



lêtheia
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP




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the gospel of
JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΟΓΟΣ ΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ
ΘΗ ΚΑΙ ΘΕ ΤΗ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΣΤΟΣ ΗΝ ΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΤΙΡΟΣ
ΤΟΝ ΘΗ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ



Religion is a defense against
the experience of God.

John 16:1–4 ~ 1“These things I have spoken to you so that you will not be led into sin. 2They will ban you from the synagogue, yet an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering a service to God. 3These things they will do because they have not known the Father nor Me. 4aBut these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. 4bHowever, I did not say these things to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

Here we get some very important concepts that tie our previous passage together with the remainder of this one that extends through verse 15.

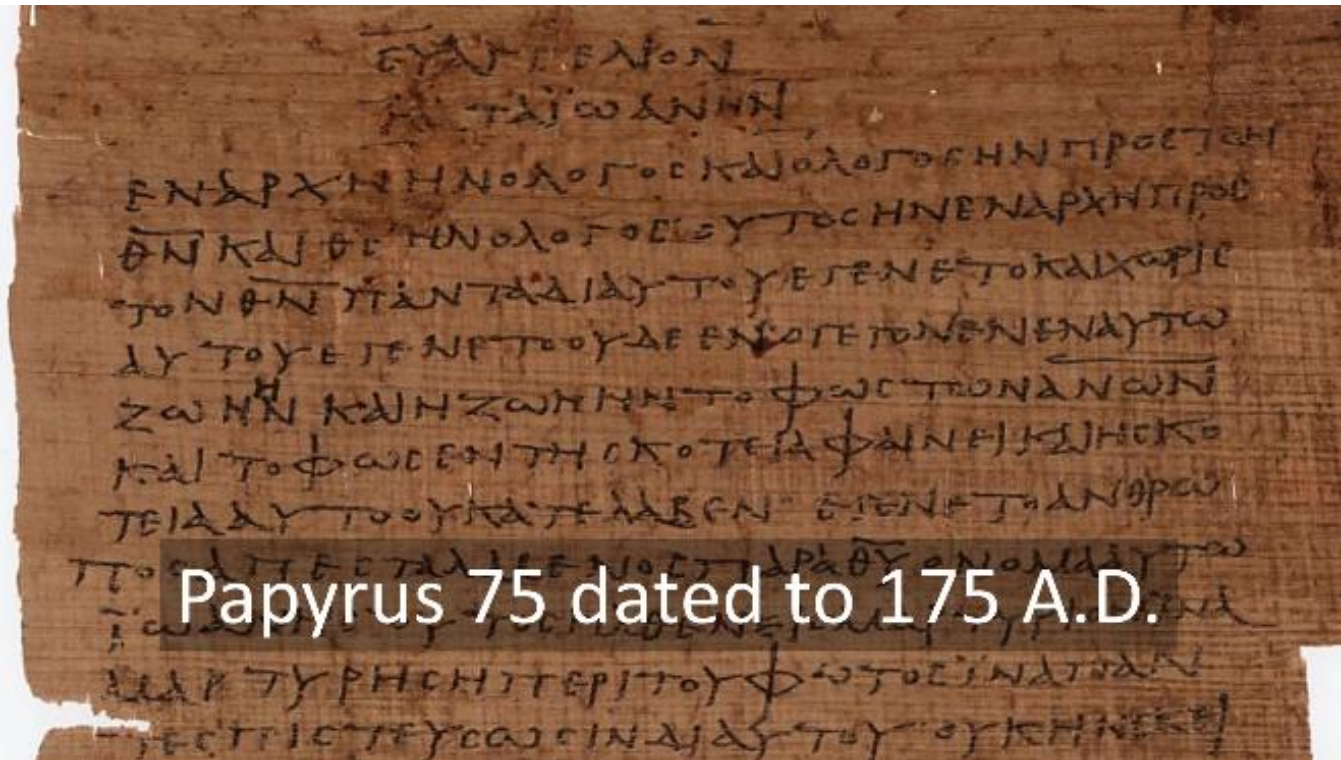
In addition, we have a few things happening here that are obvious, and so, easy to see, and so, excellent examples, of rhetorical devices used to both enhance and nuance the meaning of Scripture.

