

# “Full and Necessary Disclosure”

John 16:5–15

<sup>5</sup>“But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ <sup>6</sup>But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. <sup>7</sup>But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup>And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; <sup>9</sup>concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup>and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; <sup>11</sup>and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. <sup>12</sup>I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup>But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. <sup>14</sup>He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. <sup>15</sup>All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.” [NASB]

HOPE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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## I. Hearing

Sometimes the best thing about getting out of bed in the morning is the prospect of crawling back in that night. Okay... more than sometimes. It takes getting out of bed, to be able to crawl back into bed. Sometimes the best thing about a dear one going away, is the prospect of their return. The disciples had not yet grasped that there was something really good about Jesus leaving them. He has tried to tell them before, but now He goes into a little more explanation. The bottom line is it takes Jesus leaving, for Jesus to be able to come back.

But this is even better. When Jesus leaves, He will indeed come back. But first He will send the Holy Spirit. Two for One, you might say. Jesus leaves so that the Holy Spirit can come and Jesus can return. And when the Holy Spirit comes, He will make you so much more eager for Jesus to return. So if you think you're going to miss Jesus when He's gone, and if you think you'll be looking forward to His return, well you haven't seen anything yet! If you think you enjoy anticipating Jesus' return now, just wait until you know Jesus so much more than you do now! Then you'll be *pleading* with Him, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”<sup>Rev22.20</sup>

The disciples don't understand this yet, and they have not experienced it yet. Through them you and I *have*, but at this point in the Gospel narrative they had not yet experienced Jesus leaving and sending the Holy Spirit. So Jesus gave them a heads up, as it were. He is going to His Father in heaven, and if they were thinking about *Him* they would rejoice. But they are filled with sorrow because they don't understand the advantages to them of Jesus going to the Father.

They don't think about the advantage of having a friendly Advocate sitting so close to God that He can whisper into His ear whatever you want Him to do. They don't think about the advantage of having a Priest sitting so close to God, that merely by holding up His pierced hands or pointing to His spear-wounded side He can remind God that God has nothing against you anymore. Jesus Himself was pierced for our transgressions.<sup>Is53.5</sup> They don't think about the advantage of having the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit to comfort you, to convict the world, to guide you into all the truth you need to gain eternal life.

### A. Doctrine

These are all very great advantages. I must say I am glad God chose the Apostles and not me to experience the kind of sorrow they experienced, in order that we might live with the joy that is ours to experience. Nevertheless the doctrine we gain from this passage is this: *God has sent the Holy Spirit to help us fervently yearn for Christ's return.*

## II. Examining

Now before we go on, let us ask... do you fervently yearn for Christ's return? When was the last time you thought about Jesus rending the heavens and appearing with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God?<sup>1Th4.16</sup> When you awoke this morning did you look out the window, up at the sky, to see if—just if—there might be a holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband?<sup>Rev21.2</sup>

When you entered this room thirty minutes ago did your breath catch just a little because you thought that maybe—just maybe—right in the middle of this service you might suddenly find yourself flat on the floor, gazing upon One who appears as the Son of Man, who is called Faithful and True, who judges and wages war in righteousness, whose eyes are a flame of fire—burning in compassionate love for you, and in unrelenting vengeance against all those committed to persecuting you?

Or should we ask, do you fervently want to know and experience this One who declared Himself your great Prophet, sacrificed Himself as your great Priest, drew you to Himself as your great King? Or does it disturb you that He demands so much dependence upon Him for Truth, for Life, and for the Way in which He will have you to live?

### III. Investigating

#### A. Remembering His Mercy

I have an idea of how these questions might make you feel. The disciples were sorrowful in anticipating Jesus’ departure. We are sorrowful in not anticipating His return. There is good news: God has sent the Holy Spirit to help us fervently yearn for Christ’s return. He will do this in three ways. First, He will help you to remember God’s mercy. Let’s hear what Jesus says.

Put most simply: Jesus says <sup>7</sup>“it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.” This Helper is a great contrast to the “miserable comforters” who added heavy sandbags to Job’s burden of grief. <sup>Job16.2</sup> No, this Helper will never tire, He will be with you forever. <sup>Jn14.16</sup> Jesus said this “Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” <sup>14.26</sup>

Did Jesus promise that nothing can snatch you out of the Father’s hand? <sup>Jn10.28</sup> You will forget that promise... but the Helper will cause you to remember it at precisely the right moment. Did Jesus tell you that if you desire to live godly you will be persecuted? <sup>2Ti3.12</sup> You will forget that promise... but the Helper will cause you to remember it at precisely the right moment.

