

Studies in the Gospel of John 05 - Work of the Spirit

by Alden Gannett

Jesus explains to his disciples that his departure is for their good, as it will allow the Holy Spirit to come and convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Duration: 48:26

Scripture: John 16:1-15, Acts 26:9-10

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal experience of witnessing to someone who was confused about various religious beliefs. The preacher starts by discussing different ideologies such as Romanism, Buddhism, and materialism. However, he then offers to explain the gospel from Genesis to Revelation. He proceeds to explain the concept of sin, the sacrifices in the Bible, and the coming of Jesus as the Savior. The preacher also emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in helping people understand the truth of the gospel and their need for a Savior. He concludes by sharing a story of a man who, after being confused about different beliefs, quickly accepts Jesus as his Savior and experiences a profound joy.

Transcript

Continue our study in the Upper Room discourse tonight by turning to John, Chapter 16. Lord willing, tomorrow night we want to study together that great high priestly prayer, Chapter 17. Tonight, Chapter 16, verses 1 through 15.

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues, yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God's service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them, and these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Where goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. 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. Nevertheless, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.

For he shall not speak of himself, but whatever 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. The subject has been developing throughout these verses and chapters together. As we have witnessed our Lord's announcement regarding his departure, the great concern expressed by a number of questions on the part of these disciples regarding his departure.

Our Lord has told them that he's going to the Father's house, he's going with a mission, he is going to come back, and in the meantime he is giving the Holy Spirit. In fact, he himself is returning in spirit, in fact, the Father himself as well. All three persons of the Trinity will be indwelling the believer.

Last night we saw the wonderful privilege of abiding in Christ, the believer's relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then this morning we saw the rest of chapter 15 in the believer's relationship to fellow believers, one of love, and then his relationship to the world about the unregenerate world, that of hatred by the world of the believer in Jesus Christ. Chapter 15 closed with once again the reminder and encouraging word regarding the Comforter, verse 26, but when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth who proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

You are to go on in your witnessing, verse 27, ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. All right? These abiding in Christ and loving one another will be hated by the world as they go out and bear up an effective witness unto the Savior. However, the Lord is sending the Holy Spirit of God, the Comforter, the Paraclete, to come along beside and help.

It is this, now, that is our concern tonight in chapter 16. The chapter begins with introductory words, verses 1 through 6. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. He's just been speaking of awful hatred on the part of the world toward these disciples, and he explains they shall put you out of the synagogues.

You're going to be excommunicated. Yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God's service. The word for service here is that of service in a religious sense, service in the tabernacle or temple.

Our Lord says the day is coming when people are going to kill you, and they believe that in such an act they are actually performing an act of worship to God. And it didn't take long before that occurred, did it? Leave your finger here and turn over to Acts chapter 26, and you'll hear Paul the Apostle's own testimony along this line. Acts 26, verses 9 and 10.

He says, I verily thought within myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This is prior to his conversion. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints that I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death, I gave

my voice against them.

Among them was Stephen, one of the first deacons of the early church. Paul said, Jesus is now saying to his disciples, this hatred by the world, expressed by excommunication, expressed by murder. Verse 3 of John 16, and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

They're blind. But these things, verse 4, have I told you that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them. I'm anticipating again, as we saw back in chapter 13.

I want you to be forewarned, and to be forewarned is to be forearmed. I want no surprises here. I want you to realize that this is part of the package.

And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was yet with you. Now it is true that in the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord spoke of persecution, but in a more general sense. In chapter 10 of Matthew, our Lord spoke of this kind of thing, but again in an isolated situation here now, prior to his departure, and because of this, verse 5, now I go my way to him that sent me.

And so now in this event, he is giving this in more detail, and Matthew 24, for example, spells this out even in greater detail of the awful and vehement opposition against those who trust the Lord. Now our Lord says, I have a question, verse 5, now I go my way to him that sent me, and why none of you are asking, where doest thou? You are occupied with the fact that I'm going, but you are not concerned about where I'm going. You don't seem to be intensely interested in that subject.

He is saying, in effect, you're taking the negative approach to my departure. Verse 6, but because I said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. You haven't yet gotten the point that my leaving is for your good.

It's a great moment in a Christian's life when he truly believes and accepts Romans 8, 28, for we know that what? All things do what? Work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. Now does that verse say some things work together for good? Does it say a few things? Does it say most things? Does it say everything but my problem? I've talked to some saints during the years that have been pretty bitter, bitter against God. I remember so well being with a family before going off to conduct the funeral service, and I said, are there any questions while we're here together? And the sister of the dear one who had just become a widow a couple of days before said, why did God take away my husband a few years ago? Explain that, preacher.

