

The Advocate

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 September 2016

Preacher: Philip Wells

[0 : 00] Right, let's turn in our Bibles to John chapter 15.!

So we're in John chapter 15 and the bit that I'd like us to look at is on from verse 26 to around verse 15 of chapter 16.

And thank you Ben already for praying for us. The context of this speech by Jesus is as follows. Jesus is about to go away. He is with his disciples having his last meal with them. And he leaves with them his final words about how things will be when he has gone away. And their first reaction will be it will be impossible to live the Christian life without you because the Christian life is Jesus.

[1 : 33] But Jesus explains to them that it will be possible to live the Christian life. In particular because another person will come.

The counsellor or comforter. The Holy Spirit. So they will not be left as orphans but the Spirit will come. And Jesus also tells them that they are to continue the Christian life in prayer. In receiving his words and keeping them. In loving one another. And the climax of this is at the beginning of chapter 15 where Jesus gives this parable metaphor picture of the vine and the branches.

And he says I am the vine. You are the branches. If you remain connected to me. Even though I am gone away. You can still be connected to me.

And you will bear spiritual fruit. Because your life is connected into me by the Holy Spirit. And he says you must bear fruit.

[2 : 52] Otherwise you will be cut off. So disciples are fruit bearers by definition. And if you abide in me you will bear fruit. He says that in chapter 15 verse 5.

The part that we looked at this morning was the contrast with the love that God has for his people. And Christ has for his people. And his people have for one another. And it was the hatred and rejection of the world. And Jesus as it's translated warns this apostolic group.

These first disciples. This is what it will mean. Jesus himself was rejected. And persecuted. And died. And if you were a follower of mine says Jesus. You must accept that this might happen to you too.

[3 : 54] That's what following me is. And I realize that that's easy for us in our sheltered existence here in the west to say that. But it is what Jesus says.

And that is a reality for many of our brothers and sisters in different parts of the world. The rejection by the world of not only Jesus but those who belong to him.

But it isn't just a bleak picture of rejection. Jesus also portrays the possibility of his word being spoken by the apostles.

And people in the world. That's to say the hostile environment that doesn't accept God. People believing or receiving or keeping those words.

And you've got that in chapter 15 verse 20. If they persecuted me they will persecute you also. If they kept my teaching they will obey.

[5 : 05] Sorry. If they obey my teaching they will obey yours also. So the possibility that as Jesus found some people did keep his teaching.

And maybe some people will keep the teaching that goes on from the apostles. And we put that in the context of God's love for the world.

That the world is this place that doesn't accept God. Doesn't want to know God. Doesn't want. Doesn't perceive God. Which you might say is ungrateful.

Unreceptive. Corrupt. But God loves this world. For God so loved the world. That he gave his only son. That whoever believes in him.

Should not perish. But have eternal life. So this is in the context of the world's hatred and rejection. But of God's going out as it were.

[6:16] His sending of his son into this world. And the son sending his apostles and his church into this world. Because of his love for the world.

So it's a multicolored picture. And what I'd like us to do this evening. Is to tease out what Jesus goes on to say.

About the role of the Holy Spirit in this. And I've got three pictures. Which we will fill in together. I don't ask you to put a great deal of faith in diagrams and pictures.

They're always less than the truth. I think the positive is it does allow us to pin our thoughts down. And itemize them in a way that I think is often helpful.

So let's try and do that this evening. So we're looking now at verse 26. When the counselor comes.

[7:16] Whom I will send to you from the Father. The Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father. He will testify about me.

And you also must testify. For you have been with me from the beginning. So this is what Jesus is saying to the apostolic group. And so does that show?

Yeah a little. So in my diagram the rectangular shape was the world. Here are people in the world. And the circle was the circle of people who belong to Jesus Christ.

And here are they the apostles in this case. You notice that the people that Jesus is speaking to specifically. Are the ones who've been with him from the beginning. So this is not firstly addressed to us.

It's addressed to them. The apostolic group. And I've got here a place to write down the things about the Father.

[8:19] The things about the Son. And the things about the Spirit. So can we work out. There is actually a direction of travel here. Because it talks about when the counselor.

That's the Holy Spirit comes. Would anybody like to volunteer anything about the direction of travel of the Spirit? Comes from the Father.

Yeah. And comes from the Father. And where does the Spirit go to? So from the Father.

Yeah. To? Yeah. To you. Yes. Yeah. Well it says. Whom. To you.

