

# What Disciples Must Know About This Hour

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[ 0 : 00 ] Through the Gospel of John, the fourth Gospel. So please turn to John chapter 16 today. John chapter 16, our sermon text is verses 1 through 15.

As I read John 16, 1 through 15 today, remember this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear and sufficient word. This is God's very own word for you, His people.

If you believe that, if you receive God's word that way, when I'm done reading it, I'll say, this is the word of the Lord, and we'll respond, thanks be to God. John 16, beginning at verse 1.

Jesus, in the last moments with His disciples, He's already left the upper room, either walking toward the Garden of Gethsemane or already there teaching them. And He listened to what He says.

He says, concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me.

[ 1 : 55 ] Concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see Me no longer. Concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears, He will speak. And He will declare to you the things that are to come.

He will glorify Me, and He will take away what is Mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take what is Mine and declare it to you.

And this is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God. Indeed, you may be seated. The Bible says that the grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you are not silent, that your word comes to your people again and again and again.

[ 3 : 08 ] We thank you, Lord, for what you said to your disciples, and what your Holy Spirit caused the disciples and the apostles to remember and write down. And we pray, Lord, that today your Holy Spirit will apply your word to our lives.

Lord, we pray that as we hear your word, we will obey you immediately. That we will receive your word as the food that we need to eat today, Lord. You know all that we come needing, Father. We need more faith. We need more hope. We need more comfort. We turn to nothing besides you. So please feed us today, Lord. We are your children.

May your word feed your children, Father. Grow our hope. Establish us in the faith. And equip us for your mission, we pray. Amen. Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, I want to try to show you today what I believe Jesus wants you to know about this hour.

It's what disciples must know about this hour. Our faith, we believe it and we receive it.

[ 4 : 21 ] But isn't it true that most of the time it's below the surface? We know there's a glorious gospel, like a great treasure. We know it and we hold to it. But it often doesn't glimmer in all of its glory until we're pressed and until we're in a moment of crisis.

Isn't that true? We're in this hour in which God is ministering to us by the power of his spirit. And in moments of crisis, we see the glory of Christ, that only he could have done that in a person's life. And it brings him all the glory. There's one such moment I heard about from a brother who lived in South Africa. And he's still a living man. He's still alive.

This is our generation. He's a man of dark skin in South Africa, which is a divided country with a long history of racism. His name was Moses.

He was introduced to us as Brother Moses. He worked as a school administrator in South Africa. And he shared this terrible story of how these white racist men ran over his own son on purpose

with a pickup truck.

[ 5 : 31 ] His son went to the hospital and died. That's the first part of this moment of crisis. I'm going to tell you more about him later. What came out of his lips next could only be explained as a man who has the glory of the gospel like a hidden treasure in his life.

He's a man living in this final hour where all of these promises that Jesus gives to his disciples are put on display. It's still happening. God still does this in your life and in mine.

So that's what you need to understand. What is true about this hour that we live in? The hour that was inaugurated by the disciples. And that is the hour until Christ returns.

See, the shepherd had called these sheep. They heard his voice. They followed him. Jesus has told them, apart from me, you can do nothing. You can just picture the disciples walking with them with sorrowful hearts.

And they say, yes, we believe that. And then in the next breath, Jesus says, I'm going away. Well, Lord, you're going away. And apart from you, we can do nothing. Where does that leave us?

[ 6 : 36 ] They're gripped by fear and sorrow. But Jesus tells them, this is to your advantage. How can that be? And that's what he answers in these verses.

Look at verse 2. Jesus says, indeed, the hour is coming. It's not going to last forever. It'll go fast. But it's coming. He says, I'm going to send you out as sheep among the wolves. I wash your wool, and it's white because I washed you.

Those woes are going to sink their fangs into you. You're going to bleed. You're going to give up your lives for my sake. But this hour is to your advantage. Look at verse 4.

Jesus said, I've said these things to you that when the hour comes, you may remember all I told you. So three headings of what you need to know if you're a disciple of Christ about this hour.

[ 7 : 38 ] Number one, if you are a disciple of Christ, expect persecution from unexpected people. If you are a disciple of Christ, expect persecution from unexpected people.

In the old covenant, being born an Israelite, it meant that your parents are what make you part of the covenant community. Well, the Apostle Paul in Romans 9-6 reveals by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that not all who are descended of Israel belong to Israel.

Jesus said, I am the true vine. Only those grafted into me bear fruit, Jesus said. If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, expect surprising persecution.

I see three things Jesus said. He gives them two warnings and one encouragement. Warning number one, Christ warns his disciples, his true church, he says, you will be hated by the religious elite when you follow me.

