

**SPIRIT OF CONVICTION**  
**'GOD IS' SERIES - WEEK 5**  
**Dan Burrell**

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Good morning Life Fellowship. My name is Dan and I am one of the teaching pastors here. Normally Pastor Ben was supposed to be here this morning, but like many of you, and your family, and co-workers, and so forth, he caught that flu about ten days ago, and he has really been down with it. So I am going to ask you as a church to pray for him this week. Every time he thinks he is about over it, he gets up and it knocks him down again.

So we have been talking throughout the week about how he was feeling and so forth, and as we got closer to the weekend I decided that I ought to start doing some prep just in case. So I began prepping the message I was supposed to preach next Sunday, and I soon realized that I was going to be preaching it this week instead. And then, Lord willing, Ben will be back next week, and he will preach the message that was supposed to be for this week.

Now I tease Ben a lot as we have that kind of relationship, but he knows I love him. And maybe you don't know this about Ben, but he is a very clean eater. He is almost vegan and he doesn't like to eat a lot of meat. And if you know me real well you know that is not what I am known for, and I rarely get sick. So I told him, *'Dude, what you need is a big plate of bacon and a couple of liters of Diet A & W.'* I was really giving it to him, and then yesterday morning I woke up with a raspy throat.

So I kind of have a little something, and if you saw me earlier this morning you may have noticed that I have been walking around with my hands in my pockets rather than shaking hands with people, because I want to be a blessing to you this morning. So if I don't shake your hand I am not being rude, but if I have something contagious I don't want to pass it around. And whatever it is it is not the corona virus, because I don't drink. *(Laughter.)* That was really a bad joke, wasn't it? And anything I say this morning that is inappropriate it is because I am under the influence of cold medication. So if I go off the rails, just blame NyQuil, okay?

We are going to be in John Chapter 16 this morning as we continue our series on 'God Is,' and we are speaking of the Holy Spirit as God. As we do this, we are going to be kind of looking at the idea that one of the missions of the Holy Spirit is to call us to repentance, to call us to Christ likeness, to call us to righteousness.

I remember in the 1970s when I was high school that there was a big project that was taking place in Italy. It was the restoration of da Vinci's 'The Last Supper.' Many of you know that as it was a classic piece of world art that virtually everyone has heard about. You can probably even envision this painting in your mind where Jesus is sitting on one side of the table surrounded by his apostles. And it is quite an amazing work. But if you have gone back and looked at pictures of the painting over the ages, if you have

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seen photographs of it from about 1978 to early 1980, or it if you look at it today, it looks like a completely different painting. And the reason is because in the late 70s a great scientist, who was also an artistic restorer, by the name of Dr. Penna Barcelone, decided that it needed to be restored. And so she was commissioned as the scientist, and the art restorer, and the historian, to be responsible for leading this project whereupon they would remove what was basically five hundred years of smoke, dust and debris that had accumulated on this painting.

Now you remember that during those days when da Vinci was painting that the paintings were hung in buildings that did not have climate control, and they were illuminated by oil and candles, and they were heated by furnaces that were powered by wood or coal, as well as by fireplaces. So over the passage of time, microscopic elements had come into contact with the face of the painting, and layer by layer it had distorted the beauty of the painting.

So Dr. Barcelone used high powered microscopes, she used tiny very intricate surgical scalpels with very fine edges, and she gently applied special chemicals and solvents until layer by layer by layer she could remove all that had accumulated. And if you could see the post painting versus the pre painting, if you looked at 'The Last Supper' in the 1960s or early 70s versus the way it looks today, you would be able to see that the change is dramatic, the colors are vibrant, and the detail just pops out at you. It is like looking at a whole different painting.

I tell you that because of this - one of the ways that the Holy Spirit works in our lives is to make sure that when we see Jesus we see Him as He really is. When we see truth that we see it as it really is. And you know the fact of the matter is that over the course of time with our own biases, by our culture, by the toleration of sin in our lives, by our own lack of awareness and lack of sensitivity, we will allow the visage, the character, the nature, the elements, and the attributes of Christ to become distorted if we are not careful.