1 "These things I have spoken to you so that you will not be led into sin. 2 They will ban you from the synagogue, yet an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering a service to God. 3 These things they will do because they have not known the Father nor Me. 4 But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. ✂ However, I did not say these things to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

One way that we can define what constitutes a section or sub-section is when an inclusio is used as it is here. This type of inclusio is a phrase used as bookends at the start and end, which then include the material within... the material inside of the phrase brackets is inclusively included - an inclusio. Here it is the phrase "These things I have spoken to you so that..." followed by the reason.

In this case, we end up, ending up only halfway through verse 4, because the second half of verse 4

actually starts the next sub-section with the word translated in the NASB as “However.”



That’s another point to always remember. The Bible headings, chapters, verses, notes, and apparatuses are all much later additions intended to help in comprehension. They are manmade supplements, not inspired Truth. Originally each Bible Book was written without any spacing between the letters, let alone spacing between words and so, no chapter or verse divisions at all, and not even any punctuation or other dividing devices. This is P75 a codex opened to the beginning of John’s Gospel.

Our sections consisting of verses 1 through 4a, verses 4b through 6, and verses 7 through 15 form 3 sub-

sections of the 6th of 8 sections of Jesus' Farwell Discourse that began in chapter 13 and extends through the end of chapter 16. Just to be clear, today we will be looking at the 3 subsections contained in John 16:1-15, which together make up the 6th section out of the 8 sections, that form Jesus' final words to His church.



In verse 1 Jesus said, "these things," meaning the whole content of what He's been teaching them, but the context is primarily focused on what He just said to them, which was that those people who abide in Jesus will produce the fruit of love for the church which will be used by the Holy Spirit to testify about Jesus to the world... The Holy Spirit will speak the Truth of

Salvation to the world through the church and the world will hate the church for it.

Why would the world hate the church for simply living out the Truth of Agapê love? Jesus told us in the middle of the previous section. If He had not come and lived as Truth among us the world wouldn't be convicted in the same way. If the church behaves as badly as the world and refuses to share the love of God and therefore refuses to share the True Jesus Christ... The world can feel good about its rejection of a God Who doesn't seem to exist, or at the very least doesn't seem to be a God Who cares or has any real effect down here.



That's what the Jewish majority of Jesus' day did and that's what the majority of Christians have done since. We've shown the world a completely ineffectual God, who hates people who are different or who disagree, just as much or more than the world does.

