

Book of John #23
Holy Spirit
John 16

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May 26, 2024

Sports and war movies have in common winning, competition, teams, adversity...and almost always these movies have a speech towards the end where the leader encourages the participants. This is where we are in the book of John: This is the speech going into the final act. These are the final instructions: what the disciples will do, what the other team (the enemy) will do. This final speech is really Chapters 13-17.

John 16

1 “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 me.

Remember the man who was healed and thrown out of the synagogue? Another example is Lazarus whom they wanted to kill to get rid of the evidence. They think they are serving God by doing these things...such events are not only what **will** happen but what **has** happened.

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,

Jesus is preparing them for what is to come. This is the time-out speech in the 4th quarter. The focus is on the **Holy Spirit**.

5 but 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 Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. **8** When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: **9** about sin, because people do not believe in me; **10** about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; **11** and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

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 receive from me what he will make known to you.”

The Holy Spirit will come: this is like the background character in a movie that finally enters the main action. The Holy Spirit has been around since the beginning, hovering over the waters in the creation. The Spirit came on people when the people made the tabernacle. He came on David to write the Psalms. He comes to the prophets to communicate on behalf of God. Jesus says the Spirit will take what belongs to Jesus and make it known to them.

What will the Holy Spirit do?

Convict the world of sin righteousness and judgment

(vs. 8) If you are a follower of Jesus and believe in him, you have the spirit. He will convict you of:

Sin: These are the places where you have not believed, wandered away, or not focused your eyes on him.

Righteousness: It took me a while to work through this and NT Wright helped me: Righteousness is in the glory of God, in his presence with the Father. He will remind you of ways Jesus is victorious in his presence with the Father.

Judgment: The prince of this world is now condemned and defeated by Jesus. The Spirit reminds us we have freedom from the enemy and our sin.

Bottom line: You are in sin: Jesus is victorious and sin is defeated along with the one who would accuse you. You are free!

What, then, should we do with the Holy Spirit? Over the last months, Eric has been talking again and again this past year about listening to the Holy Spirit. This is because we don't practice listening to the Holy Spirit. If he convicts of sin, reveals righteousness, and frees us from sin, we should be listening to this message!

Ways to listen to the Holy Spirit:

1. (vs. 14) The disciples knew Jesus's voice, the sound and the timbre of his voice, and the ways he said things. When you live in small towns, there are ways of saying things and Jesus knew those things that identified Jesus as a Galilean. The Holy Spirit also speaks in Jesus's voice. We recognize this by **READ THE WORD**, the recordings by the disciples of Jesus's voice.

2. Practice **SILENCE AND SOLITUDE.** We are not quiet people, if not in our voices, in our minds, which are chaotic. (With our phones) we fill the spaces in our minds with chaos. We need to be silent in both our voices and the things we are doing. Sometimes this requires solitude, especially hard for parents of young children. This is not just getting time alone for a couple of hours. It is taking the same spaces that we will with chaos (“the small moments” -Calvin Miller) when you are in your car, maybe, to take time to pray. It’s in the stillness that the Spirit will speak. (Practice setting a timer other than your phone for even 3-5 minutes to be still.)
3. **BE IN COMMUNITY.** (I John: test the spirits, Matt 18: where 2 or 3 are gathered) When we gather together, we listen to the Holy Spirit. This is not a silver bullet or “The Fix.” Communities across time have been deceived.

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.”

Is this a translation error? It feels confusing. It’s just a weird way of saying it, no matter the translation. And then John repeats it over and over:

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.”

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, “Are you asking 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’?”

Yes, they are asking this! It makes sense that they are confused:

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. **23** In that day you will no longer ask 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.”

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.”

This would not be my immediate response to hearing that I would be like a woman in labor and in pain and that the world would rejoice in my pain. This speech doesn’t seem to be going well before the final battle. But there is hope: you will feel pain like death but then you will have joy in the new life that is coming. It is a specific picture because the world has been waiting for Jesus since the beginning when the Spirit hovered over the waters, since Adam and Eve sinned: the world has longed for restoration.

The disciples proclaim that they believe (they say this over and over as well!).

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.

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 the world.”

This is what we are going through: you believe, you will be scattered, you will forget....but that’s OK. You can still have peace. Let’s break vs. 33 down:

“I have told you these things” What things? Since Chapter 13

- Betrayal
- Denial
- Prince is coming and they hate me and will throw you out of the synagone
- You will be scattered
- You will leave me alone.

“So that in me you may have peace”

Peace = absence of strife. You will have this in your soul; Jesus knows what will happen (see above). What have we done that Jesus doesn’t know? If he could sit down with you and tell you these things he would say: don’t hold onto your guilt. The prince offers lies but he has been defeated.

You will have trouble but take heart: I love this idea! Be encouraged, be of “good cheer,” let your spirit be lifted. If you think about the connection between trouble and encouragement, it doesn’t make sense. But victory belongs to Jesus: he has overcome the

world and has been defeated and overcome the enemy. He has won: we can take heart because we have won, too. The spirit convicts us of our sin and then tells us of our victory and our freedom from slavery.

How do we know these things day after day? We listen to the Holy Spirit who reminds us of these things. Read the word, practice silence and solitude, be in community. These things enable us to listen to the Holy Spirit.

Q & A:

Q: How to be actively TAKING HEART: A: The hardest places to take heart are places of pain and sorrow: It is in these moments, however, that Jesus is present. There is a book by Michael Card called *Sacred Sorrow* about stories of people who do this.

Q: As a community, I think we're growing in taking heart but there is also room for correction and push-back: others can tell us when we are not in the spirit. A: we bring things we hear from God in **humility**. When we hear things, we say we don't know if that is the voice of Jesus but "I'll pray with you."