And one of the things that the Holy Spirit does is He convicts us of those distortions. He removes the grime, He removes the impurities, He removes the biases, the prejudices, and the unconfessed sins, all of those things away from us if we will listen to Him. And if we will allow Him to scrape it away so that we can see God in His fullness, so that we can see God as He is. Many today view God and the Godhead incorrectly. And so it is no wonder that the church, and the world at large, are often confused when we talk about God and Jesus and Scripture.

We know as many of us have seen this, that many people view God as some kind of doddering old man who oversees this messy creation in a grandfatherly way. And He

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has a host of very feminine looking angels who are assisted by these little naked infantile cherubs who fly around with their little wings, and their little Valentine bows and arrows, and so forth where they all reside in the clouds. So they reduce God to some kind of odd caricature that is part emotional and part silliness.

Some view Jesus incorrectly too. They view Him as a political revolutionary, or some kind of a philosophical guru, or perhaps some kind of an amazing educator, or teacher who walked around in sandals and natural fabrics followed by this merry band of renegades, these youngsters who were impressed with Him. They followed Him around and were there to spread peace and love and justice on the earth, to get rid of the Romans and bring about some 'all is love' kingdom on the earth.

Others view the Holy Spirit incorrectly as well. And we have talked about that some. In many ways many people view the Holy Spirit as some kind of mysterious, ethereal, ghostly creature who periodically will show up in some kind of supernatural way with feats that are intended to amaze and impress. These feats of power that mystify us like a Las Vegas show featuring some kind of magician or hypnotist. They say cliché things about Him.

Many people refer to God sometimes as 'the man upstairs,' or 'the big man.' I really believe that if we knew God the way God was intended to be known, none of us would ever refer to Him as 'the big man upstairs.' We would instead fall in reverence and in awe before His majesty and His authority, fully cognizant of His righteousness and of our sins. We would not treat Him casually. He is not our 'homeboy.' He is not some kind of casual guy that we can approach. Can we come boldly before Him? Absolutely. But we need to understand that when Moses came into contact with God he couldn't even look upon Him. When one prophet was approached by God he said, *'I am undone. I can't even stand before Him.'* And yet we have reduced God in our culture, and we have often reduced Him in our mind's eye.

We not only do that with God, but we portray Jesus similarly. We have pictures of Him that hang on our church walls in many cases where He kind of looks like a doe-eyed European with a mystic look about Him. He has this head full of locks that look like they have been groomed with high end hair products. And we think that is Jesus, and we almost iconize Him in a way that does not remind us that this is He who was God in the flesh, and who died for us.

In America sometimes I think we kind of act like Jesus was some sort of entrepreneurial business guru who had amazing leadership principles we should follow. Or maybe He was a card carrying member of the NRA who voted a straight GOP ticket every election. We try to have Him fit our expectations and our beliefs, rather than to

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examine Him fully as God in the flesh who came to redeem our souls. Sometimes we say silly things like, *'Well, you know God really showed up today.'* That one is one of my pet peeves. If you have ever said that in front of me I'm sorry but you probably saw me flinch.

We need to understand that God doesn't just randomly show up. God is in you if you are a believer, and He is with you 24 hours a day. And He isn't required to have some kind of conjured up experience, some kind of razzmatazz show so that all of a sudden we can feel compelled to say, *'Well, God showed up today.'* No, it just might be that we become aware of Him, but He was really here all along if He is in our heart. That is the work of the Holy Spirit.

And so I think we need to hold ourselves accountable to the fact that God cannot be contained; nor can He be expressed adequately by our own words. And that sometimes we need to stop thinking of Him the way we think of Him and start asking the Holy Spirit how we should see Him. How should we see our Heavenly Father? How should I interact with that Holy Spirit that lives in me? We distort God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit when we blindly participate in such nonsense. We need to study the Scriptures so that we can learn who He really is, and what each part of the Godhead performs in their leadership over creation, over the world, and over the church.