In just that spirit, she hadn't learned yet all things work together for good. Oh, I've seen students on Bible college campus. Didn't like the food.

Boy, did they have to gripe, you know. Didn't like the assignment. Impossible.

And that examination I gave, you know, I never did learn in 25 years how to give a good examination. Somehow I never could please them. Boy, students can gripe and growl about exams.

Somehow I haven't learned that even examinations work together for good. Huh? Does this go for arthritis too? Does this work for financial reverses too? How about the stock market? Does it work for that? I asked you a question. Oh, good.

Few of you live by the stock market. All right. Okay.

The rest of us, it doesn't worry. All right? All things work together for good. You know, that verse is just as true as John 3, 16.

Why is it true? Because the infinite God who said it is infinitely good, and infinitely righteous, and infinitely holy, and infinitely true, and infinitely faithful, and infinitely wise, and infinitely loving, and merciful, and gracious, shall not the judge of all the earth do what? Right. No wonder he can say, and we know, that all things work together for good. Now, in this immediate setting here, the Lord is saying to these disciples, you haven't learned that lesson yet.

Sorrow has filled your heart because I'm going away. You haven't believed me yet that when I said I'm going away, it's for your good. I'm going to build those resting places for you, and I'm coming back and receive you unto myself.

But where I am, there you may be also. You haven't understood yet that my being away is more important to you, more profitable to you, and you'll have a greater ministry as a result. And hence the revelation now, the Holy Spirit, in verses 7 through 15.

A threefold revelation. First, the revelation of the Spirit in relationship to the world. Verse 7, Nevertheless, I tell you the truth.

It's awful that the Lord Jesus has to label the truth, isn't it? You know, the suggestion is not that what else he has said is error, but the problem is the disciples hadn't believed him. I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away.

They hadn't believed a word of it yet. It's better for you that I go away. Why? For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, the Holy Spirit.

But if I depart, I will send him unto you. Do you remember last night, or the night before, whenever it was, I asked the question about the choice between the disciples living here on earth and being with the Lord in bodily form, and the choice of being united to the risen, living Christ and the presence of God, the Holy Spirit? Which was the better situation? I personally took the stand that far better these days, with the risen, ascended Lord there in the right hand of the Father, but our being joined to him and engulfed by the Spirit. That's the very position Jesus takes here in John 16.7. It's expedient for you that I go away.

Oh, it's better. Why? Every one of you will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Every one of you will be baptized by the Spirit into me, and every one of you, then, will be united to the living Lord.

Every one of you a vine, excuse me, every one of you a branch in the vine, every one of you with this intimate, personal, vital, fruit-bearing relationship to me. Now, I've just been telling you that you're going out into the world as witnesses, and the world's going to hate you. Chapter 15, and the opening verses of chapter 16.

Now, you have a helper. When he, the Spirit, has come, verse 8, on the day of Pentecost, he will reprove. He will convict, even better and more accurately, he will convince the world of three things, of sin, of righteousness, of judgment.

That verb, convict, or reprove, and as I suggested, best translated, convince, is a very strong word here. It's a legal term. It's the one our Lord used, which of one of you convinceth me of sin, remember? Same word.

It's a word that presses for verdict. It's a verb that speaks of the evidence as being sufficient to the point where a verdict is rendered. And our Lord says, oh, here's a ministry you can't accomplish.

You can't ever do this by yourselves, but the Spirit of God, this one called alongside to help, has come. When he comes, he's going to convince, thank God, the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. All the verdicts will not be the same.

For he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God abideth on him. And nevertheless, convincing will take place. Three realms regarding sin, regarding righteousness, regarding judgment.

He explains, verse 9, of sin, because they believe not on me. Will you notice that the word sin is in the singular? He does not say of sins. Did you know that people do not go to hell because they murder? Because they lie? Because they cheat? Because they commit adultery? That's right.

Christ died for all those sins on the cross. In any other one you want to mention tonight, and I don't care how far you go to find one, or how little or big you think it is, my Bible says, The Lord laid on him the iniquity, finish it, of us all. And in John 129 says, He's the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

In 1 John 2.2 says, He is the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, believers, but not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. That's good news, friend. That's the best news in all the world.

