

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit In Relation to the World – Part 2

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AM Service

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Text:

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8: And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9: Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10: Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11: Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Introduction

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit has a ministry not only to the believer but also to the unbelieving world. Our Lord gives us the threefold area that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of, namely, **sin**, **righteousness**, and **judgment**.

First of all, it is the aim of the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin – particularly the sin of unbelief. After convicting and convincing the sinner his sin and guilt of refusing to believe in Christ, the Holy Spirit now works on convicting and convincing the sinner concerning righteousness.

John 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9: Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10: Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

This morning I want us to see three things about the ministry of the Holy Spirit of convicting the world about **righteousness**, namely, the **grievous accusation**, the **glorious vindication**, and the **gracious provision**.

I – Grievous Accusation

When Jesus Christ walked on earth the religious leaders of His day accused Him with many outrageous, slanderous and demeaning accusations.

They have called Him a sinner in ...

John 9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that **this man is a sinner**.

They have called glutton a drunkard and a friend of publicans and sinners ...

Matthew 11:19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man **gluttonous**, and a **winebibber**, a **friend of publicans and sinners**. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Some of them even said He was filled with demons. Even when Jesus was working miracles and they would say concerning Jesus, "*He does it by the power of the devil.*"

Matthew 12:22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. 23: And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? 24: But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, **This fellow doth not cast out devils**, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

His arrest which eventually led to His crucifixion was the world's assertion that He was a malefactor

John 18:29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? 30: They answered and said unto him, If he were not a **malefactor**, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

Oh, what our Lord went through when He was on earth. How He was humiliated. How He faced scandalous accusations. They thought He was a wicked man, a troublemaker, a sinner, a friend of publicans and sinners, a glutton, a drunkard, a seducer, devil possessed, an impostor, a blasphemer, etc. And these men thought that the crucifixion was an assertion of all these accusations.

But that is not the end of the story for we know that our Lord was gloriously vindicated.

II - Glorious Vindication

But who was Jesus? Liar, a lunatic or Lord? Was He a liar or a lunatic as the religious accused Him of or is He Lord as He claims Himself to be?

I am glad that the Bible answers this for us!

John 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

John 16:10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

God forever settled the issue. Our Lord Jesus Christ was vindicated. He was cleared of all blame and suspicions. He proved that His claim is true. He is not a liar and not a lunatic but Lord. He was vindicated when the Father accepted and exalted Him.

Our Lord was falsely accused and crucified which eventually led to His death. But Jesus would not stay dead. He was raised from the dead then ascended into Heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father. This is the vindication of the Lord Jesus Christ. The world rejected Him and thought Him to be a wicked person but the Father received Him. Jesus Christ's going to the Father and the Father accepting Him and exalting Him would prove His righteousness. This

forever sets the record that Jesus Christ is righteous. This sets the record that Jesus Christ was right and that He is Lord as He claims He was.

Our Lord was rejected by the world, but received by the Father.

Romans 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The Father raised Jesus from the dead. He ascended into heaven where He is now seated at the right hand of God Almighty.

Our Lord said to His disciples when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world not only of their guilt and sin of not believing Jesus but also He will convict and convince them of the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

John 16:10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict and convince men and women, boys and girls, that their judgment on Jesus Christ is wrong. That is the sticking point of the gospel, isn't it? Even if you can get them to admit their sin, they still have to believe in Jesus, that He is Righteous One; the one-and-only Saviour sent from heaven. Only the Holy Spirit can cause sinners to come to that conclusion. It is the Holy Spirit's job to work through your witnessing to change people's minds so that they can become convinced that they were wrong and Jesus was right.

Acts 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Now the Spirit of God, by the mouth of Peter, on the day of "Pentecost", proved, to the conviction of the Jews, that their judgment of Christ was wrong; that Christ was an **innocent, holy, and righteous** person; that Christ was a man approved of God among them. And His going to the Father, and being received by Him, were a clear and **complete confirmation and demonstration that He was righteous.**

III – Gracious Provision

The Holy Spirit convicts and convinces men of their sin. He reveals the great truth that none are righteous, no not one. He shows mankind that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; that our righteousness is as filthy rags. But then after that, the Holy Spirit also convicts and convinces them of the righteousness of Christ. **It is Christ's personal righteousness which the Spirit was to bring home to the sinner's heart** and convinces those to receive the righteousness of God through the shed blood of Jesus upon the cross. He convinces man of His need for the righteousness of Christ to be applied to his account.

God's perfect righteousness in Christ is a gift! The perfect righteousness which God provides for us is a gift and it is ours the moment we take Christ as our Saviour. **We cannot produce a**

perfect righteousness, and we cannot earn it. God gives it to us. The moment we take Christ as our Saviour, God gives us perfect righteousness as a free gift!

Does this not cause your heart to rejoice? This is God's gift to all His children. What a gracious provision! He convicts the world of sin then of righteousness.

“It is a fit time for the Holy Ghost to convince God's people of righteousness when they are convinced of sin before. Then they can relish Christ.” - R. Sibbes

“Until sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet.” - Thomas Watson

Closing Thoughts

In ourselves we are not righteous, but God has made us perfectly righteous in His sight. How did God do this? He put us in Christ; we are made “the righteousness of God in Him.” The Bible says,

2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; **that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**

This verse says that we are "made the righteousness of God in Him." Just as God looks at Christ and sees Him perfectly righteous, so He looks at us and sees perfectly righteous because we are in Him.

Romans 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive **abundance of grace** and of **the gift of righteousness** shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. 18: Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19: For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, **so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**

God is not stingy in blessing us. He is "the God of all grace." He abounds in His grace toward us, and we honor Him when we receive joyfully and thankfully all that He gives us.

God has given Christ to us as our perfect righteousness. Has God the Holy Ghost convinced you of sin by showing you the righteousness of Christ? Has God the Holy Ghost driven you to lay hold of the justifying righteousness of Christ?

For those who are still outside of Christ this morning, may God the Holy Spirit convict and convince you of not believing in Him and convict and convince you of Christ's perfect righteousness and that it could be yours if you would only believe!

AMEN!