And there is something else we tend to do - we also distort our own sin, and the depth of our offense, the need for our reconciliation with Him, the joy that is part of forgiveness and for the accountability that the future holds for every single one of us when we much stand before God. So we distort truth. We distort righteousness. And we try to reposition God so that He is okay with us rather than for us to examine our own lives and ask, *'Am I like Him?'*

I will never forget something that happened to me about twenty-five years ago. I was in my office and I was talking to a young guy who had by all evidences been walking in faith for years. And he came in and he said, *'Pastor Dan, I just wanted you to know I am filing for divorce this week. I have met someone, and I am going to get a divorce and marry this women in a few weeks.'* And I was just stunned and I said, *'Whoa. Where did this come from?'*

And he said, *'Well, you know, Pastor Dan, I haven't been happy for quite some time. I finally realized that if I am not happy God is not happy because God wants me to be happy. I am not happy with my wife, and I found this other woman who makes me happy, and because God wants me to be happy He is good with this.'* And I said, *'Hang on just a moment. You are walking in deception. You are walking under the influence of*

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*a lie because God is not nearly as concerned about your happiness as He is with your holiness.'*

We need to remember that Satan is the great deceiver who would love nothing more than to distort how we view God, and how God views us, how we view the Scriptures and what the Scriptures says to us, how we interact with the Holy Spirit and what the Holy Spirit is leading us to do.

So we need to be actively, even proactively, examining our hearts, using the illumination of the Word of God, allowing the Holy Spirit who lives within us if we are believers, and who is calling us to repentance if we are not. And we need to ask, '*How do I align with Him?*' And this isn't a matter of experience, this isn't a matter of culture, this isn't a matter of generation, this isn't a matter of what we feel. This is a matter of God's Word, the forever settled truth that He has given to us through the apostles.

I have said all of that to say this: the Word of God must be where we focus so that we can align ourselves biblically, without distortion, without all the nonsense. And we have all seen this. I was watching a little bit of a political debate this week, and to me it is one of the most irritating things ever to see people who know just enough Scripture to distort it. It makes me a crazy man I have to tell you. There are times when I just feel like my head is going to explode.

And I can just hear someone saying, '*Well, thou shall not judge. Judge not lest you be judged.*' Well, that is probably the most distorted verse that anyone ever quotes. Some people study just enough theology to be dangerous. It is like getting your medical advice from Facebook. You need to study the context. So let me say this - the Word of God is not to be used for politics. The Word of God is not for the acquisition of power. The Word of God is not so that we can appear to be smarter than the next guy, or so that we can manipulate people into seeing things our way. The Word of God is sharp and powerful, more than any two edged sword, and it is there to divide error from truth. And we all need it in our life.

Sometimes we call the Scripture the Canon. I believe, and most evangelical pastors would believe in what is called a 'Closed Canon.' When you study the word 'canon,' it means 'plumbline.' If you are a carpenter or a plumber you know what a plumbline is. You actually put a heavy lead weight on the end of a string, and then you tack the string to whatever you need to, and as the weight pulls on the string, you know that is a straight line, and that is why it is called a plumbline. In fact you want it to be put 'into plumb,' or into alignment.

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The Scripture refers to itself many, many times in similar ways. For instance if you are an accountant, you use the term 'reconciliation.' When you are reconciling something, what are you doing? You are making sure all of the pluses and the minuses equal out so that you hit zero, or that every penny, dime, and dollar are accounted for. When you do that you have put it in alignment. You are reconciled. God gave us His Word so that we can be put into alignment with truth, so that we can be reconciled with Him. That is why we need to study His Word.