That means no matter how wicked you've been, how horrible you've been, how unfaithful you've been, how irresponsible you've been, how much you've disobeyed God and man, or rebelled against God and man, every single sin, past, present, future was laid on Jesus Christ. Now, you and I could get together here tonight and pick out someone who's living in sin, and you and I could go and get the goods on him, and we could go into court tonight and convict the man, let's say, of irresponsibility in his home to his wife, or unfaithfulness to his wife. You and I could take time and get the goods, and show the evidence, and have testimony, and go in the courts and declare a man guilty.

But that wouldn't get him saved, would it? There are lots of people around who know they sin, who know they do wrong, who are not Christians. But you see, our Lord says when the Spirit comes, he's going to cause people to see what the real issue is. What's that? That they believe not on Christ.

You see, the good news of the gospel is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, that God commended his love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. It's how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised again the third day according to the Scriptures. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

That's the gospel, friends. The gospel is not what I've done for God. The gospel is the good news of what Jesus Christ did for me on Calvary, and the proof of it all in that God raised him from the dead the third day.

That's good news. And when the Spirit comes, says Jesus, his ministry, among others, will be to convince men of the awful, awful sin, singular, the sin of not believing on Jesus Christ as personal Savior. The issue, again, is what will you do with Jesus, which is called Christ? That's the issue.

You see, he that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already. Because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. That's the issue.

God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

That's the issue. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. That's the issue.

The Spirit of God is going to come along as a faithful minister, a faithful witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, shares the word, and show that man what the real issue is, and the real issue is his personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross for him and who was raised again. I wonder if there's one in the house tonight who needs to see this for the very first time. You may have thought the issue was church joining.

You thought the issue was water baptism or confirmation. You thought the issue was serving in the church. You thought the issue was doing good and helping everybody and loving folks and all the rest.

But you never started at the beginning. And the starting point is your sin and the good news that Christ Jesus died on the cross for your sins. Have you ever called upon him to save you? The sin here, the awful sin, sin in the singular, is that men believe not on Christ.

People believe about him. There are lots of people tonight who know he's the Son of God and who know he came into the world and who know he died on the cross and who know he was raised from the dead who have never made it personal. Have you? You insurance people know or you businessmen know this business that there are times you have to sign on the dotted line.

Isn't that right? An insurance man can come to your door and he can tell you about life insurance policy and the benefits of it and how to take care of your dear widow when you die and how she'll be provided for for life and her children will be educated and all these blessings and if you live through it all you'll have so much cash value and it sits there and sounds great, my, wouldn't it be wonderful at age 65 or 70 to have all this and you say, great! The insurance man before walking out the door says, friend, it all sounds great but here's a pen and you have to sign on the dotted line. You have to do that with Jesus Christ, so to speak. Yes, he loved you.

Yes, he died on the cross for your sins. Yes, God raised him from the dead. Yes, it's all true.

Paul said to the Philippian jailer when he cried out, sir, what must I do to be saved? He cried out, believe. Make it personal. Put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

Sign on the dotted line, friend. It must be more than an intellectual assent to theological facts. It must be a personal faith in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

For if thou shalt confess with thine mouth the Lord Jesus and believe where? In thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead. Thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth on the righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Are you saved? Do you know it? Does God's Spirit witness to your heart? It's the Spirit's ministry, and may he be pleased to do it this very hour. If there is one here tonight who needs this to convince you of sin, the

awful sin, the most heinous sin in all God's universe, rejecting Jesus Christ as God's Son and your Savior. The second ministry of the Holy Spirit to the world, verse 10, is a convincing regarding righteousness.

Jesus said, Because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more. Sin? Here's the standard. Righteousness.

The people in that day decried Jesus Christ and said he was a blasphemer. Why? He makes himself equal with God. He's a lawbreaker.

Why? He performs miracles on the Sabbath day. And they nailed him to a cross with that twofold indictment. They rejected him as the Son of God.

They rejected him as their Messiah and Savior. You who have been witnessing have found the difficulty of causing people to understand divine righteousness. Now, says our Lord, the Holy Spirit, first of all, is going to vindicate me in all this.

I'm going to ascend into heaven. I'm going to be seated at the right hand of the Father. And the fact that I ascend and am seated indicates a finished and completed ministry and full acceptance by the Father that this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

And so Peter, on the day of Pentecost, stood up to those betrayers and murderers of Jesus Christ and declared him to be a man approved of God among you. Now, while I was living in and out among you on earth, said our Lord, you beheld my life. You beheld the righteousness of God as seen in me.