When the Spirit comes. And is the Son involved with that at all? So the Spirit comes from the Father. Yeah.

[9:19] Okay. Jesus sends the Spirit from the Father. And it says. Let's do that as a.

So. If I did it this way. And said. Like that. So. The Spirit comes from the Father.

And is sent by the Son. From the Father. Is that correct? Well. It says. Whom I will send.

So if you like. I could put the. The Son a bit closer. No. No.

This isn't going to work. No. No. No. No. No. No. No. No.

[10:19] How about that? So the Son sends the Spirit from the Father. There's another direction of travel thing in verse 26.

Okay. The Spirit testifies about the Son. So let's... Who's he going to be testifying to? No, let's be more specific than us.

So is it the apostles or is it the world? Who does he testify to? I think not.

I think not. Okay, let's do the...

When the counselor comes whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

[11:32] You also must testify for you have been with me from the beginning. So let's put it this way. Who are the apostles testifying to? The world.

So the apostles are testifying to the world. I'm sorry about that. Arrow wasn't quite where I meant it to be. The apostles are testifying to the world.

And the Spirit is testifying to. Is that right? You must testify.

So they're speaking to the world. They testify because they've been with Jesus from the beginning.

But it isn't just their testimony because the Spirit testifies to.

Actually, he puts it the other way around. He will testify about me. You also must testify for you have been with me from the beginning. Does that make sense?

[12 : 34] So here's the world. And they receive a sort of double testimony from the apostles because they've been with Jesus from the beginning.

So they know all the stuff that Jesus has said. They've seen all the stuff that Jesus has done. And they are in exactly the right place to testify to that.

Yes? And it is not just them speaking, but the Spirit is saying the same thing sort of along with them. Just to read it again. When the counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who goes out from the Father. Notice he's the Spirit of truth.

So this is about teaching. He will testify about me. You also must testify for you have been with me from the beginning.

[13 : 33] So the Spirit testifies about Jesus. And the apostles testify. And the two testimonies go together. They've been with Jesus from the beginning, so they know.

And the Spirit testifies about me, says Jesus. Would anybody like to suggest why that's a very important truth? Or do you think it perhaps isn't an important truth?

Because at the time, we've got a test of this. Like, even this one, one person can walk. Two people. Two people.

Two people. Okay. Thank you very much. So, Roberto has taken us on to our own testimony, but it's not taking it too far.

There's a confirmation in testimony from two sources. Yeah? Anybody like to take it any further? Sorry? Sorry?

[14 : 46] The Spirit opens eyes and ears. Yes. Because we've been told about the world. The world cannot see and cannot know. So what's the point of testifying to the world if they can't see and they can't know?

Well, the only thing that would make sense is if there is a supernatural power at work to accompany the testimony that the apostles give.

So that when the apostolic testimony is heard, and for us the apostolic testimony is here. So when somebody opens this up and says, this is what the message is.

Let me explain it to you. Same message. When that is said, there is also sort of invisibly and secretly a work going on in which God himself is saying, this is true.

This is right. And a miraculous sort of taking away of blindness and opening up of the heart. So in that lovely reading that Ben read, do you remember what happened to Lydia?

[15 : 51] What happened to Lydia? The Lord opened her heart to receive Paul's word. It's a beautiful example of this, isn't it? That the word was being spoken and the Lord opened her heart to receive God's word.

And that's what we want to see, isn't it? Isn't that what we want to pray for? And I mean, there's a very sort of specific example when Ben and others go down London Road with the book table there. Countless messages are bombarding every single person that walks along London Road. You know, buy your pizza here. Get your refreshments here.

Buy your eggs here. And there's another message which says Jesus is the Savior. And unless God says, that's the one. That's the one.

Then it's a pointless exercise, isn't it? But such a powerful truth that the Holy Spirit testifies with the apostolic testimony.

[16 : 59] Can we fill in a few more connections here? So let's go on a little bit further. All this I have told you so that you will not go astray.

So that you won't get stumbled. And simply to point out what was said before. Our expectations are really important. If we come to the Christian life thinking that Jesus guarantees us peace, security, invulnerability, health, wealth, and peace.

In this life, we're going to be very disappointed. Because Jesus says, these are the things that they will try and do to you. This is what it is to be a Christian.

They will put you out of the synagogue. In fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you thinks he is offering service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

I have told you this so that when the time comes, you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.

[18 : 13] So we could put in a few little connections here. So going this way, the world does what to the apostolic group?