John Chapter 16 is where we are going to be this morning. We will begin reading in verse 4, and I want to kind of give you the context in which this Scripture is about, because I think it will help us understand what is being said. And by the way this passage is often misunderstood, not in a malicious way, not in a manipulative way, but simply in an incorrect way. I am going to try to point that out to you this morning. One of the ways that we can understand this is by understanding the context of the passage.

I was supposed to go with my wife to a concert, and I think a lot of you had tickets to this concert as well. It was to hear Andrea Bocelli on Friday night. Maybe you are thinking, '*Pastor Dan, you are from Missouri. I didn't know that you loved opera.*' Well, I don't, but I love my wife, and that is why I bought her tickets for Christmas to this concert. We all know when mama is happy that everybody is happy, right? So I had these tickets, and then Andrea got laryngitis and the concert was cancelled.

And you know we were planning to do something this weekend, and my wife knew that I am a big C. S. Lewis fan. And she told me there was a guy coming to town to do a C. S. Lewis monologue. And I have seen these monologues a couple of times in the past, and they are amazing. What they do is they take some of C. S. Lewis' writings, or recordings, and then an actor portrays it. So yesterday we were able to go see a man portraying C. S. Lewis, and it was about a conversation that had been recorded in the late 1950s with C. S. Lewis and a group of writers that he had had a conversation with in his home. So it was 90 minutes of a man quoting the conversation that C. S. Lewis had had with a group of American writers.

Now I know for some of you that may sound like going to the opera, right? You are thinking, '*Why in the world would you want to do that?*' But I found it fascinating. And here is the thing. When I got into the theatre and was listening to it for the first few moments I was critiquing, because that is what I do. And I was thinking things like, '*I don't know that C. S. Lewis looked that way. And that furniture isn't appropriate for this time period.*' But the actor kept talking, and before long in my mind I was convinced that I was listening to C. S. Lewis. This actor was amazing. He had a nice British accent and

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I think people with British accents always sound smarter, right? Or people with a Scottish accent like Alistair Begg and some of the Scottish preachers, they just sound so smart.

And since my background is northern England all the way back five or six hundred years ago, I wish I had been able to keep that part of my background because I am always looking for ways to sound smart. And this actor sounded so educated, and he made such perfect sense that before long I could have sworn that I was listening to C. S. Lewis. And the cool thing about it was he was interacting with an imaginary audience, pretending that we were these writers, and it was like I was on the outside looking in at something that happened over 50 years ago. And I was learning from it.

And that is what is going on in this passage in John Chapter 16. Jesus is talking to His apostles. We are on the outside looking in. God wants us to learn it from this perspective. When you hear it from this perspective you are going to learn some things about your Scripture that will give you some peace, and it makes the power of the Scripture even more authoritative in your life. And we need to understand that one of the rules of hermeneutics, which is the study of Scripture, is that all Scripture is not necessarily written to us, but all Scripture is written for us. So when Jesus is speaking here, He is speaking to His apostles. These are the men who have been following Him around. These are the men who have been listening to His teaching.

If you go back just a few chapters you will read that Jesus has announced to them, *'Look, I am not going to be here forever. Look, I am going to leave you. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you I will come again.'* And this is causing some widespread panic among the apostles. *'What! You are leaving us.'* Remember these apostles thought Jesus was going to set up a kingdom on earth. They thought that He was the Messiah come to rule and reign on the earth. And He is telling them now that He is leaving? They have only been doing this for a few years and there hasn't been a kingdom set up yet. They were panicked and they were wondering what was going on.

Thomas and the other apostles were confused and doubting. They had been jostling for position and now He says He is leaving? So Jesus over these several chapters is giving them context and preparing them for the future. And yet He is doing it in such a way that they are not going to know all the details, but their faith is going to be grown in the process. So now we are going to listen in to Jesus as He is conversing with His apostles beginning in verse 5 of John Chapter 16.