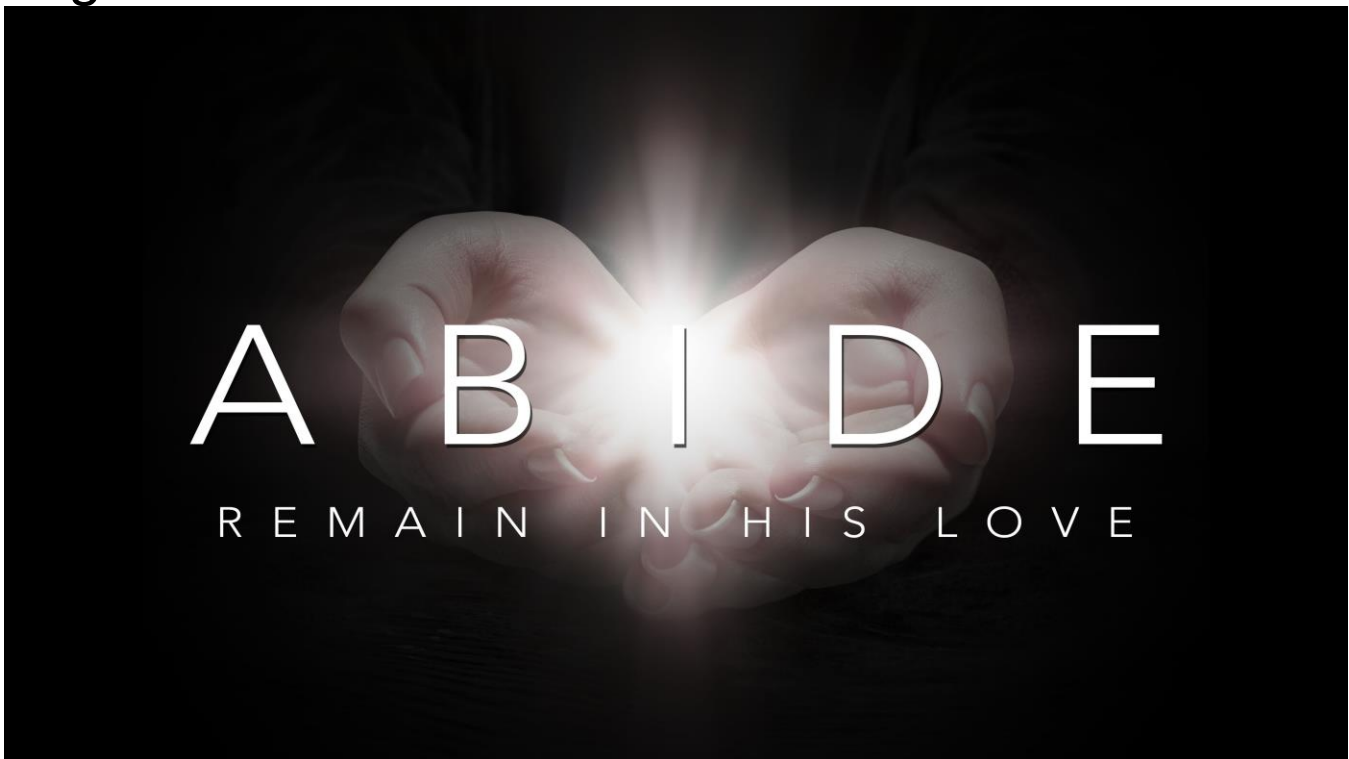


Church should be a place where love is evident, God delivers, lives are changed, hearts are healed, and families restored.

Imagine if the world saw the church, saw multitudes of their fellow completely flawed human beings being transformed at acceptance of Jesus into loving, caring, forgiving, people. Transformed from entirely self-absorbed manipulators into patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, self-controlled people who were so filled with an unnatural love that they were confidently unwavering in their faith and at peace with God, with the church, with themselves and worked overtime to be at peace even with their enemies. That would convict the world to

such a degree that they would be so uncomfortable around Christians that they would either join the church or hate the church. There would be no middle ground.

Does the Holy Spirit in you make non-Christians around you uncomfortable? As I asked last week, do people see Jesus in you and hate you for that? If not, perhaps we ought to ask why that is... Perhaps we ought to examine how connected to the vine we are...



If I were to summarize the gist of section 4 it is that we, the church, and yes, that's you and me, we, were commanded to remain or abide in Jesus. That command is identical to His commandment to love one another. Loving one another means being an integral part of the church - you cannot possibly love the church

and not be an active part of the church! To be a true member of His Body, His Bride, His church, is to be in Christ the only true vine. So again, the gist was the command to abide in Him and that is exactly the same as Jesus then abiding in you. There's only one vine. To be connected to the vine is to be one with the vine. What Jesus was telling us in that analogy was if He is in us, we will produce fruit and that fruit is God's unconditional, altruistic, divine Agapê love.

If you love the church through actual acts of selfless service because the Father has filled you with His love to the point of overflowing because you are in Christ and He is in you, then you know with certainty that you are God's own. You will know with certainty that Christianity is true, that you are sealed in eternal life in His holy presence, that you are obeying God, pleasing the Father, abiding in the Son, and operating in the Spirit.

