

Chapter Six

The Office Work of the Holy Spirit

Our Scripture Reading is St. John chapter 16: 7-16.

In order to answer the question of “double jeopardy” and to understand what the unpardonable sin is, we need to examine the office work of the Holy Spirit. In St. John 16: 7-16, Jesus described the important work of the Holy Spirit.

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. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show [it] unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show [it] unto you. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. {John 16: 7-16} KJV

It is Expedient for You That I Go Away

St. John 16: 7 seems puzzling to us at first glance but careful study allows us to understand what Jesus is saying. Jesus in human form could only be in any one place at any given time and therefore could not be accessible to all human beings at any given time. But the Holy Spirit whose personality is a mystery, but who is revealed to be infinitely dynamic in personality, can be everywhere at the same time! Therefore through the Holy Spirit, Christ would be freely accessible to all at any given time.

Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, Christ sought for the most essential and complete gift to bestow upon His followers, a gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of grace. “I will pray the Father,” He said, “and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you.” John 14:16-18, margin.

Before this the Spirit had been in the world; from the very beginning of the work of redemption He had been moving

upon men’s hearts. But while Christ was on earth, the disciples had desired no other helper. Not until they were deprived of His presence would they feel their need of the Spirit, and then He would come.

The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high. {D.A 668-9}

The Seven Office Functions of the Holy Spirit

Let us first list the seven office functions of the Holy Spirit. St. John 17: 8 describes the first 3:

1. The Holy Spirit reproves the world of sin
2. He reproves the world of righteousness
3. He reproves the world of judgement

(The reasons are given in verses 8- 11)

Verse 13 mentions 2 other functions:

4. The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth by speaking not about Himself but about Christ and the Father.
5. He will reveal the future (this is done through the prophetic gift).

Verses 14 and 15 reveal the other two (2) functions:

6. He shall glorify Christ
7. He shall receive all of Christ and make it known (intellectually and experientially) to us.

The first three (3) of these functions constitute the Spirit’s primary work.

The Holy Spirit’s Primary Work – St. John 16: 8-11

What is meant by the words in the KJV: “reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgement?”

The world has its own definitions for these terms. Religion has its own definitions for these terms. But what are the definitions Jesus gave within the framework of the gospel and the Spirit's work?

Let us read St. John 16: 8-11 from the NIV.

When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: About sin, because people do not believe in me; About righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; And about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. **{John 16: 8-11} NIV**

Reproving the World of Sin

The Gospel Definition of Sin

Our usual reference for the definition of sin is 1 John 3:4.

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. **{1 John 3: 4} KJV**

But this is not the definition Jesus gives when describing the office work of the Holy Spirit. He says the Holy Spirit will reprove the world of sin "because they believe not on Me."

Sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3: 4). All have sinned (Romans 3: 23).

God has laid the iniquity of us all on Christ (Isaiah 53: 6). Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3: 13). All have been bought back by Christ's infinite sacrifice on the cross. He died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15: 3). He tasted death for every human being (Hebrews 2: 9). Therefore, in the light of the gospel, the ultimate sin is the sin of not believing on Christ.

Let us now consider two very important but often overlooked or misunderstood texts, 1 John 5: 16- 17.

If any man see his brother sin a sin [which is] not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. **{1 John 5: 16- 17} KJV**

Let us also read those texts from the NIV.

If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death. **{1 John 5: 16- 17} NIV**

Here we see two types of sin described. There are sins which are not unto death, and this could only mean the second death. And these can be forgiven. Then there is a sin unto death which cannot be forgiven!

In Mark 16: 15- 16 KJV, Jesus hit the nail on the head.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. **{Mark 16: 15-16} KJV**

There we have it. The sin that is unto death is the sin of not believing the gospel, not believing on Christ. Persistent rejection of the gospel, until the mind is fixed in unbelief, is the unpardonable sin. The sin of not believing the gospel is the sin that produces a second condemnation and sends the unbeliever into the second death.

Reproving the World of Righteousness

Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; **{John 16:10} KJV**

Speaking in legal terminology we say that the broken law (sin) produced complete separation from God and, therefore, the second death. Jesus died that death for all mankind. Moreover the law demands perfect righteousness. This the sinner cannot give. But Jesus developed the perfect faith, love, surrender to God and obedience. He did all that for all of us. He fulfilled all righteousness for us, therefore He is the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer [it to be so] now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. **{Matthew 3: 15} KJV**

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [that] shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This [is] the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness [is] of me, saith the LORD. **{Isaiah 54: 17} KJV**

In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this [is] his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. **{Jeremiah 23: 6} KJV**

Jesus could not return to the Father until He had produced a perfect, mature righteousness for all mankind. Once that was accomplished He could have ascended back to His Father after His death and resurrection.

Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, "It is finished." John 19:30. The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory.

As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost.

To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, "It is finished," had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ's victory. {D.A chapter 79 - paragraph 1-2}

Therefore the second primary work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world that Christ is our Righteousness! All the righteousness we need to be saved, to pass the judgement and to enter glory has been produced by Christ. This righteousness is imputed and imparted to the believing sinner. This is wonderfully good news! Listen to Paul.

