 3 seen here.) But look at the disciples before Jesus left, confused, self-centered, thickheaded and afraid. Look at them after He left, filled with wisdom, boldness, clarity, self-sacrifice, and giving, so we see how it's to your advantage, and my advantage to have the presence of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, and resting upon our lives.

Vs 8-11

Apart from conviction there can be no conversion, so another objective of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. To help us come to a point of realizing our need for Jesus Christ But the way Jesus breaks down these 3 things is pretty amazing really because when you say, "Sin, righteousness, and judgment." If you were to ask me to explain what that meant, I would've went somewhere totally different than Jesus did. When I think of sin, I begin to think of all the details of wrong doing that man is accustomed to, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, drug abuse, lying, murdering, stealing and so on and so forth. But Jesus deals with all of that in one fatal swoop, there's only one sin that's going to ultimately keep you out of Heaven, and that's the sin of unbelief.

Why didn't the children of Israel enter the Promised Land the 1<sup>st</sup> time they came to the borders, it wasn't because of all complaining they did on the way, it was because of unbelief. Jesus said that only 1 thing constitutes condemnation, and that is that light has come into the world in the person of Jesus Christ and men loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. I don't care where you've been or what you've done, every sin you've ever committed or ever will commit has been dealt with at the cross, there's only 1 sin that will keep you out of Heaven. and That is the sin of unbelief, refusing to answer the call of Jesus Christ and surrender your life to Him. People who believe in Jesus don't rape anybody, people who believe in Jesus don't rip people off, or lead lives of drunkenness and all the rest, it's all taken care of in that single solitary issue, believing in Jesus Christ That's the sin the Holy Spirit convicts the world of, that doesn't mean the Holy Spirit don't deal with us on an individual basis, but when it comes to drawing man out of darkness and into light, there's only one thing He's concerned with, unbelief.

Righteousness (Jesus said) because I go to the Father, which is to say that as He ascended into Heaven the Father was placing His stamp of approval upon the righteous standard of Jesus Christ That if you want to be in Heaven, you need to have the standard of righteousness that Jesus, and Jesus alone can provide. Gandhi didn't ascend into Heaven; God doesn't accept the standard of righteous that he sought to apprehend. Jesus alone met the righteous requirements of the law, and it's in Him alone that we can be counted as righteous before the Father. Paul said that the things that were of benefit to him in the world he counted as rubbish, why? "...that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;" Phil 3:8-9 So the conviction of the need to have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us.

Of Judgment because the ruler of this world is judged, Satan is a fallen foe. His fate was sealed at the cross, and the conviction goes out that whoever is under his dominion shares his fate. When a certain government falls to another, everyone in the country of the fallen government essentially falls along with it. Now and then you hear people say that they'll take their chances with God. But the fact is there's no chance, judgment has been passed, it's like they're all on death row just waiting for the sentence to be passed. But there's a divine pardon in Jesus Christ and That's the message that the Holy Spirit sends out.

Vs12

So coupled along with vs 26 of Ch 14, this vs leads us to anticipate the formation of what would become the NT, Paul, James, Jude, Luke, Peter, John, these guys would teach us (as inspired by the Holy Spirit) the many things that Jesus would yet say to us.

Vs13-15

Of course this is more insight on the help of the Holy Spirit, He will guide you into all truth. It's the Holy Spirit who helps us discover divine truth, He gives us illumination and application of the Word of God. He'll never lead you in opposition to God's Word, He's the Spirit of Truth, and the word of God is the Word of Truth. So if the Holy Spirit is guiding you in a situation you'll always find it in the flow of God's Word, not going against the grain of God's written revelation. So when it says, "He'll guide you into all truth" understand that the parameters of that are set in God's Word. There's no "new truth" He'll guide you into, if it's true it's not new, if it's new it's not true, the bible says there's nothing new under the sun. That's what He's saying here when He says, "He won't speak of His own authority." He'll always speak in harmony with what the Lord has already said, He won't make Himself the superstar, He'll point to Jesus Christ, "He will glorify Me" Jesus said, and tell you of things to come. The Holy Spirit can reveal things to you that are yet to take place, through prophecy, or a word of knowledge, these are gifts of the Holy Spirit.

But specifically, through the epistles, He has revealed what is to come in the last days. 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter ch 3 speaks of the scoffers, and the mockery of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming that will take place in the last days, 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3 speaks of the perilous times of the last days, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess brings up details of the last days, of course the book of Rev, we know about the rapture because of the Holy Spirit's unveiling what will take place in the last days. and So He has told us of things to come so that we might be prepared when they take place. Thank God for the help of the Holy Spirit, and may He fill us fresh today, that we might walk in the renewed reality of His power and presence in our lives.

Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you today right where you sit, he's convicting you, leading you to believe upon Jesus Christ and be forgiven of your sin, to know that good ol' boys or girls don't make it to Heaven, but only those robed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ will stand in His presence, and other than that certain judgment will fall upon all of those still under the sway of the wicked one, the fallen prince of this world. Then listen, if you're hearing His voice and He's calling to you, don't harden your heart against Him, just open your heart and receive Jesus Christ and The Holy Spirit will help you, He'll teach you, guide you, give you strength, and that which you need to become all that God would have you to be. So if God is dealing with your heart, then again, do yourself a favor, let Jesus into your heart and into your life. I'm not saying it's an easy life, there's cost to be counted, but greater is He who will be in you, than he that is of this world, and if God begins a work in you, you can be sure that He'll finish it. He's willing to take responsibility for you, if you're willing to give your heart and your life to Him.