You want to know what God's perfect Will for your life is... Start by obeying His commandment to love the church. Do that and by spiritual necessity you will be loving God with all you have, you will be loving your neighbor as yourself, you will be living your life out loud for the Lord and you will find yourself smack dab in the middle of God's perfect Will for you. In addition, the

world... That's fearful people inside and outside of the church will hate you for your freedom from fear in the Lord.

So that's the "These things," of verse 1, and the reason Jesus told them was so that they would "not be led into sin." Again, we legalistically minded linear and literal thinkers assume that Jesus was talking about us committing individual sins in His absence.



That we would smoke, drink, dance, play cards, cuss, kiss, and put cream in our coffee. That women would wear pants, chew tobacco, and have the gall to demand equal pay. That men would wear long hair, put it in a bun and have the audacity to use the word "man" in describing it. That Christians would support the

entertainment industry more than the church and then have the cheek to wear flipflops and shorts to church.

What Jesus was actually saying was quite specific to the circumstances in this case. He had just told His Apostles that they would be hated to the point of real persecution for their association with Him. They were commanded to remain in Him, and that very connection would get them tormented by the world.

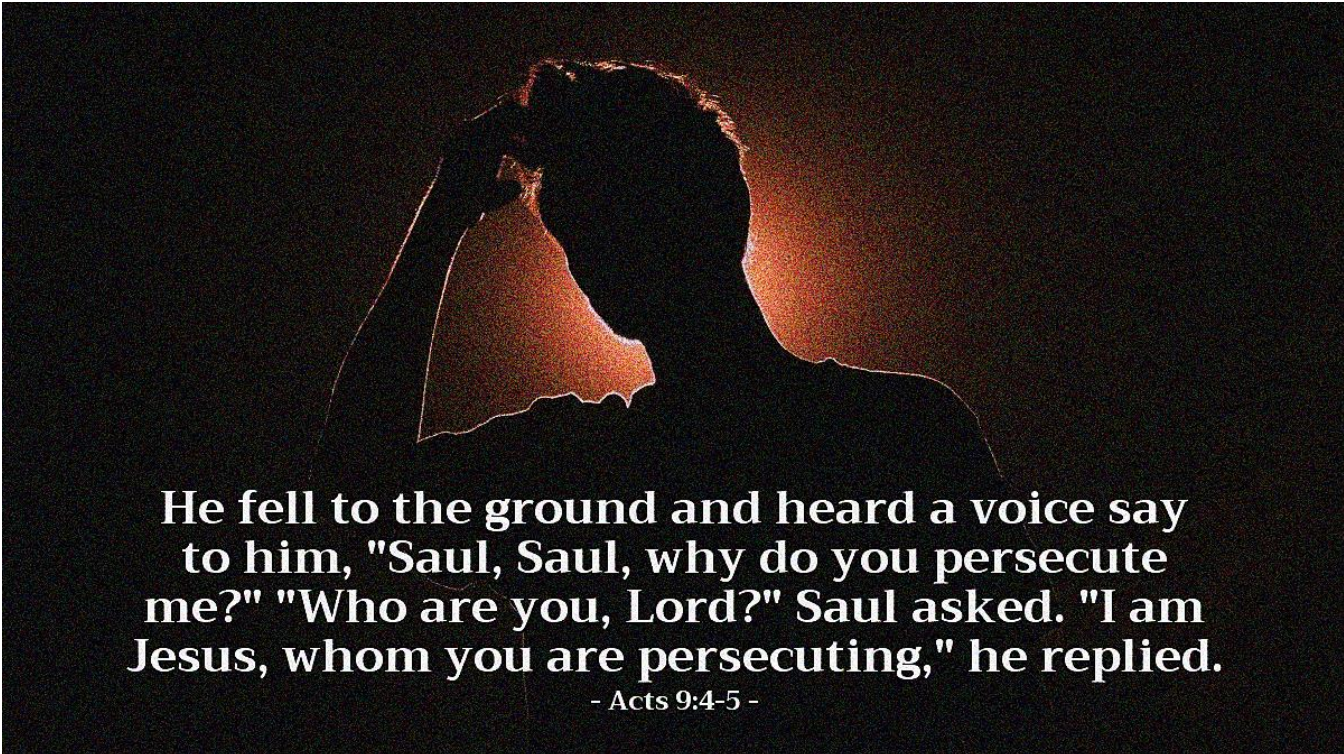


In verse 2 Jesus said something quite shocking even though it should have been apparent... Jesus essentially told them that the world included the Judaism practiced in Israel. Can you see how it would have been one thing for the Apostles to accept that being devoted followers of the Jewish Messiah might

get them hated by Gentiles who already hated Jews? But that being excommunicated from Judaism would be a whole new enchilada?

Imagine that you're following Jesus and then Jesus is executed by Rome with the full approval of the Jewish leadership. Now, you're adrift without Jesus. The Jewish leaders then turn their attention to you and say, either give up on your belief in the discredited, and dismissed, and destroyed Jesus, or be ejected from the one true religion on the planet. Be cast out of the religion of your forefathers, of your family and friends, of your national identity.

The temptation to deny Christ would be incredibly powerful. That is the precise meaning of the back half of verse 1, "so that you will not be led into sin."



He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

- Acts 9:4-5 -

It is constructed with the technical meaning of rejecting Christ. The thing that could have caused the Apostles and other disciples to stumble over Jesus and abandon the faith was the realization that their own Jewish leaders were vehemently opposed to the point of expelling them from Jewish life and then would pursue them with murderous intent just as the Apostle Paul did before his conversion.