A few things from those? Persecute. Thank you. Anything else that they will do?

Yeah, it's to put you out of the synagogue. They will dis-synagogue you. They will say, you are not fit to be part of our spiritual communion, our spiritual group.

They will put you out. And what will they think that they're doing if they do that sort of thing? They think they're doing something that God is pleased with. Think they're doing service to God.

It's not true because it says they don't know God. See, the Jewish thought was, we've got it right.

[19 : 20] We have Moses. We've got it right. We know God. And Jesus is saying that's exactly the opposite of the truth. When they, what does he say?

They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. And you see the place that Jesus puts himself. He says, if I'm rejected, people can't say, oh, well, I'm worshipping God, but I'm rejecting Jesus.

Jesus says, the two, we are, if you like, one and the same. If people reject me, they reject the Father. If they don't know me, they don't know the Father.

Okay, so there's persecution. And he even says that such people, that they will kill you. It's very sobering.

I wish it was not the truth in a sense, but it is the truth. And we have to take that on board. And I think that's as far as we can get with that little picture.

[20 : 27] So let's move on to the next one. So let's go to the next verses. It says, So there's just one word for that.

Convict the world of guilt. Convince the world of guilt. In regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. In regard to sin, because men do not believe in me.

In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer.

And in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

So let's see if we can get a little clear our thoughts on that.

So here is the world. And here is the spirit.

[22 : 07] And will he do something to the world according to those sentences that were read?

Will he do something? Or not? What will he do? Convict the world of guilt. Thank you very much. So there's a convicting.

Convincing. Or convincing that you're in the wrong. I'll put convince. And I'll try and write convict. Does it?

Okay. That's helpful. Yeah. To expose. To show. Thank you very much. Right. What are the things, what are the headings under which the spirit will do this convincing or convicting or exposing?

Okay. Sin, righteousness and judgment. Sin. Righteousness. And judgment.

[23 : 26] So I think we all know what those three things are. But I think it's a little bit more tricky to understand how Jesus connects them up. Because he does specifically connect them up.

And I'm not sure that each connection works in the same way. But let's look. He says he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

In regard to sin, because men do not believe in me. In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer.

In regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. So let's try and make those connections or at least try and follow them a little bit or at least think about them.

These three connections. So the connection of convicting or convincing of sin. Now what does Jesus say is the connection that he makes?

[24 : 27] Somebody just tell us what the connection makes. Because people do not believe in me. And he says this highlights sin.

Now do you remember this morning that the reaction that people had to Jesus uncloaked sin.

Do you remember that? Before they had a nice society. It's all very organized and everything. No sin there. But when Jesus comes and there is this reaction of rejection and crucifixion.

Jesus says, you see this shows the sin that was really underneath there. And there is no cloak for it now. It's exposed. You see what was really under the surface. And I think this is the sort of thing that Jesus is talking about.

The spirit will convince of sin. Because people do not believe in me. So in other words.

[25 : 45] The highest point of sin that Jesus is talking about is not believing in him. Now having said that, I thought I'd written this down.

Oh yes I had. Yeah. The sin that's highlighted is the sin of rejection and disbelief.

So I think what Jesus is wanting us to try and get a hold of is the idea that what the spirit does is he takes that rejection and shows how wrong it is.

I'm going to stop because I think. Right. Let's look at the next one. See if this helps shed light on that as well.

What about righteousness? What does the spirit convict in regard to righteousness? What's the connection that's made there? Because I am going to the father.

[27 : 07] Yeah. And? And you can't see me any longer. So I'll have a go at what I think this is saying. Is that when Jesus was on earth.

You could look at him. And see righteousness. In its purest form. Personified. What was Jesus? He was righteousness. That's righteousness. Righteousness. And Jesus expresses righteousness even more than Moses' law did.

He is righteousness walking, talking, living, breathing. And when he goes away. The spirit is needed to take that and bring it somehow into people's consciousness.

He will convict the world of guilt. He will convince people in regard to righteousness. Because I am going to the father and you won't see me any longer.

[28 : 17] So you don't have a living, breathing righteousness in front of you. But you have, I think this is what Jesus is saying. You have the record of me. And the spirit will bring that to people.

This is righteousness. That's what I think is being said there. Let's look at the third one. The third one is judgment.

And what's the connection that he makes with that? Because the prince of this world is condemned. And when is he condemned? Yeah, already or now. So I think this is also to do with the cross. The sin of rejection is in the cross.