Yea doubtless, and I count all things [but] loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [but] dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. {Philippians 3: 8 – 11} KJV

Reproving the World of Judgement

Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. {John 16: 11} KJV

According to John 14: 30, John 12: 31 and Ephesians 2: 2, Satan is the prince of this world. When Satan induced our Adam and Eve to sin, we were all sold out to Satan's government of sin. Our planet was also sold out to Satan who thereby became the prince of this world. Adam's corporate sin led to corporate investigation (Genesis 3) and the pronouncement of judgement on Satan.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. {Genesis 3: 15} KJV

At the cross Satan bruised Christ's heel whereas Christ bruised Satan's head. Christ as the Second Adam bought back, or redeemed, all that had been sold out. By His perfect faith, perfect righteousness and perfect sacrifice, Christ cast Satan out of his usurped position.

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto me. {John 12: 31 -32} KJV

Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, "It is finished." John 19:30. The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost. {D.A chapter 79 - paragraph 1}

So we clearly see that at the cross the prince of this world was judged and cast out! The Last Adam, Christ, won the victory and reversed the condemnation which resulted from Adam's disobedience. Since Christ has redeemed Adam's failure every individual will be judged on the matter of whether or not he or she has accepted or rejected Christ.

The investigative judgement of the righteous, which started at the end of the 2300 year prophecy in Oct. 1844, will give the Kingdom to all who have accepted Christ and His victoriously redemptive work.

During the millennium, the judgement of the unsaved will show that the lost ones deliberately rejected Christ's redemptive work.

And yet we are told that the Ten Commandments Moral Law is the standard in the judgement. The Holy Spirit uses the law to point out sins and to give us no ease of conscience until the Spirit through law by God's love brings us to Christ to be justified. And therefore as A.T Jones pointed out (in Sermon 17, 1893 which we quoted earlier):

"...the choice is forever with me as to whether I would rather have my sins than to have CHRIST...when sin is pointed out to you, say, I would rather have Christ than that sin."

So the law will be used in the judgement to show whether we have chosen Christ rather than sin or sin rather than Christ. But we will be saved or lost based on whether we have accepted or rejected Christ!

No one will die the Second Death for sins of law transgression but for the sin of unbelief of the gospel, the sin of rejecting Christ, of clinging to some cherished idol and rejecting Christ and His redemptive work!

A Difficult Concept?

This concept of a second condemnation, a condemnation which is the result of fixing the mind in rejection of Christ and His redemptive atonement at the Cross, is difficult for some to grasp. Tradition has taught us that those who will be lost and who will die the second death will do so as punishment

for their own sins. But if Christ has already exhausted the punishment for all the sins of all mankind for all time, how could these same sins be punished again?

A careful study of scripture shows us the true gospel teaching of this matter. Let us examine a number of scripture passages.

Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. {John 6: 26 - 29} KJV

Notice verse 29, the Jews, with the Old Covenant tradition of salvation by works, asked Jesus what work should they do, the answer of Jesus must have surprised them.

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. {John 6: 29} KJV

Let us now examine John 8: 24.

I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am [he], ye shall die in your sins. {John 8: 24} KJV

The message is clear. The issue is belief or unbelief in Jesus.

Consider also John 3: 17-19.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. {John 3: 17- 19} KJV

Notice again that Jesus took care of the first condemnation, the one which resulted from our fall in Adam and its resultant individual sins. The second condemnation is clearly defined as:

- (i) Unbelief (he that believeth not is condemned already)
- (ii) Loving darkness rather than light and therefore rejecting the light. And Jesus is the light.

[That] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. {John 1: 9} KJV

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. {John 8: 12} KJV

Finally John, the Baptist, and John, the Apostle, both state the matter very clearly.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. {John 3: 36} KJV

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. {1 John 5: 11-12} KJV

The second death will be the result of not believing, not having, (i.e. rejecting), the Son of God.

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard [him]; {Hebrews 2: 3} KJV

Closing Gems

Jesus placed the cross in line with the light coming from heaven, for it is there that it shall catch the eye of man. The cross is in direct line with the shining of the divine countenances, so that by beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. In beholding God we behold the one who poured out his soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and his hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold his love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love. {S.T March 7th, 1895}

The whole world stands condemned before the great moral standard of righteousness. In the great day of judgment every soul that has lived on the earth will receive sentence in accordance as to whether his deeds have been good or evil in the light of the law of God. Every mouth will be stopped as the cross with its dying Victim shall be presented, and its real bearing shall be seen by every mind that has been sin blinded and corrupted. Sinners will stand condemned before the cross, with its mysterious Victim bowing beneath the infinite burden of human transgression. How quickly will be swept away every subterfuge, every lying excuse! Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. They will then understand that they have chosen Barabbas instead of Christ, the Prince of Peace. {S.T March 7th, 1895}

Your Servant in Christ

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