***"But now I am going to Him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.***

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*Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper (capital H, this is the Holy Spirit) will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."*

*"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you (remember who the you is here - it is the apostles, not us) the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that He will take what is mine and declare it to you."*

So let me help you understand what is going on. Again, Jesus is preparing the disciples for His departure, for His crucifixion, for His execution, for His resurrection and then for His ascension. They had walked with Him for three and a half years, but He is not going to be staying much longer. He is telling them they are not even asking the right questions. No one has asked Him where He is going. And Jesus was trying to let them know that they did not understand what He was saying to them because of the sorrow in their hearts. And there was probably some panic as well.

Jesus told them they were not hearing Him. Have you ever been in a place where because you weren't processing correctly, you weren't really hearing what Jesus was saying to you? What the Holy Spirit was convicting you of? What God was trying to show you? Don't feel bad if you have because the apostles had that same problem. They were reacting rather than leaning in and listening.

Jesus told them He had good news for them. He said He had to go because if He didn't go they would not get the Helper. And it was the Helper who was going to work in them to give them the truth that was needed. He gives them three categories - to convict of sin, to point out righteousness, and to warn of coming judgment. He told them if He did not go the Holy Spirit couldn't come, and the Holy Spirit had an assignment for them.

Now do you know what the assignment was that He was talking about? These men were going to write part of the Bible. These men were going to take the message of the gospel and spread it around the world. The Holy Spirit was to come to them and He was going to guide them and give them the Word. He was going to complete the message so that every generation would hear it through the Bible. These men were all going to be executed, except for John, but the message would need to stick around, and it

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had to come through the Holy Spirit. So Jesus was telling them their job was not done. Their work was not complete. The gospel was going to be recorded and they were to be the pen.

In this passage we have a key word, and the word is 'convict.' "***When He comes, He will convict the world***" This word is used periodically any time you see the Holy Spirit, but most powerfully I think is in this passage. The word convict in the Greek is a cool word, and like many words it has multiple meanings. Sometimes we think of words as a coin with a couple of sides or a couple of dimensions to it. And the word 'convict' has two primary uses when you see it in Scripture. One of the uses is it relates to a verdict or a sentence. So when somebody is convicted, like when we watch 'Law and Order' on television, we will see someone convicted.

How do they convict someone? They bring evidence, and the evidence points to either guilt or innocence. And if they are guilty then there is a conviction and after the conviction the punishment or penalty or sentence is carried out. So when you see the word convict it is part of the process where God is bringing us to a final point.

But the word convict also means something else. It can mean convincing. Part of the process of moving toward a legal conviction is that you have to convince the judge, or the jury, that this person is indeed guilty. So there is the use of evidence, there is the use of logic, there is the use of rhetoric, and there is the use of testimony. All of these things are brought together in order to show us that the just, the right conclusion is the conviction that leads to the sentence.

So when we think of the Holy Spirit understand that God in a legal sense is using His Holy Spirit to complete the plan that was set in place by Him whereby we could be reconciled with Him. It is part of the process whereupon He convinces us that we need a Savior. He convinces us that there is absolute truth. He convinces us that there are rights and wrongs in the universe. He convinces us that there is justice and injustice. He convinces us that we cannot have His holiness of our own accord, that we are not capable of being good enough, or holy enough, or righteous enough, because when we see His righteousness, and then we see ourselves, we are going to be convinced that the gap is there and we can't bridge it on our own.

And His Holy Spirit is going to then continue the process through the testimony and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through the testimony of His Word, through the testimony of the transformed life, through the testimony of the apostles, and through the testimony of believers who have God living in them that Jesus Christ paid the price for our sins. And that He took upon Himself the penalty, the sentence, so that you and I could be freed from the consequences of our own wickedness and our own sin. So in short, God gave

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us the Holy Spirit who convicts and convinces us when we hear from Him and heed Him so that we can be brought into a relationship with Him.

Now real quickly we are going to go through this passage and then I am going to ask you to consider three things. I want you to look through this passage again in verses 5 through 7. Here is the first thing we see - the Holy Spirit was sent to complete and continue the work of God toward our redemption. Understand that God has always been at work in His creation. Try as we might to mess it up, God has always desired for us to be in harmony with Him. He created us for fellowship, He wants us for fellowship, and He wants us to spend eternity with Him in fellowship. That is His desire because when we are in fellowship with Him we glorify Him.

