



ÉGLISE ÉVANGÉLIQUE  
DE LA PÉLISSÉRIE  
G E N È V E

## **"The role of the Holy Spirit with the disciples in the world"**

Gospel according to John, chapter 16, verses 5 to 15.

### **Context:**

Jesus revealed that the disciples would have to be witnesses in a sometimes hostile world and that the Holy Spirit would be entirely at their side to help them in their witness.

Jesus was hated and persecuted by a world that didn't know God and couldn't stand those who didn't conform to him. It would be the same for the disciples.

Despite this, Jesus chose people from the middle of the world who would welcome the Gospel proclaimed by the disciples, supported, and accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus announced to them that he was leaving. What were the disciples going to do without him, in this context?

The Lord will now explain how the Holy Spirit works with the disciples in the world.

### **1 - The sadness of the disciples at the thought of Jesus' departure**

5 "Now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'  
6 But because I have spoken to you like this, sadness has filled your hearts."

It could be paraphrased as "None of you asks me questions about where I'm going, how, why, what for".

Jesus was about to undergo the terrible ordeal of the cross. His disciples don't mourn for that!

Jesus is going to return to the Father. They don't rejoice!

It seems that they are so focused on themselves, on their problems, on their feelings of abandonment, on the prospect of a difficult life without the physical presence of the Lord, that they are no longer really listening.

That's why Jesus says, "because I have spoken to you in this way, sadness has filled your heart."

It also seems that the disciples paid more attention to what they had received from the Lord, what they had lived with him, heard from him, done for him, listened to, witnessed to, ... for about 3 years.

They paid more attention to all that than to who Jesus is, what Jesus teaches, the vital significance of Jesus' mission.

The disciples were unable to understand or grasp the full meaning and scope of Jesus' mission.

A family goes on holiday. It's a nice idea. A child hurts his finger. His whole perspective is centred on his finger. It hurts and hurts. Yes, but still, there's a beautiful project that's still there, he's part of it, but he doesn't see it any more.

We can become so absorbed in our daily lives, in our tasks, however praiseworthy they may be, in everything we do, and which is legitimate, that we lose sight of what is the main thing, what is the priority, the centrality of God and his plans.

## **2 - The advantage for the disciples of Jesus' departure (7)**

"7 But I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Why is it advantageous for the disciples for Jesus to leave?

John 7:39 prepared the answer to this question:

"The Spirit could not be given, until Jesus had ... glorified."

Because it was only after his death on the cross, to atone for our sins, only after his resurrection and ascension into heaven, to the right hand of the Father, to receive supreme dominion there, that Jesus poured out his Spirit on the disciples.

The Holy Spirit is presented to us in the Word as the one who is the deposit, the guarantee of eternal life, he is the first fruits of eternal presence with God, he is the one who brings us into the body of Christ, he is the one who regenerates us, he is the one who dwells in us.

The foundation had to be firmly laid for the Holy Spirit to be given.

And Jesus Christ had to die on the cross, be buried, rise again and return to the Father before the Spirit could be poured out.

So it was to the disciples' advantage that Jesus left.

Even if they didn't grasp the full importance and significance of it.

They were not the same before and after the cross, the resurrection and the ascension.

Before the cross, at the time of Jesus' arrest, Mark tells us that "..., all abandoned him and fled." 14.50

What a difference with these same disciples after the Holy Spirit had been poured out on them:

Courageous, joyful, proclaiming the Word with confidence, bearing witness with joy.

Jesus had told them: it was in their interest that he should go away.

### **3 - The coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples to convict the world (8-11)**

8 "And when he has come, he will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 of righteousness, because I am going to the Father, and you will see me no more; 11 of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

A word about the term "Comforter": He is often presented as a defence lawyer. Some suggest that the comforter's action should be understood as that of a prosecutor who tries to convince the accused, the one who belongs to the world. His action seeks to produce a personal conviction, so that this person realises his catastrophic situation in relation to God. This conviction can then encourage the accused, who recognises his guilt, to implore and ask for God's mercy, because only grace can save him.

#### **3.1 - Conviction of sin (9)**

The Holy Spirit will convince the world of its sinfulness:

He will lead men to recognise their personal and collective guilt because they do not believe in Jesus.

They reject his teaching, what he says, and his judgement of them.

They do not realise their need for Jesus.

That's why the Holy Spirit comes to convict them of sin.

Otherwise, there would be no way for a person to turn away from the world and come to Jesus.

The world does not trust Jesus and does not see in Jesus a hope of salvation.

If the Holy Spirit did not act, the world would refuse to acknowledge its sin, and turn to Jesus, precisely because it does not believe in him.

This is why the Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin to the world.

In short, he will convince them of sin, which means that the person who is convinced will know that this corresponds to reality: they are guilty before God.

#### **3.2 - Conviction of righteousness (10)**

The Holy Spirit will convict the world of righteousness:

Firstly: he will lead men to recognise that what they think is just is actually unjust. 5.16, 39-40, 7.19

Secondly, he will lead people to recognise that what is right in God's eyes is true justice.

What does this mean: because I am going to the Father and you will see me no more?  
Why is he talking about the disciples in this verse?

1. The Disciples must bear witness in the world. The Holy Spirit will bear witness, but so will the disciples.

And 2. Since Jesus is no longer with them, they will not be left to themselves but will be associated with the Holy Spirit to be present in the world, to maintain the presence of Jesus Christ in the world.