Jesus warned them and as a consequence none of them were led into sin - none of them rejected Jesus even though it cost them their religion and for some their very lives.

Some people then take this as an indication that a true Christian can lose their Salvation. It is the opposite actually. The point here is that Jesus knew what they needed before they needed it and He provided. They were in no danger of rejecting Christ because Christ had prepared them for that test beforehand. Remain in Jesus and He will remain in you, and you will, through Him, persevere.

In the second half of verse 2 Jesus used another technical phrase “yet an hour is coming.” The “hour” has so far only referred to the sacrificial, propitiatory, substitutionary, death of Jesus. Now, it is used for the persecution of Christians starting with the Jewish persecution of the first Christians. That’s the tie-in. The world, led by those who clearly should have known better hated, persecuted, and were about to murder Jesus bringing Him to His hour. Now the hour for the murderers was at hand as they would pursue their agenda with relish fully justifying it as God’s Will.

They were hating only because they were serving God’s interests. They were persecuting only because they were advancing God’s kingdom. They were murdering only because they were trying to make Israel great again and anyone who didn’t fit their interpretation of a good Israelite had to be removed.

People hate others for God's benefit... The God Who so loved the world that He gave us His One and Only. The God Who so loved the world that He then gave the world His church. His church to be united in their hate for those on the outside, or His church to Love each other so much that the outsiders hate them.



Why do people hate others for God's benefit? Because they do not know God. Plain and simple. You hate others, no matter how evil, bizarre, and stupid, they are, it is because you don't know either Jesus or the Holy and Loving God Who sent Him to us. What's the difference between the Westboro Baptist lunatics and your personal reaction to the world? Is it only degree?

The “you may remember,” of verse 4, is directly tied to the “so that you will not be led into sin,” of verse 1. Jesus’ goal was that his guys would realize that the world included the Jews who refused to believe as well as the Gentiles who refused to believe.

Grief and Loss



John 16:4b–6 ~ 4bHowever, I did not say these things to you at the beginning, because I was with you. 5“But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ 6But because I have said these things to you, grief has filled your heart.

Jesus told them this disturbing information, at precisely the right time. Not only was there no need to tell them earlier, when Jesus was still far from His “hour,” but also, they were not ready to hear it then. That’s made

explicitly plain with the principle we will see later in verse 12.

