

Sorrow to Joy

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Date: 19 March 2023

Preacher: Roy Davidson

[0 : 00] Well let's pray and get stuck into John chapter 16. Our Father in heaven, we do pray this morning as we sit under your word that you'd encourage us and rebuke us and correct us and train us in righteousness that we might be thoroughly equipped to live in your world for your glory.

We pray in Jesus' name, Amen. Well my question to you this morning is, what do you think of the world? So do you think, well that's the question, talk to the person next to you, what do you think about the world?

So before we get much further, what do we mean by the world or this world and what is the character of this world? So have a yarn to the person, what do you think about the world, this world? Okay.

Well I trust you've sorted out all the world's problems, working out what the world is and that kind of stuff this morning. The world, the idea of this world and the world, that sort of phrase, that sort of quick phrase, comes up in John's Gospel over 252 times.

It's one of the major themes that comes up in John's Gospel. And the question is then, what does John mean when he speaks about the world? Or this world? So at one level the world is the created order, right?

[1 : 19] That's what it is, it's the place that God made. In chapter 1 verse 9 he speaks about that God is the one who made the world. But that's not the predominant way that John speaks of the world.

John speaks of the world in terms of being capable of doing things. So the world is not capable of knowing him. The world is able to have its sins taken away in chapter 1 verse 28.

And the world is able to be saved. Jesus comes into the world to save the world. The world is made up of people, in chapter 3 verse 19, whose works are evil.

And into this world Jesus comes. John chapter 6 verse 16. The world is made up of nations of people. And we read that while the world was created good, the world is in a mess because of sin.

Everything is frustrated, not functioning the way it should do. It's been subjected to frustration by the will of the one who made it, in Romans chapter 8.

[2 : 26] So when John speaks of the world or this world, he's speaking about an order or a system made up of people that are not submitting to the rule of God.

That's the idea of the world in John's Gospel. It's a system, a regime of people called, who are sometimes called, we are called out of the world.

Believers are called out of the world. The world is both corporate and individual. individual. It's an organism, an organisation made up of individuals, all corrupted by sin.

That's the idea of the world. It's a kingdom under the rule, under the influence of the evil one, Satan. So both the individual people in the world, and so the world in general, is facing the wrath of God for rebellion against Him.

And all those who are caught up in the world are blind to the things of God. All those who are caught up in the world are living in opposition to God. And those who are in it, are living in it as they are their own king, in defiance of God's authorities.

[3 : 39] There are only two kingdoms. There is the kingdom of this world, or this present age, as Paul speaks about in Galatians chapter 1, or there is the kingdom of God.

There are the only two kingdoms that there are. Jesus says in John chapter 18, that His kingdom is not of this world, not of the character of this world, for His kingdom is from above.

And right now, as we live this side of the cross, right, the kingdom of God has come, but it is still opposed by the people who live in this world, rejecting His authority.

But one day, the kingdom of God will come fully and finally, and conquer all evil, triumphing over all evil. And it's this idea that then brings us to this passage this morning, in John chapter 16.

Because, we see that Jesus promises to send His Spirit to convict the world, in verse 8.

[4 : 43] And we see that Jesus has overcome the world, at the end of our passage, in verse 33. And as we come to this passage, we see what Jesus says.

Just pick it up. I do not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. Now, what has He just said? So, Jesus just told His disciples, in chapter 15, that the world will hate them.

The world will despise them. It hated Jesus first, it will hate you too. You're not of the world, you've become Jesus' people, you've come out of the world. They are not greater than the Master, so to expect opposition and hatred for the world.

In fact, when they kick you out of the synagogues, when they kill you in my name, they'll think they're doing the very work of God. But now, He's going to go to the Father, and He's told them what to expect, and the Holy Spirit will come.

The Spirit of truth, the truth, the helper, will come. But first, Jesus must go. Right? So, we'll plug in now, to the coming of the Spirit.