Look at verse one again. He said, I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. The Greek word is, it's a rude word of scandalous. I say these words to keep you from being scandalized.

[ 9 : 00 ] In the King James, it's to keep you from being offended. Do you get the picture? You're going to be persecuted. Verse two, they will put you out of the synagogues.

They will hate you. So the question is, who is they? Well, in John 15, 18, he says, when the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you.

So it's going to be the world that hates you. But this, he said, of the rulers of the synagogue, they are the worldly ones. And in John chapter nine, verse 22, we saw this months ago.

There was the man born blind from birth. And the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be the anointed one, the Messiah, the Christ, that he would be put out of the synagogue.

So these rulers of the synagogue were the religious elite. And Jesus is saying those are the men who are worldly. They are of the world. John Gill commented on the language used here, not put out in the lesser sense, like here's one local synagogue, but there's many others.

[ 10 : 11 ] This being put out of the synagogue, it was the greatest form of discipline that they had authority to carry out. All of their hatred and all of the spite they had toward Jesus Christ, they were going to carry out on his disciples, on those who followed him.

Gill pointed out that it's the greatest excommunication. A person was cut out from the whole body of the Jewish community, which is often referred to as the synagogue or the congregation of the people.

It was to be given over to utter destruction. Jesus is saying, disciples, my true disciples, brace yourself for the rage of the religious elite.

They will hate Christ, and they will hate you who belong to Christ. There's one way to get out of that, because that sounds awful.

I love how Vodibachum put it. He said, persecution can be avoided. All you have to do is compromise. Jesus said very clearly in Luke 9, 23, if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

[11:23] And in Luke 14, 28, Jesus warns all of his true disciples to count the cost. This is one of the costs disciples must count. The second warning Jesus gives is this.

Christ warns you, disciple, many who think they serve God are enemies of Christ's true church. Many who think they serve God are enemies of Christ's true church.

That's what he warns them in verses 2 and 3. Look in your Bible. He says, Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering a service to God. Do you get the picture? Here's a lamb that followed the good shepherd and heard his voice. And they're going to take that lamb and they're going to slaughter it. And they think they're offering that as a sacrifice to God. Verse 3 says, They will do these things because they have not known the Father nor me. The disciples were following Christ, going into it, expecting that they would have to have their lives taken by the men of the world.

[12:38] What makes it even harder to bear is that when their lives get taken, those who did that think they're doing it out of zeal and love for God. John Gill said, Those men believe that whoever sheds the blood of a wicked man is one who is then offering a sacrifice.

This is a gift to God. They thought that sacrifice would have been acceptable and well-pleasing to God. Well, who immediately comes to mind as one who did exactly that? It was Saul, wasn't it? Saul of Tarsus. He thought he was doing this as a service unto the Lord, going out of his way and persecuting the Christians, taking their lives, thinking it was to please God.

Well, Sinclair Ferguson pointed out, Real loyalty to Christ, it does create friction in the hearts of those who pay Christ only lip service. Loyalty arouses the conscience and it leaves people with only two alternatives.

Follow Christ or silence him. Often, their only way of silencing Christ is by silencing his servants. So count the cost, disciple.

[13:51] We're told by Paul, your life will be either a stench leading some to death as you follow Christ, or it'll be an aroma leading others to life. And it's nothing that you do.

It's simply abiding in Christ. That's the effect it will have. So be warned. Many who think they serve God are enemies of Christ's true church.

After those two warnings, I see an encouragement. Jesus Christ encourages his disciples. When your hour comes, remember my word.

Christ encourages you who are his disciple. When your hour comes, remember his word. In verse 4, he says, I've said these things to you that when their hour comes, you may remember I told them to you.

When that hour comes, these apostles would preach this glorious gospel after the Holy Spirit filled them. There's that man, a descendant of a Greek.

[15:01] The Spirit regenerated him and filled him. And he helps with serving the tables. He gets appointed as a proto-deacon. And he remembers these words that were written down by the apostles.

And it's with joy that Stephen takes the stones on his head. And the Lord opens up the heavens to him like he had done to Ezekiel and the prophets. And he dies the martyr, the blood of Stephen. Remembering the word of God and declaring it with the last breath. And those who hear that gospel preached, God regenerates. And there's Saul, the criminal in this story, who God saves, God regenerates, reveals himself to Saul.

Gives him a new name, you belong to me now. So when that hour comes for Paul now, Paul remembers the words of the Lord. And he says, I'm on that side with Stephen now.