Did Jesus tell you that there is nothing in all creation that will separate you from His love? <sup>Ro8.39</sup> You will forget that promise... but the Helper will cause you to remember it at precisely the right moment. Did Jesus tell you that if you sin, you have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous? <sup>1Jn2.1</sup> You will forget that promise... but the Helper will cause you to remember it at precisely the right moment.

Did Jesus tell you the day is coming soon when you will have no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying, no more back pain? <sup>Rev21.4</sup> You will forget that promise... but the Helper will cause you to remember it at precisely the right moment. Did Jesus call you “friend”? <sup>Jn15.5</sup> You will forget that promise, and you will think He has it in for you, and you will think your sins too great and too persistent for Him to persevere in His love for you. But the Helper will cause you to remember the promise at precisely the right moment.

Did Jesus tell you that you *will* be fruitful because you are a branch receiving life from Himself, who is the Vine? You will forget that promise. You will look about you and think nothing productive will ever come of you. You will lament at the hurtful, stifling impact you’ve had on your family. You will begin to play with providence and start asking “What if I had just...” You will panic at the clock hands spinning faster and the remaining minutes disappearing quicker. But the Helper will cause you to remember the promise at precisely the right moment.

### ***B. Recounting the Covenant***

The disciples were sorrowful in anticipating Jesus’ departure. We are sorrowful in not anticipating His return. There is good news: God has sent the Holy Spirit to help us fervently yearn for Christ’s return. He will help you to remember God’s mercy. Second, He will help you recount His covenants.

He will convict the world concerning sin, because they do not believe in Christ.<sup>v9</sup> In 1970 the Temptations (ironically) recorded the hit “Ball of Confusion (That’s What the World is Today—hey, hey)” And the band played on. The world *is* a ball of confusion, and *has* been ever since Adam and Eve submitted to the temptations of the serpent. What happened? Eve unwittingly and Adam deliberately forgot the covenant God had made with them. The world is still in confusion today because mankind either ignorantly or deliberately neglects the covenants God made with the first Adam and with the last Adam, namely Christ.

But God has sent the Holy Spirit to help you recount His covenants. You, now, can freely and eagerly recount the Covenant of Works God made with Adam and in him with all his descendants. Knowing Christ, and embracing His covenant promises, takes the confusion out of understanding God and the world.

In simple terms, God gave Adam the promise of eternal life—contingent upon Adam’s continuing in perfect, hearty obedience to God. At the same time, God promised eternal death, upon any disobedience whatsoever. These promises were perfectly sensible and good, coming from the Almighty God. After all, He created Adam and Eve after His image in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. For them to deface that image by rebellion against Him can only bring the sentence due for such treason.

Now what the world hates most about that message, and the reason the world tries to hide and ignore it, is God made that covenant with Adam—*for all his descendants*. So if we’re stuck in Adam, we’re stuck in Adam’s treason and the sentence of death that comes with it. Of course the world is a ball of confusion with 6 billion people running around trying to be gods themselves in order to avoid admitting and submitting to the True and Only God with whom we really have to do. Jesus has spoken and now we have no excuse.<sup>Jn15.22</sup>

Not to believe in Jesus is to believe in Adam—albeit by a different name: your own. Adam failed you; no hope there. The world is blind to this, but the Holy Spirit convicts the world concerning sin... the Holy Spirit has enabled you who believe, to see and understand the perilous estate of those who do not believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit causes you to remember when *you* were in that estate yourself. He convicts the world concerning sin.

And he will convict the world concerning righteousness, because He goes to the Father, and we no longer behold Him.<sup>v10</sup> The Holy Spirit causes you to remember the length and width and height and depth of God’s love that brought you out of that sinful and miserable estate and into an estate of salvation by the Redeemer, Jesus Christ... with whom God made another covenant.

In that Covenant of Grace, Christ himself offers to God the perfect obedience that Adam did not, that you have not, and that you *will* not offer to God. Christ offers that obedience *for* you. Furthermore, Christ offers to God full satisfaction for the promise God gave regarding disobedience, namely eternal death. Christ suffered that promised curse upon the cross and in the tomb. Christ suffered that curse of death *for* you.