We pray that the Father gives us our Heavenly Manna each day the daily allotment. In other words, God gives us what we need when we need it. That's by design so that you have to trust Him daily to get through each day.

This short subsection seems weird and even contradictory. Peter directly asked Jesus in chapter 13, "Lord, where are You going?" Then in the next chapter Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where You are going; how do we know the way?"

It would seem that they did ask Jesus "Where are You going?" The key is context, surprise, surprise. While there's a lot of technical details that we could unravel, the easiest way to address the issue is found in verse 6, "grief has filled your heart." Jesus was rebuking His guys once again for their lack of sensitivity to the far more important spiritual realities.

He was saying you guys look despondent over the certainty that I'm about to die and instead of rejoicing at what that means, all you can do is think about the immediate physical effect on you. Notice that both

Peter and Thomas asked Jesus where He was going, but in both cases, it was pure self-interest. Both asked with the purpose of going with Jesus to wherever He was going - assuming it to be Heaven or at least a divine encounter like His Transfiguration. In other words, somewhere cool.

What Jesus was primarily rebuking was His Apostles complete lack of curiosity about why Jesus was leaving. The “Where are You going?” question relates to purpose, not destination. Goal, aim, objective and intention, not location.



John 16:7–11 ~ 7But I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I am leaving; for if I do not leave, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him

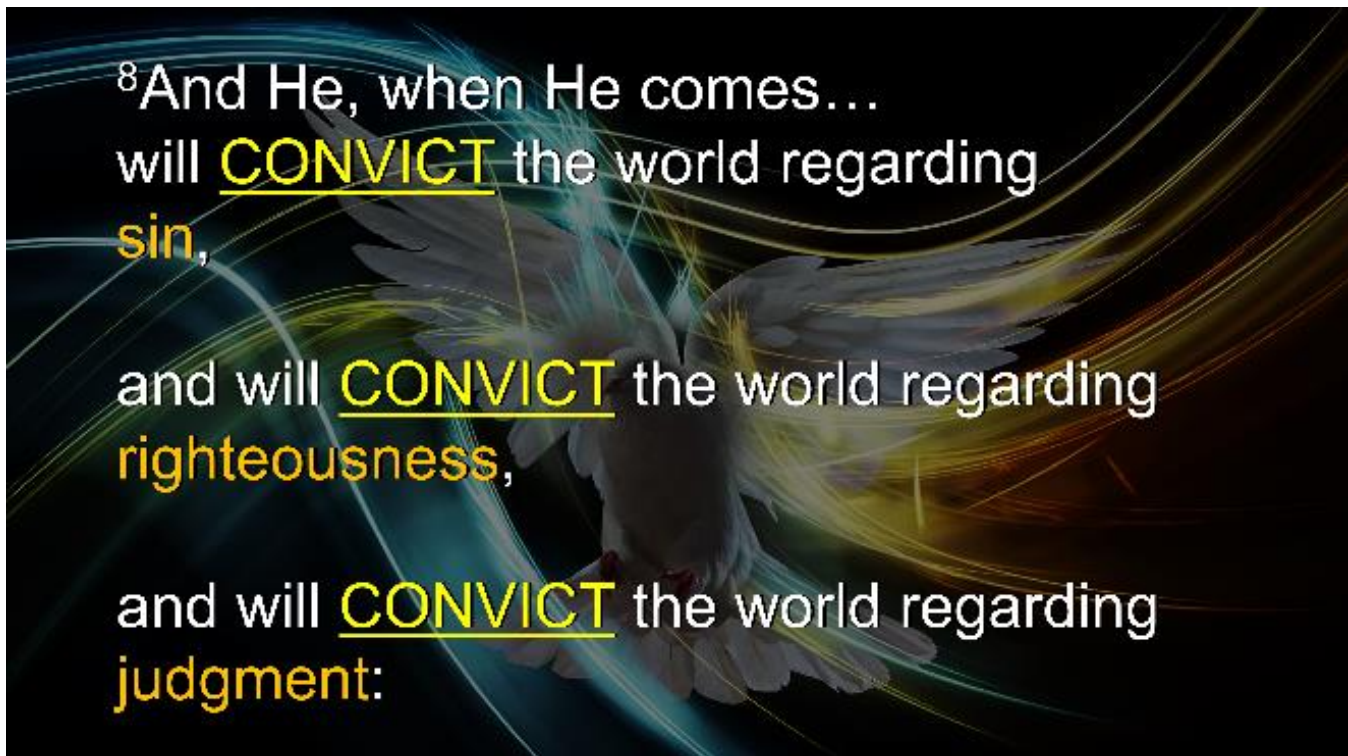
to you. 8And He, when He comes, will convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment: 9regarding sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10and regarding righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer are going to see Me; 11and regarding judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