[5 : 54] Jesus has got to go, in verses 4 to 7. And in His going, none of the disciples are asking Him where He's going. Well, that seems strange, doesn't it? He said, well, hang on a second, but now I'm going to Him who sent me, and none of you asks me, where are you going?

But, haven't they asked Him already, where He's going? Didn't they ring a bell somewhere, He's actually asked, they've asked Him before? I mean, back in chapter 13, Peter asked John, and then Jesus told them, that where He's going, they cannot come.

And back in chapter 14, verse 6, Jesus speaks about being, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father, but by Me. They have asked Him where He's going. So, what's going on here?

The disciples are pretty concerned, that He's leaving them. And it seems that, they're more concerned, about being left without Jesus, than where He's going.

And where is He going? He's going to the Father, but He's going to go to the Father, via the cross. You're going to the Father, they know that. But they don't know, that He's going to the Father, via the cross.

[7 : 10] So, instead of, being concerned about His suffering, they are worried about, their loss, of not having their, Master around. And yet, in a display of extraordinary grace, He tells them that, it's to their advantage that He goes, because, it's better for them that He goes, for then He will send the Helper, the Spirit of Truth, to live with them forever.

And not only that, it's their advantage that He goes, because, without Him going, the Spirit cannot come. And if the Spirit doesn't come, they won't have any success, in their role, of being God's, missionaries, bearing witness to Jesus, in the days ahead.

So, the Spirit comes, we see there in verse 8 to 11. And when He comes, He will convict the world, concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment.

He will convict the world, and, in saying He'll convict the world, we both mean, collectively, corporately, He'll convict the world, right? And, personally, He'll convict the people, in the world, of the world.

And so, you've got to ask the question, what does it mean, to convict the world? Well, there's two main ways, to understand the word, convict, isn't there? At least two. Firstly, convicting, has the idea, of bringing a person, to the point, of recognising their guilt.

[8 : 39] That's the first idea. They're convinced, of something, that they, were not convicted of, or convinced of before, but now they become, aware of it. That's, being convicted, of something.

Secondly, there's the idea, of, penalising, or punishing, someone, for the wrongdoing, for being guilty, of something. So, the Spirit comes, and the Spirit, will convict.

Personally, corporately. That's what he will do. And, what will he convict, the world of? Well, there's three things there.

Sin, righteousness, and judgment. So, what about sin? What is it about sin, that the world, will be convicted of?

Well, the answer is given to us, in verse 9, that the world, does not believe in Jesus. There's the answer, right? You can see it there, black and white. But, what doesn't it believe, about Jesus?

[9 : 42] Well, the world doesn't believe, that Jesus is the Christ, in the first instance, the Lord, the Saviour. The world is, on about its own, defiant rebellion, against God, the rightful Lord, of the universe.

The world at large, is made up of individuals, who do not rightly, do not honour, Jesus as Lord. And, left to itself, the world, and everyone in it, is not upset, by this rebellion.

And, either the Spirit, will convict, some, that they are sinners, and then, convinced of this, they'll do something, about it, or, or, the Spirit of Truth, will prosecute, the world, as guilty of their sin, and being convicted, of the sin, both corporate, and individual, they'll have no defence, in the presence, of the Holy God.

The lawyer, will convict them. Secondly, righteousness. Now, this one's a bit harder. What is it about, righteousness, that the world, will be convicted of?

Have a look at it, what's it say, in verse 10? That Jesus, is going to the Father, and you will see me, no longer.

[11 : 07] That's what he says. Now, this is pretty hard, to get a hold of. The idea, is, negative, isn't it? To be judged, to have your, righteousness, exposed.

Yeah? But isn't, righteousness, a good thing, to have exposed? You know, if you're righteous, that'd be good, to be exposed. And, what is it, with Jesus, going to the Father?

Well, in the context, of John's Gospel, the Jewish authorities, hold that Jesus, is not righteous, by their standards. Yeah? They think, that he, was a blasphemer, and they persecuted him, because, they hold, that he is worthy of death, because of his blasphemy, claiming to be God.

