



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

The Gospel of John Sermon Series

Supports Session 7: When The Spirit Comes

Sermon Title: “The Ministry of the Holy Spirit” (John 15:26-27; 16:7-15)

Connection to Session 7

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin and guides us to know God’s truth.

Introduction/Opening

Courtroom testimonies can be false. A false testimony can have an impact on a verdict if that testimony is accepted as true. An innocent person can be convicted. A guilty person can be set free. And all based on a false or misleading testimony. Believers have a sure word of testimony in the Scripture.

Outline

1. The Holy Spirit’s Witness (John 15:26-27)
 - a. The Holy Spirit’s witness to the disciples: Jesus told the disciples the Holy Spirit would come and testify about Him. The Holy Spirit would reveal truth about Christ. This is described in John 14:26: “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.”
 - b. The Holy Spirit’s witness through the disciples: Jesus confirmed the disciples also would bear witness of Jesus’s life and teachings. The Holy Spirit would empower them. Witnessing is an imperative and signifies a continuing command for Christ-followers.
 - c. The Holy Spirit’s witness through the church: This is not stated directly in the text but is implied by the command to testify of Jesus. The disciples were the seed of the church. On the Day of Pentecost, having been affirmed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the church began its ministry of testifying about Jesus. The early church sought to fulfill the commission that Jesus gave in John 20:21, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you.”

2. The Activity of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-11)
 - a. Jesus taught His disciples that it would be advantageous for Him to complete His work as Redeemer and ascend to the right hand of the Father. He would send the Holy Spirit to be with them. The Holy Spirit not only operates within the believers He indwells, but He also has a ministry to the world. In this context, John is using the term *world* to refer to the inhabitants of a world system that is under the power of the evil one. The Lord then indicated the Holy Spirit would convict the world “about sin, righteousness, and judgment” (v. 8). Sin, righteousness, and judgment are terms that bring to mind courtroom language. Sin is the crime noted on the indictment. Righteousness is the

criterion to which the defendant must conform. Judgment is the foundation that the presiding judge uses to render a final verdict.¹ What does *convict* mean in this context? It means to prove wrong or expose guilt.

- b. The role of conviction regarding sin: On this point, W. A. Criswell noted, “The work of the Holy Spirit is to lead us to Jesus, to point us to Him who can save us from death and the penalty of our iniquities.”² The sin to which John refers is the refusal to believe in Jesus. This is a most gracious work of the Holy Spirit directed to those in the world so they will acknowledge their need and come to Jesus.
 - c. The role of conviction regarding righteousness: Righteousness refers to God’s expected standard. This righteousness is what humanity lacks. As a result, we face the judgment of a holy, righteous God. The Holy Spirit would convict the world of righteousness because Jesus was going to the Father. Jesus’s presence in the world exposed its darkness because of His light. How would this work continue after Jesus’s ascension? The Holy Spirit would accomplish this task.
 - d. The role of conviction regarding judgment: The world stands convicted because the ruler of this world stands condemned. The prince of this world stands condemned, and every person who follows him will likewise be condemned unless they repent. The Holy Spirit convicts people of the judgment that awaits them if they continue in the path of the ruler of this world. For the one who persists in the rejection of Christ, the final sentence will be “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!” (Matthew 25:41)
3. The Guidance of the Holy Spirit (16:12-15)
- a. The need for guidance (v. 12): There were many things the Lord Jesus wanted to teach to His disciples, but they were not ready
 - b. The source of guidance (v. 13): The Holy Spirit would be a source of guidance. Since He is the Spirit of truth, He would lead and direct the disciples into knowledge of God’s truth. He would also give guidance to the church, leading believers to gain insight and application of the truth gleaned from Scripture.
 - c. The goal of guidance (vv. 14-15): The goal is clear—the glory of Christ. The Holy Spirit continually directs believers to make much of Jesus. There is a fatal defect in any religious undertaking or proclamation if it does not exalt Jesus. That flaw is the absence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals the truth of Christ to His disciples.

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit worked in the disciples through revelation and inspiration, using them to pen the written Word of God. He then through the testimony of the disciples and the church brings the message of the Word in convicting power to those in bondage to sin and Satan, so they might see and trust in the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. When people are converted and brought into a right relationship with the Triune God, the Holy Spirit applies the Word through illumination and

1. Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12-21*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 25B, The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 165.

2. W. A. Criswell, *Pneumatology*, ed. Paige Patterson, vol. 4, Great Doctrines of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 75.

direction for their Christian journeys. “For all those led by God’s Spirit are God’s sons” (Romans 8:14).

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