

MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

By Elder Dr. Samuel L. Dixon

“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.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”
[John 16:7-11 KJV]

Before leaving the earth Jesus in His upper room discourse told the disciples that He was going away but He was going to send them the Comforter who is the Holy Spirit. The word “Comforter” from the Greek was: “used of a legal advisor, pleader, proxy, or advocate, one who comes forward in behalf of and as the representative of another.” [The Complete WordStudy Dictionary] The word Comforter also means: “to comfort, encourage or exhort.” So the promise is made to the disciples that they will not be left alone when Jesus goes back to heaven. The Holy Spirit is sent to encourage us, comfort us and to build us up in the strength and power of the Lord. Aren't you glad to know that you have someone to go to when life seems to be pressing you down and there seems to be no where to turn? The Holy Spirit is always present to lead and guide you because Jesus said in this same teaching “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” [John 16:13] If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior then you have the Comforter abiding in you.

Notice also that Jesus stated that the Holy Spirit was going to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. The word “reprove” means: “1) to convict, refute, confute. 1a) generally with a suggestion of shame of the person convicted. 1b) by conviction to bring to the light, to expose.” [Thayer's Greek Definitions] So the first ministry of the Holy Spirit is to expose sin, bring it to the light, make sin known in the lives of individuals. “Sin” as used in this verse is defined as: “missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is God. An offense in relation to God with emphasis on guilt.” [The Complete WordStudy Dictionary]

The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Commentary makes our passage very clear:

Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the world. The word “reprove” (*elegxei*) means both *to convict* and *to convince* a person.

Convict means to prick a person's heart until he senses and knows he is guilty. He has done wrong or failed to do right.

Convince means to hammer and drive at a person's heart until he knows the fact is true.

The Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the world of three things: sin, righteousness, and judgment.

1. There is the *conviction of sin*.

a. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of its sin, that man is sinful. The Holy Spirit convicts a man that he...

€ misses the mark, that is, comes short of the glory of God.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" ([Romans 3:23](#)). —

There is the conviction of righteousness.

a. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of its lack of righteousness, that a man has no righteousness whatsoever that is acceptable to God. The Holy Spirit convicts a man that his righteousness...

€ is self-righteousness only.

€ is human righteousness only.

€ is the righteousness of works that are only human and therefore have an end.

€ is the righteousness of human goodness and therefore passes away when he dies.

€ is inadequate, insufficient, and unacceptable to God.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities" ([Isaiah 64:6-7](#); cp. [Isaiah 64:9-12](#)).

There is the conviction of judgment.

a. The Holy Spirit convicts the world that judgment is coming, that a man is to face the personal judgment of God. The Holy Spirit convicts a man...

€ that he is both responsible and accountable to God and man.

€ that there is to be a real day of judgment sometime out in the future.

€ that he is to stand face to face with God and be judged.

€ that he is to be judged for sin and lack of righteousness, for what he has done and not done.

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" ([Romans 14:12](#)).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" ([Hebrews 9:27](#)).

Thank God for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Aren't you glad that the Holy Spirit has already ministered to you by convicting you of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. As a believer and follower of Jesus Christ you have this assurance from Jesus Himself: **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."**[John 5:24]

Here is our scripture passage in the New Living Translation:

John 16:7-11 (NLT)

⁷ But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you.

⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.

⁹ The world's sin is that it refuses to believe in me.

¹⁰ Righteousness is available because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more.

¹¹ Judgment will come because the ruler of this world has already been judged.

Quote: **"To the one who remembers the Spirit there is always a way out, even in the wilderness with the devil."**—Herbert F. Brokering