By their standards, of righteousness, Jesus, is a sinner. But, if Jesus, goes to the Father, he is truly righteous, blameless, sinless, he is vindicated, and, they will be convinced, that they were wrong, they'll be convicted, that they were wrong.

So, in the first instance, it's Jesus, is righteous. That's what they'll be convicted of, because Jesus, is going to the Father. But, I think it's more than that. The Holy Spirit, will show, that the world's, righteousness, is actually, unrighteous, is wrong, in the first instance.

[12 : 46] The Jewish leaders, will see that, their hope for holiness, in zeal for the law, is faulty, and frail, and broken, and misplaced. See, the Jewish leaders, will see that, the things that they have put, their trust in, in their stands of righteousness, were wrong.

Remember, Paul the Pharisee, Philippians chapter 3, circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law, or a Pharisee, as a zeal, a persecutor, of the church, as to righteousness, under the law, blameless.

However, convicted, by the Holy Spirit, he goes on to say, but whatever gain I had, I counted as loss, for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss, because of the surpassing worth, of knowing Christ, my Lord.

Legalistic, religious, religious righteousness, has not worked, in fact, is, unrighteousness.

I mean, God's verdict on Israel, at times in the Old Testament, was that their righteousness, was as of filthy rags, polluted garments, Isaiah 64, verse 6.

[14 : 06] In Jeremiah chapter 7, we learn that those, claiming that they had, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, relying on the religious systems, to save them, crank their hand, or do the routine, but have no heart in it, would save them, preserve them, from the wrath of God, and they were shown, to be absolutely wrong, about that.

So, left to itself, the world, and everyone in it, is quietly, comfortably, holding on, to their own standards, of righteousness, which is terribly lacking.

I mean, you hear it, don't you? I'm certain, that person's gone to heaven, they were a good person, they're in a better place now, that's the standard of righteousness, our world has, compared to some, they weren't that bad, so, they are okay.

Whether it's done, by religious observance, the Jew in the first instance, rejecting the fulfillment, of all their scriptures, pointing towards, the Lord Jesus Christ, or the world, in its various systems, seeking to be holy, whether by doing good works, or any other form, of religious observance, either the spirit, will convict some, that their ideas of hope, their standard of righteousness, is actually unrighteous, and convicted of that, they will do something about it, or, the spirit of truth, will prosecute the world, because their standards of righteousness, are actually unrighteous, and convicted of that, the world, both corporate, and individual, will have no defense, before the presence, of the holy God, who will judge them.

The lawyer, will convict them. The spirit of truth, will convict them. The paraclete, will convict them.

[16 : 08] Well thirdly, finally judgment. What is the judgment, that the world, will be convicted of?

Have a look at verse 11. That the ruler, of the world, is judged. The upstart, rule of the world, is Satan, who has bewitched people, into believing that, the lies, that there's no judgment.

The ruler, who pretends, he's got away with it all, from plotting, and having the rule of the world, crucify the Christ. But he's completely wrong.

With the resurrection of Jesus, and Jesus going to the Father, and sending the spirit, the devil, and all those, who are of the world, are under the judgment of God, are guilty, are cast down, into the lake of fire. Evil, is evil, and Jesus, triumphs, over death, and the ruler, of the world, is condemned.

Now left to itself, the world, and everyone in it, lives in denial, or ignorance, that Satan, has been judged, and is defeated, by the cross of Jesus. And either the spirit, will convict some, that this is actually true, Satan is defeated, and convicted of that, they will do something about it.

- [17 : 31] Or, the spirit of truth, will prosecute the world, as guilty of being of the world, and so, following the rule of the world, and being convicted of this truth, they will be condemned, corporately, and individually, and have no defense, before the presence, of the Holy God.

The lawyer, will convict them. Which then brings us, to consider what, the convicting work, of the Holy Spirit does.