To die would be gain. It would be to my advantage to be with my Lord, but to live as Christ. And I lay my life down for him and I lay my life down for his people. Because he first laid down his life for me.

[16:09] God can save even Saul. And God can save you and God can save your enemy. God can save those who right now may be like Saul.

They may be persecuting those who they should be loving. Saul later reflected on this when his name was Paul and he said, what I did as Saul, now I see as Paul, I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

I did not know the Father. Although I knew all the Hebrew and I knew it all, I did not know Jesus Christ. So disciples, we can bear persecution with patience.

As someone put it, we can pity our persecutors and we can pray for them. We can bear our sufferings with greater patience because we know that whatever we are going through was appointed by Christ for your life.

And he said, this is what you should expect. That gives us comfort. A true disciple learns to trust the Word of God. That's what Jesus trusted.

[ 17 : 15 ] According to his human nature, Jesus trusted the Word of God for his life. Thomas Brooks, a Puritan, wrote that death shall be the funeral of all his sins, his sorrows, his afflictions, his temptations, his vexations, his oppressions, and his persecutions.

This is what God promises. Do you receive and trust that promise? When you die in this life, it'll be the end of all of that. God's Word also promises that your death will be the resurrection of all your hopes, all your joys, all your delights, all your comforts, and all your contentments.

This is what the Word of God promises. So, to die is gain, truly. And to live is Christ. So if you are a disciple of Christ, expect that type of persecution.

We have been warned by Christ himself as his disciples. And we've been encouraged to hold on, remember his Word. The second heading is that if you are Christ's disciple, Christ promises help in your confusion and sorrow.

If you are Christ's disciple, he promises help, with a capital H, in your confusion and in your sorrow.

[ 18 : 36 ] He promises this in verse 4. He understands his disciples will be confused. In verse 4 he says, I did not say these things to you from the beginning because I was with you.

See, the very presence of Christ with his disciples made him the true object of the malice and the rage and the hatred against God. When he sent them out two by two to preach, he knew they were going to be persecuted at some level there, but it was not even directed at them.

It was directed at the message and at Christ himself. He was with them and he gathered them back and he himself comforted them. He says, this is going to be different. It's not a quick mission and you come back and my presence comforts you.

This is going to be different. In Matthew 10, 17, he said, you will be hated by all men, persecuted from city to city, beat in the synagogues, delivered up to councils and brought before kings and governors.

But now this is why he says, you get a greater help. He says, it's to your advantage. You get the help, the comforter, the advocate.

[ 19 : 46 ] Look at verse 5. Now I am going to him who sent me and none of you asks me, where are you going? And then, Jesus is telling the disciples, there is a reality you don't even see.

There is a realm you don't even access or can even dream of. And that's the glory set before him. And the thought of them, his disciples, being united to him was the joy with which he marched to the cross to pay for their sin.

Christ had his future glory in mind because he knew from that place, that future glory, he would pour out his Holy Spirit on his disciples.

He would be preparing mansions for them while his Holy Spirit would be carrying out his mission on earth of bringing the true heaven down to earth in a spiritual sense through the preached word gathered up into the church.

So he looks at the disciples and he sees the sadness on their face. But in his heart, he knows the glory. He's comforting them with a promise that only he can imagine.

[ 20 : 56 ] So Christ understands that his disciples feel confused. But Christ also cares for his disciples in their deep sorrow. Look at verse 6.

He says, because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. He recognizes it and he tells them, I see you. I see what you're feeling. The reasons for their sorrow, he says, are these things.

He says these things six times in this chapter. It's like a climax of what he's been preaching all along. Now he's just referring to it as a lump sum. These things, these things, these things. It's persecution.

It's being put out of the synagogue by the elite. It's losing their lives. And the deepest point of their grief, it's that Christ himself would no longer be with them on this earth.

So sorrow had filled the minds of the disciples. One commentator put, it had seized on all the powers and faculties of their souls that Christ recognizes that and calls it in this moment.

[ 21 : 59 ] He pauses his teaching and he identifies what it is on their faces. Not only does Christ comfort them and recognize that in their sorrow.

Number three, Christ only does for his disciples what is best for them. In their confusion, in their sorrow, he says, what I am doing is to your advantage.

This is for your good. Look at verse seven. I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away for if I do not go away, then the helper will not come to you.

But if I go, then I will send him to you. He uses the phrase, I'm going away. He's using earthly language to tell them of the most glorious thing that has ever happened in human history.

That God, who took on flesh, will march a journey to the cross and to the grave and he will be ascended at the right hand of the Father. That's the journey.

[ 23 : 01 ] That's the going away, this trip that he's telling them about. And he will come back. He says, it's to your advantage. Why is that? Theologically, what is happening in this going away, this full work of Christ?

