

## LEAD! A.9 Spirit's Conviction

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In Which Jesus Sends the Comforter, and We Are Convicted By Him

This week we move from the [Father](#) and the [Son](#) to the third person of the [Trinity](#), the Holy Spirit. This also continues our theme of God restoring His [Image](#) by saving us from our [rebellion](#). And as usual, there is a heavy price to be paid...

### ***Adoration***

[Psalm 51](#)

### ***Bible***

[John 16:5-15](#)

Our story begins in during what is known as the [upper room discourse](#), Jesus' "after-dinner speech" between the [Last Supper](#) and when he goes to [Gethsemane](#) to pray (and be arrested). As his final conversation with the disciples, it is fraught with foreboding:

But now I [go my way](#) to him that [sent](#) me; and none of you [asketh](#) me, [Whither](#) goest thou?

Here Jesus is speaking of His impending death -- a topic the disciples would rather not think about, much less talk about. But Jesus insists on bring it up -- though He knows it pains them:

But because I have [said](#) these things unto you, [sorrow](#) hath [filled](#) your [heart](#).

Why does He force the issue? Because His departure is an essential step to something even better:

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.

We don't know exactly why Jesus had to leave (i.e., die) before the Holy Spirit could come, but it is clear that Jesus sends the Holy Spirit in much the same way the Father sends Jesus. Put another way, the Holy Spirit will represents Jesus to us much as Jesus represented the Father to the disciples.

And how will He do that?

And when he is come, he will [reprove](#) the [world](#) of [sin](#), and of [righteousness](#), and of [judgment](#):

Of all the things the Holy Spirit will do -- and there are many -- Jesus chooses to focus on these three things. Perhaps surprisingly, Jesus talks about the impact the

Holy Spirit will have on the "world" in general, not just the disciples or the church. Specifically, He will [convict](#) the world in regards to:

- sin
- righteousness
- judgement

That is a bit vague as it stands, so Jesus expands on what each of them mean:

Of sin, because they [believe](#) not on me;

First of all, Jesus makes it clear that the fundamental "sin" (singular) the Holy Spirit is concerned about is failing to "[believe in](#)" Jesus. While all "sins" (plural) can be considered [falling short](#) of God's glory -- His character and purpose -- this passage implies that the root of those sins is failing to recognize who Jesus truly is; and that the only solution is to place our trust in Jesus, not ourselves (or other "gods").

We could also reasonably infer from this that failing to believe in Jesus is most likely the one "[unforgivable sin](#)" against the Holy Spirit, since that would be thwarting His primary purpose.

Of righteousness, because I go to my [Father](#), and ye [see](#) me no more;

There's many ways to interpret this verse, but the simplest is perhaps that with Jesus no longer physically present, we no longer have His direct example of what righteous living looks like. Instead, we must rely on the Holy Spirit (through the Scriptures and the Body of Christ, as well as directly).

Of judgment, because the [prince](#) of this world is [judged](#).

The Greek word translated as "[judgement](#)" is literally "[crisis](#)". A crisis is a time when illusions and excuses are stripped away, and we are forced to make difficult choices in the light of cold reality. Christ's death and resurrection represent a judgement on the existing world ruler ("[arche](#)") -- which means we need to choose sides; [ignorance](#) is no longer a viable excuse.

Of course, these three things are just the [tip of the iceberg](#); but that's all they can handle at the moment:

I have yet [many](#) things to say unto you, but ye cannot [bear](#) them now

In fact, that's one of the main reasons we need the Holy Spirit, to pick up where Jesus left off:

Howbeit when he, the [Spirit](#) of [truth](#), is come, he will [guide](#) you into all truth:

This is the first time Jesus uses the term "spirit" to refer to the Comforter, specifically as the "Spirit of Truth" -- similar to Jesus' identity as the "[way, truth and life](#)". This fits nicely with the three "reproofs" above; in [Jewish culture](#), the idea of "truth" is tightly linked to the idea of "conviction" -- it is impossible to "believe" a truth without acting

upon it. As such, the Holy Spirit does not merely *tell* us truth, He leads us to live it out!

However, it is not His own truth He is sharing:

for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

This is similar to how Jesus claimed to do only what He saw the Father doing. The Spirit's job is to listen to the heart of God, and disclose that to us, Christ's disciples.

As just as the Son manifests the Father to us, so the Spirit reflects the Son:

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you.

This is one reason why the Spirit has often been poorly understood during church history: the Son seeks the Father's glory, and the Spirit brings glory to the Son -- leaving nobody to glorify the Spirit!

But the Spirit is okay with that; his purpose is to testify to Jesus. In fact, all the gifts and fruit of the Spirit are **not** meant to call attention to Himself, but to glorify Christ by building up His body. Woe to us if we ever seek the Spirit's power for selfish purposes!

But if we receive the Spirit in the *right* way, He will grant us all the treasures of the Father:

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you.

The following lessons -- as well as the next two quarters! -- will focus on how that works. For now, reflect on the importance of having a perfect, divine conduit to reveal to us all the riches of our inheritance in Christ.

## ***Conversation***

1. Do you ever wish you were alive when Jesus walked the earth? Do you feel we are actually better off with Him gone?
2. Have you ever worried that you've committed the unforgivable sin? How can understanding the Holy Spirit's role help someone who struggles with that?
3. What is your most recent -- or current -- crisis? What might the Holy Spirit want to accomplish through it?
4. How has the Holy Spirit helped you see truth?
5. Have you ever hungered after the gifts and fruits of the Spirit? In a healthy or unhealthy way? How can we tell the difference?

## ***Decision***

- **Repentance:** Where do you need to submit to the Spirit's judgment, and break away from the world?

- Action: Ask the Holy Spirit what truth about Jesus He wants to show you.
- Worship: Thank God for everything the Spirit has brought you.

### ***Explore More***

- [The Promise of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [Salvation an Inward Work of the Holy Spirit, L. R. Shelton, Sr.](#)
- [The Unforgivable Sin – Matthew 12:22–32 | Grace Bible Church](#)
- [The Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [Fruit Of The Spirit](#)

### ***For Next Week***

Read [1 Peter 1](#). For what have we been saved? How?