And one, absolutely key outcome, is conversion. Unless the Holy Spirit's at work, in the world, no one, no one in this room, no one in the world, would recognize their sins, their faulty righteousness, or the defeat of the devil.

And no one would do anything about it. And by doing something about it, I mean this, bend the knee, to Jesus. Confess, that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.

Unless the Spirit's at work, no one, no one, will submit to Jesus, as Lord. The work of the Holy Spirit, is to bring people, to repentance, and faith, in the Lord Jesus.

- [18 : 58] To see that the cross, in the human standards, is so, futile, and weak, and crazy, is actually, God's wisdom, and power, for salvation.

If you've come, to submit to Jesus Lord, and rely on Him, to make you righteous, before God, then the Holy Spirit, has been, powerfully at work, in you. Doing a miracle, of bringing you, from death, to life.

Transferring me, from the kingdom, of darkness, and the devil, to the kingdom, of light, and the son, of light, whom God loves. And let me give you, some more comfort.

If you are, ever convicted, of sin, which, I hope, is often, then, the Holy Spirit, is at work, in me, in me, in you.

If you are, conscious, of your own efforts, and your own, righteousness, that they are, fail, and frailty, and can never, make you right, with God, well then, take comfort, God's Holy Spirit, is at work in you, in me.

- [20 : 31] If you are, convinced, and convicted, that the world, and the rule, this world, he is judged, and defeated, at the cross, then rejoice, knowing that the Holy Spirit, of God, is at work, in you.

Because that is, the wisdom of God, that you've understood. And it means that, then, in this passage, the disciples, can go about their work, proclaiming, the gospel of Jesus, that he is Lord, and that he is the one, who is saved from sin.

And that they are not, laboring in vain, when they do that, because God, by his mercy, is working, to their advantage. The paralytic comes, without him, no one would be convicted, no one would be conscious, of their need, for salvation, of their rejection, of God, of their sin.

And no one would confess, that Jesus is Lord. For it's only by the Holy Spirit, that anyone, is able to say, that Jesus is Lord. 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 3.

So the Holy Spirit comes, the Spirit of Truth comes, and we see in verses 12 to 15, that not only does he bring conviction, but he brings also knowledge.

- [21 : 53] Verses 12 to 15. The disciples are going to be led, into all truth. 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 truth.

For not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak, and will declare to you, the things that are to come. He will glorify me, and he will take, what is mine, and declare it to you.

All the Father has his mind, therefore I said, that he will take, what is mine, and declare it to you. The disciples will be led, into all knowledge, not all knowledge, in the whole wide world, like how a nuclear power station, works necessarily, but all the truth, that God needs them to know, about the kingdom, they will know, and be able to explore, and write down.

And it will be accurate, because what they hear, will be from the one, who speaks only the truth, from God himself, and Jesus, as the word of God, will announce it, told the disciples, they can know all things, because Jesus knows all things, up in verse 30, we'll get there.

If you want to know, the truth that matters, then it's here in the scriptures, all the truth, we need to know, as the disciples, moved by the spirit, wrote down what they heard, which comes from both, the father and the son, they've written down, his word, for us to know, so that we can know, what we need to know.

[23 : 22] This knowledge we have, puts us in a very, privileged position, in the world. But we'll press on through, the rest of the passage, fairly quickly.

The little while there, is the coming of the cross. In Jesus' style, he goes on to tell them, what he's already said, but they've failed to grasp, in a little while.

He's teaching them about the things, which are about to happen, in a little while, he's going to be crucified, at the cross, and they won't see him, and then, in a little while, they'll see him again, after the resurrection.

And their sorrow, will be turned to joy, you see there in verses 19 to 23. After seeing Jesus dead, and buried, they'll be mourning, and wailing, and very upset by it, but having risen from the grave, their pain, will turn to joy.

And they'll see Jesus again, and no one's going to take away, that joy. For the resurrection age, will have begun. Joy, I believe, will be fantastic.

[24 : 32] They will finally get, what Jesus has been teaching them. They'll finally understand, what God's been working towards, since the beginning of the Old Testament, and even before the creation, of the world.