Now, how is it possible for Christ to arise from the dead and ascend to heaven to be at the Father’s right hand, unless Christ *is* and *did* everything in perfect accordance with the Father’s will? The only thing the Father ever had against the Son was *your* sins and *mine*. The Son satisfied God’s anger against those sins... completely and perfectly. So even in Christ’s death, God was perfectly pleased with His Son. Christ’s resurrection and ascension into heaven is proof of this.<sup>1Ti3.16</sup> God accepts *no one* into heaven with whom He is displeased.

The world is convicted, then, that the only righteousness which pleases the Father is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. So... if you want to get to heaven, over on the other shore, don’t just stay out of the way of the blood-stained bandit. Get covered with the Blood of the Son of Righteousness. If you believe in Jesus, you believe that His obedience accounted to you is perfectly pleasing to God and gives you a full title to heaven.<sup>Ro4.25</sup> No confusion there. Only perfect justice, perfect righteousness, and perfect mercy. He will convict the world concerning righteousness, because He goes to the Father, and we no longer behold Him.

And again, He will convict the world of judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.<sup>v11</sup> When Jesus on the cross said “It is finished,” that signaled the completion of the transaction in which He took your sins and gave you His righteousness.

The only thing that makes this world a ball of confusion for you now, is when you forget the completeness of this transaction. Or when you remember it, but neglect to apply it to yourself. The Holy Spirit causes you to recount the application of this covenant promise to yourself and to all believers.

He will convict the world of judgment, because through demonstrations of forgiveness, you and the world will see that the power of the devil is broken. God will crush Satan under your feet, and He does so through your forgiveness.<sup>Ro16.20</sup> We are no longer yoked to condemnation from God, and thus we are no longer yoked to condemning one another.

### **C. Relaxing in His Love**

The disciples were sorrowful in anticipating Jesus’ departure. We are sorrowful in not anticipating His return. There is good news: God has sent the Holy Spirit to help us

fervently yearn for Christ’s return. He will help you to remember God’s mercy and recount His covenants. And third, He will help you to relax in His Love.

How do you relax in His love? You listen to His love-words. You sing His love-songs. You speak to Him in love-language. You receive His love-gifts. You share His love-gifts and bear fruits of love.

There is a lot of stuff you can listen to in the world. In the final verses of today’s passage, Jesus gives us a diagnostic regarding what we listen to. It is a diagnostic to help you discern whether what you hear are His love-words and His love-songs or not. The Holy Spirit will help you. The diagnostic is simple: does it glorify Christ? Jesus promises that He will disclose to you the things that honor Him. He will give you full disclosure of everything you need for relaxing in His love. These are His love-words.

Nothing honors Him so exquisitely as His mercy to you. He prayed, <sup>Jn17.1</sup>“Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, <sup>2</sup>even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.” Giving eternal life to you brings glory, honor, and praise to Him.

By His mercy you are born again. By His mercy you are justified—given the title to heaven. By His mercy you are adopted as a child of God. By His mercy you are sanctified—made fit for heaven.

The Holy Spirit will guide you into the truth. He will do this through the preaching of the Word of God. <sup>1Pe1.12</sup> He will do it through the grace of the Sacraments. He will do it through the discipling of the Church. Your Loving God does this for you for one purpose: that you may honor Him and relax in His love forever.

You are not satisfied with how little you relax in His love today. The Holy Spirit is helping you yearn for Christ’s return, because when He does return, your relaxation in His love will be through and through with nothing disturbing you.

#### **IV. Receiving**

The disciples were sorrowful in anticipating Jesus’ departure. We are sorrowful in not anticipating His return. There is good news: God has sent the Holy Spirit to help us fervently yearn for Christ’s return. He will help you to remember God’s mercy, to recount His covenants, and to relax in His Love. The more you remember, recount, and relax, the more you will yearn for His return.

This is not a yearning filled with angst. This is a yearning filled with confident expectation... this is a yearning that we might call *eager* anticipation. The more you know Christ, the more you will yearn for His return. So ask the Holy Spirit to help you know Christ. The more you yearn for Christ’s return, the more you will press into knowing Him. So ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with yearning for Christ’s return.

That, after all, is exactly what He is here for!