John Gill put it this way, I must go, in the words of Christ, to open the way for you into the Holy of Holies by my blood. I must go to remove all charges and accusations against you.

I must go to take possession of heaven for you. I must go to prepare mansions for you to dwell with me in my Father's house. I must go to appear in the presence of God on your behalf.

I must go to be your advocate. I must go to make intercession for all good things for you. I must go to mediate between you and God. I must go to present your petitions to the Father.

I must go to see that every blessing of grace is applied to you, my people. That's why it's to the advantage of his disciples that Jesus go away.

[ 24 : 09 ] The last John Gill quote says, If Christ had not gone away to die and rise again, there would have been nothing for the Spirit to do. no blood to sprinkle, no righteousness to reveal, no fruit to bear, and no salvation to apply.

In that moment of deep sorrow, of deep confusion, Jesus promises them, what I am doing is best for you. This is for your good.

Do you trust me? Do you trust me? Do you trust me? And getting to know each one of you and different ones in our congregation, it's humbling.

I'm humbled because I've not had to endure some of the most painful things imaginable that you've shared, that you had to endure. And so I feel like I'm not even the one who can comfort you because I have not identified with you in the suffering in that way.

What I can do is give you the word of Jesus Christ. He identifies with those hardest things you went through. And in reasons we can't understand now, the confusion and the deep sorrow that we still feel, Jesus Christ says, whatever I do in your life, it is for your good.

[ 25 : 35 ] Do you trust my word? Do you trust the word of Jesus Christ, your Lord? If you are Christ's disciple, God promises help in your confusion and sorrow.

Praise God for the Spirit who is our help. And that's our third and final heading for today. If you are Christ's disciple, His Spirit will guide you into all truth.

If you are Christ's disciple, it's okay that you don't have it all figured out now, that you have big questions. His Spirit will guide you into all truth.

What a glorious promise. The Holy Spirit, I'll show you four things here. number one, graciously convicts you. The Holy Spirit graciously convicts you.

Look at verse 8. When He comes, the helper, the comforter, the advocate, the Spirit of truth, when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

[ 26 : 47 ] That's what He'll do. And then He opens it up, He unpacks it. And notice how each thing that the Spirit does points you where? It points you to Jesus Christ. So, we saw previously how the Holy Spirit is the second advocate.

Jesus Christ is the advocate of His disciples. Jesus Christ is the advocate in heaven pleading your case, defending you in the legal court. Here, the Holy Spirit is advocating for Jesus Christ.

It's the Spirit of truth pointing to Christ. So, the Holy Spirit in a legal court setting, the Holy Spirit is the defending attorney. And Jesus Christ is the one in heaven the Spirit defends.

Well, what does that make us as disciples? We don't have to defend Christ. That makes us witnesses. I would like to call my first witness to the stand. Is what the Spirit is saying about Jesus

Christ true in your life?

Do you testify that this is true? If you take the Lord's Supper, you are proclaiming that gospel of Jesus Christ until the day that He returns. What is it that the Spirit testifies to and defends?

[ 27 : 57 ] Look at verse 9. Concerning sin because they do not believe in me, Jesus Christ. So the Spirit comes and convicts of sin so they will believe in Christ. It's a gracious conviction.

That's the first use of the moral law in evangelism. We go to a community college we bring up any topic under the sun and we can use the moral law of God and the Spirit by the power of Christ will convict of sin.

And that conviction of sin it makes you need I need a Savior. It makes you know that. And He humbles us. It's a gracious conviction that drives us to the cross of Jesus Christ. Acts 2.23 this was inaugurated.

The Spirit convicted the world not just these disciples not just the 3,000 that would believe but He convicted all nations represented. Acts 2.23 says this Jesus Peter's preaching He was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God because you crucified and killed Him.

You lawless men put the Son of God on the cross. And that's a gracious conviction to see your sin that put Him there. Jerry Bridges said conviction should actually grow throughout our Christian lives.

[ 29 : 18 ] In fact one sign of spiritual growth is an increasing awareness of our sinfulness. Jerry Bridges is saying you want to see a mature Christian there's a Christian who is so aware of his own sinfulness.

So the Spirit graciously convicts you. Number two the Spirit shows you Christ's righteousness. It builds one builds on the other. Look at verse 10 the Spirit ministers concerning righteousness Jesus says because I go to the Father and you will see me no longer.

Now think about that what does going to the Father have to do with the righteousness of Christ?