It was to their advantage and to every person's advantage ever since that Jesus willingly took the sins of the world to the Cross. The concept of Salvation is tackled as the result Jesus was stressing here and that is a new reality where the Breath of God - the Holy Spirit Himself would indwell Believers.

Verse 7 confirms that without Christ's payment for sin, there can be no true reconciliation with God and so no indwelling Holy Spirit. I keep saying indwelling, because it is a vital concept not as obvious in this passage as in others. The real focus here has to do with something most people completely miss.

Jesus did not go away so that the Holy Spirit could come and ooze all over the world as some nebulous, ethereal, Luke Skywalker type of force. We totally get that wrong - the Holy Spirit works through people. He does not blow like an aimless wind, He blows into, and

therefore out of, the church. Christians must yield to the anointing of the Holy Spirit in order to operate in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit so that He can minister through the church to the church and to the world beyond the church.



Specifically, the Holy Spirit through Christ's Body on earth "will convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment:" It is the mission of the church led by the Holy Spirit to convict the world. Convict is the verb ἐλέγχω (ě-lěn-ġō) which for several highly complex reasons means a progressive movement of first to expose, or reveal; second to convict, or shame; third to convince, or prove. Basically, it's what you figured. Using the first element sin what convict means is that the Holy Spirit through

the Christian church will show the world what constitutes sin, He will show them that they are guilty of sin, and finally, He will show them that their judgment as sinners is certain.

That verb to expose, convict, and convince, is the only one controlling the three following elements “sin, and righteousness, and judgment.” Each element is preceded by the same preposition, which in this case, means “because of,” and each element is individually highlighted rather than just existing as a chain of similar items.

What that means is that the way we should think of this is that the Holy Spirit will expose, convict, and convince the world of three equally important things. He will expose, convict, and convince the world because of sin. He will expose, convict, and convince the world because of righteousness. He will expose, convict, and convince the world because of judgment.

Jesus then expanded each element by giving the reason for each one. Verse 9 the exposing, convicting, and convincing of sin because they do not believe in Me. The goal is to reverse the situation and barring that to confirm the result of unbelief. The role of the Holy

Spirit is to reveal sin, in order that the work of Jesus can remove sin.



What is sin? It's clearly defined here as unbelief in Jesus - a failure to accept, embrace, and abide. It is the "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." It is the one and only unforgiveable sin. The refusal to be moved by the Holy Spirit's witness to Salvation only in Jesus.

Again, the Holy Spirit doesn't float around on an invisible magic carpet shooting people with His little arrows (to mix a lot of metaphors). The Holy Spirit exposes, convicts, and convinces the world of the sin of unbelief through the church. Through all Christians as a collective whole.

Christians who are involved in evangelism oftentimes work in their flesh and as a result work to expose, convict, and convince non-Christians concerning their sinful lifestyle. Hammering away on the things that they personally find offensive or immoral. Perhaps smoking, or drinking, or sexual promiscuity, or homosexuality, or transgenderism.

That is not the job. The job is to allow the Holy Spirit to thoroughly point out the sin. The unforgivable sin. The sin of unbelief. Allow the Holy Spirit through you to move a person to the foot of the Cross and then trust that the Holy Spirit will conform that new Believer to Christ through the church in His timing.