So the Holy Spirit was sent to complete and to continue this work that we see began in the book of Genesis. For instance we see throughout the Old Testament, God the Father, and God the authority, from the burning bush to the God on the mountain to the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. We see the authority of the righteous God of Israel throughout the Old Testament, and how He was offended by their sin. That is throughout all of the Old Testament.

Now you may wonder if Jesus was present as part of the Trinity? Yes, He was. Is Jesus eternal? Yes, He is God. And the Holy Spirit is God as well. We read in the Old Testament that the Spirit moved. We read that David cried out to God not to take His Holy Spirit from him. The Holy Spirit was around in the Old Testament, but the primary character on stage was God, the Father. After the Old Testament there was 400 years of silence. Then what happened was the advent of Christ in the person of Jesus, who was God in flesh and walked among us. And He was that bridge between God and man that was required so that we could have eternal life, because He offered Himself as a sacrifice and took our sins for us. The four gospels talk about Jesus. We see Jesus, as the Son of God, Jesus, as the advocate, and Jesus, as the redeemer. This is the focal point and the narrative of salvation's plan of the gospels, with Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man, the hope of the world.

Then Jesus ascends to Heaven and we have the book of Acts. The Acts of the apostles is what we call it. What happens now is the church is founded, and at the very beginning the Holy Spirit comes. And then the Scriptures are given to us through the apostles so we have the pastoral epistles after that. And the pastoral epistles lead to a conclusion which are the things to come told in the book of Revelations by John, the one apostle who wasn't martyred. And what is the focal point of what is happening in the last part of Scripture after the gospels? It is the Holy Spirit.

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So do you see what is happening? In the Old Testament we have God the Father. In the gospels we have God the Son. And in the rest of Scripture we have the work of the Holy Spirit. It is all God, all complete, all part of His plan, and this is how God has redeemed us and called us to Himself. This is how He is restoring the marred creation. This is His process of scraping away the debris, and the confusion, and highlighting the impurities and bringing out the things we need to address, so that we can be once again brought into alignment with Him.

It is beautiful, isn't it? It is a beautiful picture. Can you see the restoration? Can you see the colors coming out now? This is God's message to us, and it is a message of love, it is a message of hope, it is a message of redemption, it is a message that tells us to get rid of all the debris in our lives, and just to trust and follow Him. It is a good thing.

Then if we look at verses 8 through 11 we see what the Holy Spirit is doing in this process. ***“And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.”*** In verses 8 and 9 he is convincing unbelievers, the world, of their need for Christ. You don't just get God by being born; you have to be born again. Why? Because we are born into sin, so the Holy Spirit is convicting us of our sins so that we can be born again. So He is making us aware of our sin.

You know if it wasn't for the Holy Spirit, if it wasn't for truth, if it wasn't for God, we wouldn't even know we were sinners. We would just be walking in total ignorance. But there is something in us that God gave us that allows us to know there is such a thing as right and wrong. And this, by the way, is just part of the way He has created the heavens and the earth. You don't have to be a Christian to know that some things are wrong. You don't have to be close to God to know that if you stab somebody in the heart, it is wrong. If you kick a baby, it is wrong. If you abuse an animal, it is wrong. If you take something that isn't yours, it is wrong.

Why? It is because God in His creation has allowed us to be able to see the obvious. But we still don't get all the picture until the Holy Spirit says, *‘There is hope, there is a plan for you to be reconciled, so you don't have to live in the sin, and you can live free from the sin.’* So the Holy Spirit makes us aware of our sin.