And that brought conviction of sin. Now I'm going back to the Father. You'll see me no more.

But in this world you're going to have all kinds of self-righteous, bigoted Pharisees. You can't touch them with a ten-foot pole, you know. Oh, they've done so much good, and they've served in the church, you know, and oh, they've loved everybody, and they've given and they've done this, that, and the other.

Oh, but they're not sinners, they say, and they don't need a Savior, they declare. And I'm going to be away. I won't be here.

They won't see my life firsthand as I move in and out among the multitudes. And so our Lord says when the Spirit comes, he is going to continue this ministry. He's going to convince regarding righteousness.

Now, what's he going to use? Way back before the law was ever given, there was the law of nature, wasn't there? Inscribed on the very Constitution of men, the law of God. Then at Sinai, God gave the Ten Commandments, another revelation of divine righteousness. Then came the person of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he moved in and out among men and personified the righteousness of God.

Now, there will be yet the written word, God's word. God's going to use that word, and the Holy Spirit is going to use this word, for by the law is the knowledge, the clear, exact, precise knowledge of sin. He's going to declare Christ in the word, and when Christ is preached, the Holy Spirit is going to convince of righteousness.

And even self-righteous, bigoted Pharisees will see their sinful condition and bow and call upon Jesus Christ to be saved. There is a third ministry, verse 11. The Spirit of God will convince of judgment, because the prince of this world, Satan, stands judged.

He was judged at Calvary. The sentence was announced. Verdict declared.

But then, as our Bible tells us in Revelation chapter 20, that the day is coming when the Spirit of God will order Satan into the lake of fire, and he will be tormented day and night, forever and ever and ever. Now, will you notice, the prince of this world stands judged. Go back to chapter 12, verse 31.

Now is the judgment of this world, says our Lord. And related to this, now shall the prince of this world be cast out. Victory over Satan was accomplished at the cross.

Read Hebrews 2. Now, the judgment of the leader infers the judgment of the led. Those led by him. The judgment of the prince of this world here is related to the judgment of the world itself.

And so, our Lord is declaring here to all those self-righteous, bigoted Pharisees who somehow think that they're good enough and righteous enough and don't need God or man to see them to glory. The Lord says, here's a warning. The one who started all this and the one who's the prince of this world system and the one whom you follow and of whom you are subjects was defeated at Calvary by the shed blood of Christ.

You follow him. Your doom is the same. Now, the glorious truth of our text is, Christian witness, the Spirit of God has come to help to do this.

To make the issue crystal clear. To cause people to understand the truth of the gospel. What it really is.

Men's need of the Savior. I shall never forget some years ago in London, Ontario, Canada. One of our students told me he had 75 fish on the stream.

75 people he was working on at the same time. One here and one there. One today and one tomorrow.

But 75 people for whom he was praying and to whom he had given a witness. And he spoke to me about this young man, all confused, and he said he's dabbled in Romanism and dabbled in Communism and dabbled in Mary Baker Eddyism and he went down the line and mentioned all kinds of problems. He said he's read them all and he's just so confused he doesn't know and yet he's hungry.

Would you talk to him? I said, yes, I would be delighted to. He said, here's his phone number. Well, I like the other fellow to take the initiative because he wants to.

So I phoned up this young man and said, student of ours, so-and-so has shared your burden with me and tells me that you might want to talk to me about it and I just want to say that if you ever want to give me a buzz, here's my phone number. So it's a receiver, definitely. I prayed for him and a week or two later that very afternoon I was concerned especially about him, sat at my desk and prayed, Lord, wilt thou convict this young man and create in his heart a real sense of need of the Savior? And the telephone rang and it was he.

He said, can I come to see you? Surely, when? I can see you this very afternoon. Come on. And he came over, sat down and began to talk about Romanism a bit, began to talk about Buddhism a bit, began to talk about materialism a bit, began to talk about this various business he'd been involved in.

And after he'd talked a while and I kept replying with the Word of God, a verse of Scripture here and a verse of Scripture there, I said, friend, would you like for me to take just a few minutes and explain to you the gospel from Genesis to Revelation? He said, most sincerely, yes, I would. So we sat there and I started with the Garden of Eden, with the sin in the garden, the fall, the explanation of the entrance of sin

into the human family. And I told him about the sacrifices of Cain and Abel and the sacrifice of the Passover in Egypt and the Day of Atonement.