The righteousness of Christ is in the cross. And the judgment of the evil one is in the cross. So I don't think I find this a particularly easy connection to think through.

[29 : 18] But I think what it's saying is that when Jesus dies on the cross, this is the sort of first and key stage in condemning Satan, his kingdom, sin, everything else.

And this is the judgment that will echo on until it's finally, finally, finally worked through, finally consummated in the total destruction of sin and Satan.

And it's the Holy Spirit's work to take that judgment and convince people of it.

That's as far as I can get on that, to be honest. It's a tricky one, isn't it? I mean, we think sin, righteousness and judgment, that must be fairly obvious. But actually how Jesus connects it up, I think, is not quite so obvious.

So I've had a go. And if anybody has got a better way of doing it, please, or any thought on that that would help us, please say so. Is there a thought that judgment, I mean, it's convincing the world is wrong about these things, isn't it?

[30 : 42] So is there any thought that the world has a different idea of judgment? Either that it won't happen at all, or that it's something different, maybe it's judgment by the law of Moses or something like that.

And it's Jesus saying that it will convince the world of judgment because the judgment on the evil one has already happened. So that says what judgment is, and it ensures that it will be carried out.

That's a very helpful thought. I don't think I can say yes or no to that. It's a helpful thought, isn't it? John 3, Thank you.

Yes, and that sort of links up with the disbelieving here, doesn't it? It looks like Jesus is going to the Father, sending the Spirit to carry on his walk.

Yes. Yeah. And the work is to convince the world, so all the people out of Jesus, including us, to be convinced. And it looks like he used the sin to convince the world, because we have a object of Jesus, he's in the sin.

[32 : 08] It looks like that. It looks like the righteousness, and Jesus was right. It was not in the world there, but we got the Spirit. So we work in righteousness because we got Jesus, people of Jesus, the Spirit, that showing the righteousness of God.

It looks like showing to the world that actually Jesus was true. And it commits to throw away, like it looks like.

And the judge, Jesus died on the cross. It looks like he's defeating them because we live in pictures. Yeah. That's the only link I can think of, is that the actual mission of your Spirit.

Yeah. I mean, that's helpful again. That's helpful again. I'm going to say, perhaps we got as far as we can get on that this evening.

I'm perfectly prepared to accept defeat in the sense of saying, there's some things I'm not going to try and say because I don't understand them myself. Yes.

[33 : 16] I'm just, when I'm reading this, I've got the new, new international version here. And instead of saying convict, it says, it will convince the world that it is wrong about it, it is wrong about it.

Yeah. That's an accurate translation. It kind of actually is helpful because it suggests that the world has the wrong idea about these three things. Yes. The Spirit is going to prove that their idea is wrong and put something presumably right in its place.

Yeah. It does say it will convince the world. It's not just, you know, there's something happening to the world that the world is being proved wrong. Yes. If the button of you're wrong about is the right button to press, then that helps us forward.

I haven't done enough research on that word to say whether that is the right button to press. Do you know? I can say that Don Carson would say it's convict.

Yes. Yeah. Don Carson tries to connect each of them up in exactly the same way, doesn't he?

Yeah. And I wasn't quite sure whether you always have to do that in general. Let's move on.

[34 : 27] But... Hmm. Hmm. Hmm. Hmm. Hmm. Hmm.

Hmm. Yep. Yep. I think what we do take away is that there is this comprehensive work of the Holy Spirit which we so much need and whether we understand quite how Jesus explained it all doesn't matter too much but that's how we became Christians.

and that's how we expect other people to become Christians. So let's look at one more picture. I have more to say to you more than you can bear.

This is verse 12. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. Just bear with me. He will guide you into all truth.

He will not speak on his own. He will speak only what he hears. He will tell you what is coming. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

[35 : 56] All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. So let's have a little think about this one.

Who are the people to whom this ministry is said to take place? Who are the people on the receiving end of this?

Yeah, it's the apostles. Yes, it's not to the world. Am I right? He will guide you into all truth. He will tell you what is yet to come.

He will bring glory to me by taking what is mine and making it known to you. The Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. That's correct, isn't it? This is a ministry not to the world but to the apostles.

And three times the word, a word is used which I suggest the English word is explicate.