In verse 10 the Holy Spirit points us to righteousness. You don't know you are walking in darkness till you see light, right? How do you know the difference between sweet and sour? Well, if you have tasted something sour, and you have tasted something sweet, you know there is a difference. How do we know there is a difference between evil and good, between unrighteousness and righteousness? It is because the Holy Spirit points it out to us by telling us what is righteousness and holiness and lets us know to whom we should aspire. He points us toward His righteousness.

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In addition to that, look in verse 11 which concerns judgment. He loves us and He wants us to be reconciled with Him because He knows the consequences of our sins. Make no mistake, the ruler of this world and all who follow after Him will be judged. Who is the ruler of the world? It is Satan. Jesus is saying clearly to the apostles that the Holy Spirit is here to keep us from the consequences of sin. And the judgment to come is first for Satan, but he is going to drag as many people with him as he possibly can, including the angels who followed him and the people on this earth who have been seduced by him, and will not repent.

You know we live in a culture and in a generation where even Christians don't want to talk about the reality of hell. And do you know what that is - it is another layer of soot on 'The Last Supper.' It is a distortion of God. It is a distortion of the future. It is a distortion of truth when we stop believing there is a hell, because we then diminish the wonder of Heaven. When everything is right as long as it doesn't hurt people, or as long as it is between consenting adults, we remove the consequences of our sin which is damnation. Satan always wants to distort truth. He wants us to think evil is okay, that truth is relative, that as long as we are happy then God is happy. But God is not happy until we are reconciled with Him. He is not willing that any of us should perish.

So when we understand this, when we get a hold of this, when we understand the lie of Satan is to say, '*Do your own thing,*' the lie of Satan is to say, '*As long as nobody gets hurt,*' the lie of Satan is to say, '*Oh, a good God wouldn't send anyone to hell.*' But it is not God sending us to hell; it is our sins that send us to hell. God is the hope so that we can escape hell. We need to quit blaming God for the things that Satan has engineered.

The reason that we have death and tragedy and evil and wickedness and war and cancer and all the bad things in the world is not because of God; it is because of Satan. God did not set it up this way; Satan injected it and we followed it. And God was not satisfied and He made a way of escape. And the fact that there is still evil and death and sin in the world is not evidence of the weakness of God, but of the patient, longsuffering love of God who is giving us the time to repent. If you are walking in sin today understand this - God is not okay with your sin, God is waiting for your repentance. He wants you to say, '*I have to have you. I give. I want to be with you.*' So the Holy Spirit warns us of the coming judgment.

The third thing is this - the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to convince us of truth. Now as I said, this is being written by the apostles. Christ's ministry and teaching was about to be dramatically interrupted by His trial and execution, and the apostles hadn't learned everything that they needed to know. So it was going to be through the

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Holy Spirit that they would receive the additional revelation that they would need. God was going to give it to them, and then to us through the Scriptures - the Acts, epistles and then finally Revelation. And when you combine that with the record of Jesus' life in the gospels, we have the New Testament which is the completed text, and we have the Closed Canon. We have everything we need to know to live out the truth of our new life in Christ.

The Holy Spirit works in harmony with God's Word to share with us how to discern between right and wrong, and to give us a sense of morality. The Holy Spirit works in harmony with God's Word to help us discern how we should act in various circumstances. The Holy Spirit explains how to navigate us in our relationship with God. The Holy Spirit convinces us of God's love for us through the security we have in Him, and lets us know what desires we should have and act upon. It convicts and convinces us to reject the sin that pollutes and weighs us down, and that confuses the power of the gospel in our relationship with God.

When the Holy Spirit convicts the world, He is convicting them to repent and to believe so that they will escape the coming judgment. Our biggest sin is the sin of unbelief. When we refuse to believe in God it is the biggest sin of all. And if you don't believe that Jesus is who He is, damnation is sure. And when the Holy Spirit convicts us, the redeemed, those of us who have trusted Christ, He is convincing us to become more like Christ and to maintain a right relationship with Him. This is the convincing aspect of conviction so that we can have the fullness of our relationship with God, and so that we can avoid the chastisement of a Father who loves us so much He is not willing that we should stray from Him.

