

“Assurances Regarding Our Mission” (Jn. 16:1-15)

1. Adversity against the Mission (1-4)

- a. Preface: Chapter division... Jesus’ preparing them for the heated opposition transitions to the promise of the Helper.
- b. Persecution: He promised they would lose their social standing (2a). Such is the threat of not going along with the “social justice.” You’ll lose your social standing, be cancelled, vilified, and thwarted from equal opportunities.
- c. Presumption: In fact the religious persecution is done sanctimoniously (2b). We must continuously check to see if we are aligning with the Word’s intent. Those punishing Jesus’ followers were using the authority of the scriptures to do so. Many have noted that historically to present, the most severe persecutions of the church are done in the name of God – but such is the epitome of third Commandment.
- d. Perdition: Persecutors of Christians are those who do not know Christ or the Father (3).
- e. Perseverance 1: Such warning also serves as future confirmation of Jesus’ person and work (4). In fact, the cliché states: The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. D. A. Carson insightfully commented, “Now, [Jesus] says, he is leaving; and he not only prepares his followers for what lies ahead, but gets them ready to serve as the front-line target once he himself is no longer present to draw the hottest fire. ¶ It is difficult for some to believe that a cause is truly God’s unless it is constantly on the ascendancy. When a movement is relatively weak, few in numbers, and without any of the clout a pagan or secular world appreciates, it is hard for some to accept that it is of God. But we must remember that this is the path the Lord Jesus himself traveled. The way *of the cross* is the Savior’s way.” (Emphasis mine).¹
- f. Perseverance 2: Carson went on to give historical examples which help with implications and thus encourage our application. He wrote:

Meditation on these verses forges men and women of God with vision and a stamina whose roots reach into eternity. It calls forth a William Tyndale, who while constantly fleeing his persecutors worked at the translation of the Bible into English. Through betrayal, disappointment, and fear, he struggled on until he was captured and burned at the stake. His dying cry revealed his eternal perspective: “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes!” In a similar vein, William Borden prepared for missionary service in the Muslim world. Born to wealth, he poured his money and his example into missions. After the best of training at Yale University and Princeton Seminary, he arrived in Egypt to work with Samuel Zwemer. Almost immediately he contracted a terminal case of cerebral meningitis. His dying testimony did not falter: “No reserve; no retreat; no regrets.” C. T. Studd, born to privilege, gifted athletically, and trained at Eton and Cambridge, turned his back on wealth and served Christ for decades against unimaginable odds, first in China and then in Africa. He penned the words:

Some want to live within the sound
of church or chapel bell;
I want to build a rescue shop
within a yard of hell.²

i.

¹ Carson, D. A. (1988). [*The Farewell Discourse and Final Prayer of Jesus: An Exposition of John 14–17*](#) (p. 130). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

² Ibid.. 131.

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2. Advancement of the Mission (5-7)

a. Their Neglect of Inquiry (5-6)

- i. “None of you asks Me, ‘Where are you going?’” v.5. See 13:36 & 14:5. It’s not that they didn’t literally ask the question but that they didn’t inquire of the actual ‘place.’ They were more concerned “that” He was leaving and thus the implications of their being w/o Him v.6. But they didn’t inquire as the how/why of His departure – which was to the Cross before the Father.
- ii. Analogy: A son asks his father where he is going after the Father tells him that he must go into work for an emergency but the day before he promised to spend the day with him. The question asks, “where are you going” without truly probing the reason for the father’s going; and this is what Jesus is likely getting at.
- iii. Jesus’ going away would seem as an abandonment of sorts. Carson again helpfully surmises, “they are so concerned with their own problems, their feeling of abandonment, their sense of impending crisis and doom, that they do not really *listen*. They love themselves much and their master little; and therefore they neither rejoice with him in his prospect of returning to the Father, nor mourn with him in his prospect of the cross.”³
- iv. In summary, they were sad “that” He had to go but would rejoice “why” He had to go.

b. Their Ignorance of Advantage (7)

- i. If they had asked “Where are you going?” in the sense of why and how He must leave them, they would rejoice for it is unto their advantage v.7!
- ii. The work of the Cross must happen before the application of that work can be done by the Spirit. Likewise, sorrow would precede joy for the disciples (cf. vv. 20-22).