[37 : 03] Now, you may never have heard the word explicate and I only ever heard this word used apart from in odd theological books. When I went to do teacher training course and I did the sociology of education and the psychology of education and the philosophy of education and they would use the word explicate and you have to make a judgment as to whether you think they used it because it was the right word or because that's what people who teach the philosophy of education and sociological education, that's just the way they speak.

Because there are, you know, people do speak. I think explicate means to explain and enlarge upon. So, even if we forget the word explicate, let's just think of explaining and enlarging on.

And three times it says the spirit does, I think that this is the word for what he does. So, it's, let me tell you where it comes.

Things to come he will, NIV says he will tell you, so I'm going to say he will explicate what are the things to come.

And then when it says he will take the things of, take from what is mine and, NIV says make it known, but it's just that word and I'll say explicate it to you.

[38 : 39] And I've got myself in a muddle with this. It's also verse 41. He will take what is mine and make it known to you. So, do you follow me?

We've got in the NIV one word is tell and then twice it says make it known. Same word in Greek and I'm suggesting the idea is to explain and enlarge upon.

So, in my little picture here I want us to think about the role of the father and the role of the son. so these two discs represent the father and the son close together and the spirit who is in a slightly different relationship in terms of what's happening here and then these people are the apostles so last time I did them in blue but anyway they'll just have two and here are the apostles they're going to respond to what happens so could anybody like to say any connections between father, son, spirit and apostles in this text?

thank you very much the spirit speaks what he hears so let's put an arrow that goes like that let's put it in a nice colour so the spirit speaks but he speaks what he hears and where does he hear it from where does it come from just have a careful look what does it say does it tell us what about verse 14 say that again pardon say again thank you so he takes the things about Jesus and makes them known to these guys here okay

[40 : 55] Jesus repeats that verse 15 that is why I said the spirit will take from what is mine and explicate it to you he says it in verse 14 he will take from what is mine and explicate it to you what is the relationship between the father and the son that Jesus mentions in these texts all that belongs to the father is mine which is which verse is that 15 so we've actually got a movement from the father all that belongs to the father is mine in other places it says the father shows the son all he does or the father gives the son so there's a movement from the father to the son and then this pardon the exact yeah in terms of revelation the son takes the things of the father and shows them in terms of action in just about every sort of form of relationship the things of the father are given to the son and yeah and here we say in this matter of revelation the things of the son are taken by the spirit and made known to the apostolic group the other thing that is explicated is in verse 13 he will not speak on his own he will speak only what he hears he will tell you he will tell you what is yet to come that's what the

NIV says and I puzzled over this and again I might have to admit defeat it's only temporary defeat we can keep thinking and keep God is always teaching us more things but as far as I got with this was as follows the way it's written it makes you think that this is a sort of prophetic he will tell you what is yet to come in other words he will tell you thus far we've been talking about Jesus and the cross and now just we've got this sudden little blip which says he'll tell you about the end of the world and he'll tell you about wars and he'll tell you about famines and things like that and it just struck me at the time of writing it was the cross that was yet to come and I wonder and I haven't researched this but I wonder if what he's actually saying is what the spirit will do is take this event that's going to come this cross and resurrection and he will explicate that and it all fits together he's going to take all the things about the son all his deeds and his words and in particular his cross and where previously you looked at them and you were like the world you said

I don't understand this doesn't fit together don't see anything clear about this he will take all of these things and he will explain them and enlarge upon them and so when you look at the cross under this ministry you will say wow there is so much there I can see what it's all about I can see something of the richness of it and it's the spirit's work to take from the things of Jesus and explain them and enlarge upon them so that the apostolic group say wow wonderful or something like that yes we do yes yes and we would say spirit given

Christ taught spirit given yeah and it's worth just remembering that we've we've not got two separate lines of revelation here the things that Jesus said and did and then the spirit going off in a different direction the two are married together aren't they the spirit testifies you will testify you've been with me from the beginning the apostolic group it's it's those events of the incarnate Christ that the spirit takes and enlarges upon and shows us the wonder of them it says after Jesus was glorified they didn't understand but it's the same thing yes one of the themes of John is misunderstanding that people didn't understand they didn't dare to ask but when the spirit comes it all becomes clear of course we now from our point of view see it all clearly but that's the work of the spirit yes

Yes, he is. And I think part of this is to say that the gospel comes to an apostolic group who are not confused and baffled and mystified.

[46 : 50] They're convinced, clear, and they've got it. So they can then tell us and we can be confident of what they say. Well, yeah, I think that's as much as I can say this evening.

I hope that's helpful.