This brings me to the last thing - the Holy Spirit is ultimately about the glory of God. It is about the glory of God. Again, if we look at verses 14 and 15 what the Scripture is saying to us is what the Holy Spirit is all about: ***"He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that He will take what is mine and declare it to you."*** Jesus says it twice, He is taking the message, the gospel, and He is declaring it to us. Not saying it just once but twice. He is doubling down and He is emphasizing it.

Why? In verse 14 it says because, ***"He will glorify me."*** And that is what the Holy Spirit wants. Everything we do, everything that exists is to glorify God. Every drop of rain, every feather on a bird, every note that is sung, every strike of the hammer in a carpenter's hand, every hug from a child, every word that parts our lips, everything can, and should, remind us of God. And in that is an opportunity to give Him the glory.

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So what should we consider? Here are the three things. Number one - is the Holy Spirit showing you your need for a relationship with God? This morning if you are sitting here in this room and you say, *'Wow, I didn't realize some of this,'* any truth that you gain in your heart is not because of my eloquence because I don't have any. It is not because of the room. It is not because of the songs. It is because the Holy Spirit is calling you into a relationship with God. The only question is - will you respond to it?

Number two - is the Holy Spirit alerting you to some sin in your life that needs addressed? I realize this is church and it is Sunday morning. Most of us in here are Christ followers but you understand that the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit is to bring us into alignment and full fellowship with God. And yet so many of us allow busyness, self-righteousness, all kinds of debris, dust and soot to distort what God is saying to us, which is this, *'Be ye holy as I am holy.'* How often do we just pause and say, *'God, show me the sins in my life that your Word and your truth and your Holy Spirit are telling me to address.'*

The last thing is this - is the Holy Spirit actively reminding you to worship God in spirit and in truth? Is your life one that glorifies God? Is your life one that is being lived in such a way that others see Jesus in you? Are you the light in the world of darkness? Are you the sweet in the world of sour? Are you the gateway to hope in a world that seems to have lost its way? Part of the mission of the believer is to reflect the glory of God so that others can see Him in us.

There has been so much in this passage and I feel I have just scraped the first layer off of it. But as we close I want us to take just a moment and I want us to listen for the Holy Spirit. So would you join me by bowing your heads and closing your eyes. I want to take you to an exercise similar to what I did last week. The first thing I want us to do is to pray out loud the prayer that we have been talking about throughout January and February. And that is we ask God to help us today to hear from His Word and through His Holy Spirit.

So will you join me in that prayer. Please say it out loud with me if you will. *'God, help me today to hear from you through your Word and through your Holy Spirit.'* Now our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed and it is just you and God. Don't be thinking about anything else. In the quietness of this hour will you say this in your own heart: *'Lord, show me a sin that I need to address.'* Is it unbelief? Is it a sin that you are consciously committing? Is it a sin that you have covered up and have chosen to ignore? But right now ask the Holy Spirit to show you a sin that you want Him to address.

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And now finally, right there in your seat, will you say: *'Lord, I confess that as the sin that it is. I repent of it and I ask you to forgive me. And I am never going to consciously pursue that sin again.'* That is how you know whether you are serious about it or not. Let's pray.

*'Holy Spirit, I pray in my own life as I was preparing this sermon and you identified several things to me, a whole laundry list of things that I had become comfortable with and casual about, that you will in the weeks to come keep me sensitive to those things I need to excise from my list once and for all.*

*Father, for your kingdom's sake, purify me. For my soul's sake, keep me close to you. Holy Spirit, continue to guide me in all truth with your Word. And Father, I pray that this church would be so under the control and influence of the Holy Spirit that every day we become a little more like you, that other people see Jesus in us, and it impacts our workplaces, our homes, our communities, our neighborhoods and our church as we become more like you. Help us to genuinely hear from your Word and your Spirit. For it is in Christ's name I pray. Amen.*

*The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.*