3. Agency of the Mission (8-15)

a. Helper’s Threefold Conviction (8-11)

- i. He will convict the world of (quite likely of “its”) sin, righteousness, and judgment.
- ii. Of sin because of failure to trust Jesus v.9. Sin of unbelief cf. Jn. 3:17-19.
- iii. Believe “in” vs believe “that.” John continually pointed out that some believed that Jesus was the One but didn’t believe in Him to follow and sacrifice e.g. 12:42 cf. 7:13, 45-51; 9:22. Also see Jam. 2:19
- iv. Of righteousness (its) because of Jesus ascended to the Father. See Jn. 3:13 & Ps. 24:3-5. Jesus’ righteousness is the only true righteousness and thus the Spirit must convict sinners of their ‘righteousness.’
- v. The world needs convicted of its righteousness which, compared to God, is as used menstrual cloths (Isa. 64:6). Read also, Mat. 5:20; Ro. 10:3; Phil. 3:6-9; Titus 3:5.
- vi. Observance/application: Religion of this world presumes a righteousness which demands little of its proponents and much of its opponents. I think of SJWs who think themselves righteous because they simply apologized for their privilege or painted or posted a BLM sign on their business while they demand others to implement full-scale changes in their business to engender social equality. Jesus points out such self-righteousness (Mat. 23:4-7) and self-righteous judgment (Jn. 7:24).
- vii. Carson comments on why although the Spirit would convict the world of its sin, righteousness, and punishment, Jesus included “and you see Me no more.” He notes

³ Ibid. p. 135.

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that as well as the Helper’s job is to convict sinner to repentance, He comforts the saved in Jesus’ physical absence.

- viii. Of judgment because Satan is judged. See Lu. 10:18; Jn. 12:31; Col. 2:15.
 - ix. Jesus righteousness vindicated most ___ by His resurrection (Acts 2:24).
 - x. Carson again: “Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out” (12:31). The world thinks of the cross as the place where Jesus is condemned, but Jesus insists that in reality it is the place where the world is condemned and the prince of this world is decisively defeated. That victory heralds the inauguration of the eschatological age of blessing: believers enjoy eternal life right now, in the present, even if the consummation of that life awaits Christ’s return. But by the same token, that victory on the cross also heralds the inauguration of the eschatological judgment: unbelievers already stand under the wrath and curse of God, even if the culmination of that curse awaits the last judgment. “Whoever does not believe stands condemned already” (3:18); indeed, “whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him” (3:36).⁴
 - xi. We see these plainly only via the Spirit’s illumination of the Word.
- b. Revelation to Come (12-13)
- i. V. 12. More to come from Jesus 40 days between resurrection and ascension. Also more to come from the Spirit (Eph. 3:3-5).
 - ii. The revelation is complete and “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).
 - iii. V. 13. Spirit’s illumination would help to compile the NT canon w/in four decades (as many conservative and liberal scholars now concur). The Spirit worked with the Apostles in a limited way so as to develop and complete the canon.
 - iv. Not a different authority: The Spirit shares the same source as Christ (1 Cor. 2:10-11).
 - v. “Tell you things to come” includes near events and final return of Jesus.
- c. Spirit Glorifies Christ (14-15)
- i. V. 14. Spotlight’s purpose is not to be seen but to illuminate (glorify) the object of its focus.
 - ii. The Spirit reveals and illuminates what has happened and brings nothing new. He illuminates the historic events and eternal truths of God. Our salvation is not based upon or acquired via ideas, theories, or religion. Salvation is not based on faith. Some have faith in their faith i.e. sincerity. Rather, our salvation is based and lived upon and in Christ alone.
 - iii. Richard Phillips commented on v. 14 re: the Spirit of Christ: “What is true of false religions is also true of false professors of Christianity. Those who disobey the teaching of Scripture—for instance, by deserting a spouse, pursuing an agenda of greed or pride, teaching unbiblical doctrines, or worshiping according to worldly principles—only deceive themselves if they claim the leading of the Spirit, who serves and glorifies Jesus alone.”⁵
 - iv. V. 15. Trinity for us! Col. 2:2-3; 3:3

⁴ Ibid. p. 146.

⁵ Phillips, R. D. (2014). *John*. (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.) (1st ed., Vol. 2, p. 350). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

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Excursus 1 from vv. 12-13

Joel 2:28-32 is referred to by Peter so as to say that what Joel and other Prophets spoke of the Spirit’s coming/outpouring is what you begin to see, hear, and now (Acts 2:16-21). See “Cosmic Chaos” Doc.

Excursus 2 from passage in general and the Spirit’s generational work

2 Cor. 3:3; Heb. 10:16 cf. Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:25-29. What is the distinction from the Law written on our hearts from the Law in our consciences (Ro. 1:18-21; Eccl. 3:11)?

The difference is revelation and illumination or revelation and regeneration. Our passage of Jn. 16 reveals that only the Spirit can convict of the world’s sin, self-righteousness, and judgment. The revelation is open to all but the Spirit must illuminate/regenerate one’s dead spirit to be awakened “to all truth” (Jn. 16:13) and thus begins to embrace that which had formerly condemned him and so he avoided it viz. The Law. Before regeneration we hate and run from the Law’s light, righteousness, and salvation (Jn. 16:9). After regeneration, we run to the lovely, perfect Law of God. Thereby, we convey the truth v. 13, we glorify Christ v. 14, and share what is Christ’s v. 15 cf. Col. 2:2-3 and 3:3.