The hour of clarity comes. And we see the clarity there, in verses 25 to 28. Jesus has been using figures of speech, all the time, as you've been teaching them.

You can think of some of the figures of speech, he's spoken to them, maybe the temple. He said, you know, I've destroyed this temple, and I'll raise it in three days. Pithy sayings, but saying them openly, but they've been, sort of, hidden, the meaning of them all.

It seems that, this day is a day, when the Holy Spirit's come, for it's in then, that Jesus will speak to them, clearly. And it's a time, when left in this world, when Jesus has left this world, to be with the Father.

That's this day, this hour, he's talking about here, in verses 26 and following, 25 and following. They'll finally understand, the things rightly.

[25 : 34] The things that have been, hinted to in the past, and so far in Jesus' life. They'll understand, the idea of the temple, being Jesus' body. They'll get that. They'll understand, that he is the true bread from heaven, that gives life to the world, in chapter 6.

They'll understand, what it means for one man, to suffer for the people, rather than the whole nation, to perish, in John chapter 11. And they'll understand, he's the true vine, chapter 14. He's the true and faithful Israel.

They'll get those sort of things. But belief, what is the nature, of their belief, in verses 29 to 33. Right now, before the cross, they say they get it.

They recognise, that Jesus comes from God, that his place of origin, was God the Father. But still, Jesus questions, their faith, in verses 31 to 33.

So Jesus says to them, do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and leave me alone. They'll abandon Jesus.

[26 : 43] In his hour of need, when he needs them the most, they'll abandon him. He tells them to watch, he'll tell them to watch, but they'll abandon him. As they, must live, as all disciples, must live in the world, the world is, hostile to Jesus.

And, they will suffer, in this world, as they live in it. They do not belong, to this world, they belong to another. And we can have confidence then, that even though the world, may think, it has conquered Jesus, that could not be further, from the truth.

See what he says there, verse 33, I've said these things to you, that in me, you may have peace. In the world, you'll have tribulation. But take heart, I've overcome the world.

Sure they will suffer in the world, sure there will be tribulation, but Jesus, has conquered the world. Even though the world, might think it has conquered Jesus, Jesus has conquered the world.

He has, the victory in battle. Even, before it was had, its way with Jesus, Jesus knows, he has conquered the world.

[28 : 01] And as Jesus comes to the Father, he paves the way, for the world to come to the Father. For in the sending of the Spirit, there will be a great awakening, of people from all walks of life. From people who've lived, self-directed, self-authority, rebellion against God, sin.

From people who are thinking, that they have lived righteously, but actually is wrongly. From people who think, that the things of the devil, that rule the world, are good. God will bring to repentance, and faith in Jesus.

People from all kinds, of backgrounds. Who bring them to, recognise, and know Jesus Lord, have forgiveness of sins. And a true righteousness, under the good rule, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And they'll come to the Father. And it will happen, by God sending his Holy Spirit, and people, who will proclaim, the saving Lordship of Jesus.

That's how it will happen. And in a little while, not sure how long, that little while will be, we will see Jesus again. When everyone eventually, comes to the Father.

[29 : 14] Now for some, it will be a time, of joy and gladness, having been brought, to personal conviction, of sin, and so faith in Jesus.

Recognising and believing, that he is the Christ, the Son of God, and so having life in his name. But for others, they will see the Father. And it will be a terrible time, of final conviction, as they come under, the righteous wrath of God, for remaining in ignorance, and rebellion against him, all their lives.

the question is, which way, do we live? Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we thank you for sending your Holy Spirit, your Holy Spirit, to convict us of sin, to convict us of righteousness, and to convict us of judgment.

We do pray, your Holy Spirit, will continue to do his work in us. And we ask in your mercy, that your Holy Spirit, will continue to do his work in the world, as we proclaim the things of Christ.

That we might see your kingdom grow, and many come out of this world, and into the kingdom of your Son, whom you love. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.