Well Jesus died for sin but He was only raised from the dead because the Father saw the obedience of the suffering servant His entire life His righteousness His active obedience His fulfillment of the moral law and because He was sinless and He died in our place now the Father raises Him from the dead.

He says this is a life that merited eternal life not because He lacked anything but He merited it on behalf of His people of those He came to save. 1 Peter 1.8 says though you have not seen Him you love Him though you do not now see Him you believe in Him and rejoice with joy inexpressible filled with glory.

That's the ministry of the Holy Spirit pointing to you yes you're a sinner you need to be forgiven and washed clean by His blood but it's His righteousness that covers you. It's the Spirit who gives you a joy inexpressible and filled with the glory of the Son His righteousness put unto you.

[ 31 : 03 ] Number three the Spirit shows you that Satan was crushed. The moment when when Christ suffered the wound on the heel the serpent's head was crushed.

That same moment on the cross it was the death of death itself and the death of Jesus Christ. Look at verse 11 the Spirit reveals to you concerning judgment because the ruler of this world is judged. What did Jesus accomplish on the cross according to Colossians 2 15 and 16 on the cross Jesus Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities of the spiritual realm and put them to shame by triumphing over them in Christ.

Number four the Spirit illuminates God's Word to you. The Spirit illuminates God's Word to you.

Look at verse 12 Jesus said I still have many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes He will guide you into all the truth and He will not speak on His own authority but whatever He hears He will speak and He will declare to you the things that are to come.

[ 32 : 13 ] He will glorify me for He will take what is mine and declare it to you and all that the Father has is mine therefore I said that He will take what is mine and declare it to you.

the Holy Spirit according to verse 13 will guide these apostles into all truth. Yes there's more revelation the whole New Testament still needs to be written and they will take what is Christ's the full work of Christ and the Spirit will open it up for the church.

The Spirit will help these apostles to declare it and the New Testament will be breathed out by the Holy Spirit and now that same Holy Spirit who regenerates and who calls you to believe in Christ that same Holy Spirit ministers His own word that He breathed out to you and He guides you too

through His word into all truth.

That's why we believe what Colossians 3.16 we believe it as witnesses we can testify not only is this what it says this has been true that as we let the word of Christ dwell in you richly He establishes us in our faith we teach one another into all wisdom and we do this with thankfulness in our hearts to God it's the ministry of the Holy Spirit in us if you are Christ's disciple His Spirit will guide you into all truth so the focus today is this hour what we as followers of Christ need to know about this hour Jesus said in verse 2 indeed the hour has come in verse 4 He said these things to disciples that when the hour has come you'll remember what He had told you Jesus said of this hour it is good it is to your advantage this hour is even better we wish we could be there in the first century and see

God in the flesh Jesus we don't understand it He says what we have now with the Holy Spirit is better this is the glorious hour of the Holy Spirit in the church beloved brothers and sisters believe this today this is the hour according to John 12 23 yes the hour has come for the Son of Man our Lord Jesus Christ to be glorified this is the hour according to John 16 in which the Holy Spirit applies the redemption that Christ accomplished this is the hour according to John 4 23 in which the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth this is the hour according to Matthew 10 19 in which when you get delivered over to those who hate Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit will give you what to say this is the hour in John 1st John 2 18 in which many will abandon the faith making it plain that they were never of the true vine this is the hour in which you who are not of the world will walk with your shepherd in this world as sheep among wolves this is the hour according to 1st Corinthians 4 11 through 13 that when you are reviled you will bless when persecuted you will endure when slandered you will pray how glorious

[ 35 : 53 ] God's power is is often hidden until we're in a moment of crisis brother Moses of South Africa grieved he had anger he wanted to carry out vengeance on those who killed his son brother Moses stood and shared with us over a long process the Holy Spirit taught him to forgive those who killed his own son because God forgave Moses who killed the son of God with his sin that's the power of the Holy Spirit there is no other explanation for it brother Moses bears witness everything the spirit reveals about Christ is true the spirit advocates for Christ and we join in bearing witness yes because it's been true in my life also this is the hour according to Revelation 3 10 in which our Lord Jesus

Christ calls his church to keep his word with patient endurance until he returns this is the hour according to John 5 25 in which the dead will hear the voice of the son of God and those who hear will live this is the hour according to Luke 12 40 in which you must be ready for the bridegroom shall return for you in glory oh disciple of Jesus Christ you must know according to Romans 13 11 that the night is far gone and the day is already at hand salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed the hour has come for you to wake from your sleep amen let's pray verse 12 of Romans 13 oh Lord may your Holy Spirit cause your true disciples to cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light and follow you

King Jesus for your glory may your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven amen you!S