I told him of the coming of our Savior and that he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and that the reason he died on the cross was for our sins, of paying the penalty, of satisfying the justice of God as a full and complete penalty for all our sins. And I went right on through and gave him verse after verse in the epistles, just sharing the wonderful gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And after doing this, it took me about 15 minutes to go from Genesis to Revelation.

That was a quick Bible study, wasn't it? And I haven't gotten that short since, as you've noticed. And as we talked together, I said, friend, would you like to bow and receive Jesus Christ as your Savior? He said, yes, sir, I would. Just like that.

I said, let's get on our knees. And we got on our knees together and he called on the Lord to save him. And as soon as he finished, the phone rang.

So we got up, I answered the phone, and a few moments put the receiver down, I said, friend, are you sane? Oh, he said, it's just as if an iron band has been snapped from my chest. And he sat there with the joy of the Lord in his face. Now, how does a man all read up on Romanism and Communism and Bakeriddeism and Joseph Smith and the crowd, how in the world does a fellow like that in about 30 minutes get all straightened out? Well, I've got one thing for sure to say tonight.

I'm not smart enough to do that. Because I battled with these fellows by the hour and left thinking I got nowhere. What happened on this occasion was that the Spirit of God took over.

And the one thing I used was the Word. And he told his friend, my student afterwards, he said, you know, every time I raised a question, Brother Gann gave me the Word. Just gave me a text out of the Bible, that's all.

Just gave me the Word. And the Spirit of God used the Word. And that fellow left that office gloriously triumphant in Christ.

It works. It works. We had a young man in Birmingham.

I say young man. He was married, had a family. And when we came in 1960, they asked me to give a spiritual life conference about the third week of the fall semester.

Since I was new, they said, we'll just turn you loose. And so I preached away and this man's wife was saved that very first conference, that very first semester we were in Birmingham and those meetings. Then she got concerned about her husband.

We had evening school. Brother Willie has referred to it. And this young man and his dear wife sat in that evening school about the third row down in that old chapel.

I could almost spit on them, you know, and I got my mouth too full while I was preaching. There they were right there in front. And I preached at that fellow every Monday night.

I somewhere had to get the gospel in my text. I knew he was there. He was a salesman, a traveling salesman on the road, but every Monday night he arranged his schedule so he was in Birmingham.

He was in that Bible study. And I kept preaching the gospel every Monday night, preaching the gospel every Monday night, preaching the gospel, and I almost pointed at the fellow, you know. You know, when you get a face that close, you just want to jump in the water and grab him.

Well, we kept inquiring and kept praying and asked the dear wife, well, how about Dale? Has he saved yet? Well, he's getting closer. He's warming up, but you know, it takes more than that. And we moved along toward Easter.

Here I was preaching at the fellow all year long. In fact, I believe it was the second year after we were in Birmingham. I preached all year long to the fellow, and every Monday night without exception down there.

Well, as we moved toward Easter, his dear wife said, he's getting really under conviction. You know how wives are. They can only say so much, you know.

You wives learned that yet? If you can't win them with the Word, 1 Peter 3 says, you win them without the Word, remember? By the manner of life of the wife and so on. All right. And so she kept living before him, kept praying, didn't nag, and didn't shove, and didn't push.

Wives are helpmates, but not shovers. You know, there's a difference. All right.

And she very discreetly took her place as a dear Christian wife. About Good Friday. It was Good Friday.

We'd learned about Wednesday that he was going on a trek all by himself. Kind of a strange affair. The fellow liked history regarding the Civil War.

Excuse me, the war between the states. And so he wanted to go up to Gettysburg, and he wanted to go over to Georgia, and he wanted to do this and that. So he was just going all by himself.

Well, we knew he was getting close to the kingdom if he was pulling a stunt like that. Why would a fellow leave his family for a couple of days around Easter time and go off all by himself? Well, he goes. We prayed.

On Good Friday afternoon, his telephone rang. Brother Gannett, this is Dale. Can I come to see you? Surely.

Come on. There wasn't anything more important in all the world on my desk that afternoon. Come on.

He came in. He said, I've come to get saved. He'd gone out to look at Gettysburg or wherever he'd been just to have time to think and to ponder and to face the issues.

And he'd realized all along that he needed Christ. And there in my office, we got down together, and old Dale called upon Jesus Christ to be saved. Now, who saved him? His wife? The neighbors? This preacher? None of us.

When the Holy Spirit comes, He will convince of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. Beloved, it's His ministry. You let Him do it.