Jesus will have returned to the Father, so they will no longer see him. But they are not forsaken, because the Holy Spirit will come and convict the world, working in part through believers.

Believers will be righteous

1. by what they proclaim, their oral testimony,
2. and by the quality of what they live, their visible testimony.

By working in believers and producing in them a profound and biblical righteousness, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of righteousness.

And he continues this ministry today.

"The Pilgrim's Journey", a book written by the preacher-writer, John Bunyan.

His book has been translated into over 200 languages.

Because of his attachment to Jesus Christ, and his refusal to stop preaching the Good News, the Gospel, Bunyan was thrown into prison.

This was in England between 1660 and 1672 (Septante-deux).

They told him to stop preaching or he would be banished forever.

He stood his ground!

Bunyan was an example of what God can do through someone. The more he knows God, the more he thinks and lives according to God.

In society, the Spirit-filled Christian shows. Integrity shows. Humility shows. God-centred projects, it shows. God-centred family lives.

In short, he will convince them of justice, meaning that the person convinced will know that this corresponds to reality: they will know that they are unjust. And that true justice is God's justice.

### **3.3 - Conviction of judgement (11)**

This is the judgement by which the world rejected Jesus Christ.

It also refers to all the false judgements pronounced by the world. For example, the world condemned Christ, the Prince of Peace, the Righteous One. This is false judgement to the last. The ultimate horror.

The world is wrong. Especially when it comes to Jesus.

It judges wrongly because of its moral perversity.

The Holy Spirit convicts the world by making it aware of the erroneous judgements it makes about spiritual realities.

V11 The Holy Spirit convicts the world of judgement, because the prince of this world is judged.

At the cross, the world condemned Jesus, but, in reality, it was the world that was condemned, and the prince of this world defeated, forever.

The cross demonstrates the false judgement of the world, which condemned an innocent man.

Jesus, the sinless one, paid. Jesus, the sinless one, could not remain in the tomb. So God raised him from the dead, proving that he is without sin.

The world is unjust. God alone is just.

In short, he will convince them of judgement, which means that the person convinced will know that this corresponds to reality: they will know that their judgement is wrong. They will know that it is God's judgement that is right.

#### **4 - The Spirit of truth will complete the revelation of the Trinity for the disciples (12-15)**

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot understand them now. 13 When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth; for his words will not come from himself, but he will speak of everything he has heard and will give you good news of things to come. 14 He will give glory to me, because he will take from what is mine and make it clear to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; that is why I said he will take from what is mine and make it clear to you.

Jesus has many things to say to them, but the disciples cannot yet understand them, because the cross and the resurrection have not yet taken place. And because they are still immature.

Jesus knows that his disciples have not understood everything they saw and heard when they walked with him on earth. They did not understand everything that Jesus had announced to them in advance.

There is so much more to say. But it's too much for them and still too early for them.

But he knows that when the time comes, they will understand; after the event. And the one who will help them to understand is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the one who leads into all truth, who reveals reality.

"13 When he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all truth; for his words will not come from himself, but he will speak out of all that he has heard and will tell you things to come.

Jesus had already told his disciples that the Spirit of truth would remind them of everything he had taught them.

And now there's more: v13 the Spirit will lead them into all truth and make known to them the things to come. They will truly understand the meaning of what God is doing through his plan of salvation for the world and the central and inescapable place of the Lord Jesus Christ in that plan.

Carson: "As God once spoke through the prophets, spoke through the Son (the Word of God), who spoke what the Father commissioned him to speak, so he speaks through the Spirit, who completes God's revelation in the Son, speaking to the disciples and proclaiming divine truth to them."

And from this ministry of the Holy Spirit came the New Testament.

Jesus opens a window on one aspect of how the Trinity "works":

The Spirit depends on Jesus, as much as Jesus depended on the Father: v. 13-15

Jesus, in total dependence and obedience to God the Father, was a guarantee that everything he said was from a divine source and in total harmony with the will of God the Father.

It's the same for the Holy Spirit. It is a guarantee that everything he will say is from a divine source and in total harmony with Jesus Christ and the will of God the Father.

The teaching of the Holy Spirit is truly the teaching of God.

His teaching is focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ. He reveals him, he makes us understand his mission, his teaching, the eternal significance of what he did, the majesty of his person, the eternal beauty of the glorious Son of God.

His role is to glorify Jesus. Jesus who died on the cross, Jesus who rose again, Jesus who is exalted, Jesus who is seated in the glorious presence of God the Father. Jesus who poured out his Spirit on all flesh, to continue God's work in the world.

The more the Holy Spirit acts, the more we learn about Jesus Christ, and the more God the Father is glorified.

The Holy Spirit inspired and wrote the Bible, which reveals Jesus Christ.

- study the Bible,
- devour the Bible,
- meditate on the Word of God,
- live close to the Lord,
- talk to him,
- speak of him,
- exalt him,
- adore him, the King of kings,
- bless him, the Lord of Lords.

This is the will of God the Father, in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit!

Some useful books in French:

- Évangile selon Jean - Carson - Excelsis
- Systematic theology - Wayne Grudem - Excelsis
- Encyclopaedia of Biblical Difficulties - Gospels and Acts - Emmaus

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**Église Évangélique de la Pélisserie**  
Rue de la Pélisserie 20 | 1204 Genève, CH  
+41 22 311 67 00  
courrier@eglisepelesserie.ch  
**eglisepelesserie.ch**