For centuries the clergy, in an effort to keep all the power for themselves, were the ones responsible for spreading the Gospel. After the Protestant Reformation it was recognized that every Christian was an integral part of the church and that we were all commissioned by Christ to be vessels through whom the Holy Spirit ministered to the lost.

In the last 50 years or so, we've mostly decided that the Holy Spirit is the One Who must do the work and so all of us rank and file Christians just need to pray, put money towards the church and missions and stay

out of everyone's way. To some degree we've come full circle.

I heard an Anglican preacher explain the phenomenon well. He said that Christianity was like a big house full of family members and that the Holy Spirit was like the doddering old great grandpa who lives in the attic. He is practically bed-ridden and so the family members visit him once and a while, they bring him food and water, but they rarely, if ever, bring him into the main part of the house where all the activity is happening. The family thinks about him on occasion, but the old man has no effect whatsoever on the daily running of the house. I hope that doesn't describe us.



Verse 10, “righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer are going to see Me.” This is a little less obvious and when understood correctly actually becomes the key to better understanding the nuance of the other two elements.

This righteousness is not in any way, shape, or form, Godly righteousness. Because that is so, some translations and commentaries prefer the English word Justice instead. The point is that the world as the arbiters of truth in their own mind, as those who determine good and evil for themselves, call their ethic righteousness, or justice and they are wrong.

The specific context is the Jewish leaders who would turn Jesus over for execution in a few hours thinking that their actions were righteous justice. The world’s understanding of righteousness is fatally flawed as seen by the fact that the world murdered Jesus in the name of justice - under the guise of godliness.

The modern role of the church is not to be a political entity. It was never for us to take sides and to push for a society that conformed to our sensibilities. The modern role of the church is to allow the Holy Spirit to minister to the world about the difference between

human righteousness and the True righteousness of God.

First and foremost, the fact that God's righteousness can only come through acceptance of Jesus. Secondly, that God's righteousness is clearly defined as love. Love in its ultimate form is Jesus. Love from the church in its ultimate form is love for the church. Love flowing from that exists as fairness, equality, dignity, kindness, and justice in the world.

It is the Golden Rule of Jesus, "Do unto others as you wish that they would do unto you" (Matthew 7:12). It is the Law and prophets, "love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Mark 12:31). It is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, "peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5 22&23).

Same-sex marriage isn't evil because it goes against our sensibilities, it's evil because it rejects God's righteousness in exactly the same way that premarital, extramarital, and post marital sex do. We happily get up in arms over abortion but are unconcerned about the homeless. We get riled up over LGBT in the schools but say nothing at all about gossip in the church. God's righteousness is perfect justice and justice is never served by prosecuting some sins while

ignoring others and prosecuting some people more aggressively than others.

It is “you” will no longer see Me, not the expected, “they” will no longer see Me. The powerfully compelling reason for that is that the world will see Jesus in His church. One scholar put it this way, “The disciples are invited (and expected) to participate in the Spirit’s ministry in the world by displaying in their personal and corporate lives the positive righteousness only God can provide. The church, therefore, is to emulate its Lord by incarnating righteousness in its corporate flesh.”



Verse 11, “judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.” “The ruler of this world,” can be personified as Satan, but it is really the totality of his

influence. It is the same universal sin of refusing to trust God. It's what causes us to want to take control and causes us to define good and evil for ourselves. It is what causes us to be in conflict with God and with each other and even with ourselves.

The entire world system and its foundation has been judged by God as guilty, and therefore condemned by God eternally. If a person is part of what has already been judged and condemned, guess what.

Revelation 20:14&15, After the beast and the false prophet (19:20) and Satan himself had been thrown into the Lake of Fire (20:10) it says... 14Then Death and Hell were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15Anyone whose name was not written in the (Lamb's) Book of Life was (also) thrown into the lake of fire.”