He will use the testimony of your life to be sure. He will use the Word of God to be sure. But it is He who does it.

You have an unsaved husband tonight? The Spirit convinces of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. You have an unsaved member of your family? The Holy Spirit convinces of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. You got an unsaved neighbor? The Holy Spirit convinces.

Maybe he's 10,000 miles away. It doesn't matter. The Holy Spirit convinces.

One more quick one. We had a lady in Dallas, Texas, and this dear lady was in on a communion service one Lord's Day morning. And I stood up there before my church family and said, this is only for believers.

And if you've never received Jesus Christ as Savior, you let the cup pass by. This is not for you. How mean can a preacher get, you know? And she stomped out of that place and she said in the car, no young upstart preacher's ever going to tell me.

I can't take communion. That afternoon she got saved. Her neighbors who brought her, our Bible college students, led her to Christ.

Well, now her husband, a Roman Catholic husband, steeped in religion, but at the moment doing nothing about it and in the military. Well, her husband came home on leave and of course here this wife, all excited about the Lord, teaching the Bible to her children and all thrilled in the church every time the doors opened. She was writing her husband and telling him what happened and how she got saved and how exciting it was to be a Christian.

And boy, he thought he had a fanatic on his hands, sure enough, back home. So he came home and let her know straight out that he wasn't going to get saved. Well, she talked him into coming and talking to me in my study about being a Christian.

And for two hours we talked about the Roman Catholic faith and if you had been a begging man, I'd have told you, I'd bet you a dollar to nothing that I lost the case completely. I didn't see one ounce of interest or evidence. You know what his next move was? To ask Uncle Sam for an assignment as far away from his family as he could get.

Arabia, no less! To get away from his family. He would make this religion down his throat. And he got away for two or three years.

What did his dear wife do? She got everyone in the church to pray for her husband. Everybody had to pray for her husband. It's the most important thing in all the world.

Get my husband saved. So everybody had to pray for her husband. Great.

We kept praying. Five, two, three years, came back home. I'll come home if you don't talk religion.

Okay, come on. To make a long story short, I think it was five, seven years later. I'm not sure now.

At least some years later. They were down in Biloxi, Mississippi on New Year's Eve and went into a New Year's Eve service and called on Jesus Christ to save him. I've seen him since.

You ought to hear his testimony. What, the old fanatic? He just had to talk about the Lord the whole time. He's excited too about Jesus Christ.

How in the world did he get saved? The Holy Spirit convinced finally of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. And he told me later, those two hours we spent in your study meant a lot to me. He didn't admit it to me, not an ounce.

But God used the seed that was sown and he's using the seed you're sowing and he's using the seed you're watering and he's using the witness you're giving and he's honoring the prayers in that closet. The Spirit of God convinces. You let him do it.

And you trust him to do it. And maybe that's what God's waiting for to save that loved one of yours. Trust God to save yourself and make him a child.

More tomorrow morning. Until we go to tonight. Precious Lord, how wonderful is the gospel.

What a joy tonight to be saved. What a thrill to be able to sing as we did tonight. Know, our Heavenly Father, how we rejoice in that moment when the Spirit of God convinced us of sin, of righteousness, of judgment.

Lord, if there's one here in the service tonight who needed this message, give grace to that one right now to see the issue. To right now call upon Jesus Christ to be saved. While our heads are bowed, everyone praying, is there someone here tonight, not a Christian? You can be saved right now.

The Lord said to the woman at the well, if you'd asked me, I'd have given you living water. If you'd asked. Will you right now, very simply, from your heart, ask the Lord Jesus to save you.

Romans 10, 13, Paul puts it this way, For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Right now, with your head bowed, between you and God, I'd love to hear your testimony as you walk out the door. That's up to you.

But right now, let's settle it. Right now, call upon Jesus Christ. Pray this prayer, if you will.

Lord Jesus, I trust Thee to save me. Will you pray that? Lord Jesus, I trust Thee to save me. That's the prayer I prayed 41 years ago.

And God wonderfully saved me. Now thank Him. Thank Him for saving you, for He has.

Thank Him with all your heart. Precious Lord, make Thy Word exceedingly personal right now. Bring everyone in this house without Christ to a saving knowledge of the Senior.

And we join together for our loved ones tonight. Thou dost know them by name, those on our hearts for whom we pray. We ask Thee who has sent the Holy Spirit.

We ask Him to convince of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. We claim their salvation in the name of Christ. Dismiss us with Thy blessing.

Give us a good time of fellowship together. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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