

International Bible Lessons Commentary
John 16:1-15

King James Version

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, March 15, 2015

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, March 15, 2015**, is from **John 16:1-15**. Please Note: Some churches will only study **John 16:4b-15**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses the questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the **International Bible Lessons Commentary** website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

John 16:1-15

(John 16:1) These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

A true disciple of Jesus will follow Him wherever He leads. These verses do not apply only to the original 12 disciples

of Jesus, but to all who will seek to follow Him throughout world history. A disciple of Jesus will be an imitator of God (Ephesians 5:1). He will “walk in newness of life,” “walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit,” “walk by faith, not by sight,” “walk in the light as he himself is in the light,” “walk just as he walked,” “walk according to his commandments,” and “walk in the truth” (Romans 6:4; Romans 8:4; 2 Corinthians 5:7; 1 John 1:7; 1 John 2:6; 2 John 1:6; 3 John 1:3). By telling His disciples what to expect in the future, Jesus could build up their faith and prevent them from stumbling as they walked (see also John 8:12; John 11:9-10; John 12:35). If His disciples stumbled, they might fall and actually turn from their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

(John 16:2) They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

Jesus promised to give His followers the Holy Spirit, and among other things the Holy Spirit would guide them and empower them through times of persecution – not protect them from hardship and persecution, but help them through such times. This promise is given to all of Jesus’ followers throughout all time. The Holy Spirit will help believers keep walking through events that might cause them to stumble and hurt them and others spiritually. There have been times throughout history when

“religious” people have persecuted the true followers of Jesus by excluding them from fellowship and even murdering them. They have even worshiped and called out the name of their god as they have murdered Christians and others. Some in synagogues and churches have persecuted, have excluded, and even murdered those who have tried to follow Christ according to the Scriptures.

(John 16:3) And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

By telling Christians what they could expect in this world from following Him and walking as He walked in a hostile world, Jesus could strengthen Christians in their faith and total trust in Him rather than have them stumble with the thought that He gave them false promises of security and prosperity in the world. The reason unbelievers persecuted Jesus and will persecute all of His followers is because they know neither the Father nor the Son, the one who makes the Father known (See also John 1:18; John 5:22-23; John 8:19; John 10:30; John 14:6).

(John 16:4) 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.

No follower of Jesus Christ who reads the Bible should be surprised when hardship and persecution come as a direct result of trying to live faithful to Jesus Christ, of trying to obey Him in all things, of trying to love and serve others as He loved and served others; for Jesus warned us in advance that we would suffer if we followed Him as He directed. When Jesus was with them in the flesh, he could more easily keep His disciples from stumbling because He could physically stand between His persecutors and His disciples. He could easily answer the questions of both His persecutors and His disciples. Jesus was their Lord and Teacher, and the verbal and physical attacks of those who did not know the Father or the Son would fall first upon Him. After Jesus was crucified, the attacks would naturally fall upon Jesus' followers as the physical and visible representatives of Jesus and His teaching.

(John 16:5) But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

The revelation of Jesus and the Bible reveal and teach more and more as God's people are prepared and ready to receive more and new truths over a period of time: this is technically called "progressive revelation," as new truths are revealed throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament. After Jesus revealed much about himself and His mission, He revealed even more as His death and

departure neared. The Holy Spirit that Jesus would send His disciples would reveal more truths and create the New Testament Church through the disciples. At the time, His disciples might not have known to ask, “Where are you going?” Or, they were focused too much on their own needs when they learned that they would lose Jesus’ presence to think to ask the question about where Jesus was going.

(John 16:6) But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

Sorrow filled their hearts to learn that Jesus was going to leave them; as a consequence of being His disciples, they would also lose the fellowship of those in the synagogue, and they would also be persecuted and murdered and those killing them would think that they were serving God in the process of persecuting them. This happened to the first martyr, Stephen. And Saul led a group of persecutors until he met Jesus and became the Apostle Paul.

(John 16:7) 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.

Even though the coming events would bring them much sorrow, and even though their fearful anticipation of Jesus leaving them filled them with sorrow, Jesus assured them

that the results would be for their own good, for their benefit. Jesus had to go away before He could send the Advocate to them as their “Defense Attorney,” as their Helper, Comforter, and Counselor. Jesus had to die an atoning death for them so they could be forgiven and cleansed from their sin and prepared to receive the Spirit of holiness and truth.

(John 16:8) And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

The Holy Spirit is an Advocate or Defense Attorney for the one who follows Jesus as His disciple. The Holy Spirit is a Prosecuting Attorney to the world or to the one who follows the ruler of this world and the world’s way of life. The world is wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment; and the Holy Spirit will work to convince an unbeliever that they are wrong in order to lead them to saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will work on the conscience of the unbeliever, who will harden their conscience (and perhaps persecute Christians and the Church) or repent and turn to Christ for salvation.

(John 16:9) Of sin, because they believe not on me;

Those of this world do not believe in Jesus, who reveals the Father and who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The Holy Spirit in the believer's way of life and words, and in the Church, proves the world is wrong; especially when those of the world persist in unbelief and rebellion against God in spite of overwhelming evidence and the work of the Holy Spirit to lead them to believe and repent.

(John 16:10) Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

The world is wrong about righteousness because living rightly according to the commands and teachings of Jesus is a righteous way to live. Since all have sinned, no one can be righteous apart from the work of Christ on the cross and accepting Christ as Savior and Lord. When God raised Christ from the dead, God proved that all Jesus said and did was right and righteous. The Holy Spirit will help believers teach these facts about Christ to the world. The world may think righteous living does not matter, but the world is wrong and there is a coming judgment.

(John 16:11) Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners from their sins and the just punishment that all sinners deserve. The Holy Spirit uses the truth of God's word to lead sinners to saving faith in Jesus Christ as Christians testify to Christ by their life and words. God condemned Satan, the ruler of this world, for his rebellion. Sinners can choose to follow

the way of the condemned ruler of this world or sinners can choose to follow Jesus Christ in the way of salvation that the Holy Spirit shows them through the truth as the Spirit works on their conscience.

(John 16:12) I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Jesus could have told His disciples all of the details about His arrest, flogging, crucifixion, death, and burial prior to His resurrection, but Jesus knew that in their present state of anxiety they could not bear to learn these facts. He could have explained the meaning and purpose of His atoning sacrifice for sinners, but Jesus decided that the Holy Spirit could remind them of what He had taught them that they did not understand at the time and reveal new truths after He ascended into heaven.

(John 16:13) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

The fact that Jesus is “the Truth” and the Holy Spirit is “the Spirit of Truth” indicates that when Jesus’ earthly work in the flesh is done that the Holy Spirit will come and carry on the work of God the Father and Jesus, the redeeming and sanctifying work of God through the Son

and the Spirit on earth. Jesus walked beside His disciples when He walked with them on earth. The Holy Spirit walks with Jesus' disciples from inside of them, and the Spirit teaches them from within them. He would also teach Jesus' disciples more about the future (see especially the Book of Revelation).

(John 16:14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

The Father glorified the Son and the Son glorified the Father by revealing the truth about each other to the disciples and all who would come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. As the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit would glorify Jesus Christ by revealing the truth about Him inside believers; the Spirit will help them understand and apply the Bible to their lives. He would keep teaching truth as Jesus taught and consistent with what Jesus taught when He walked on earth.

(John 16:15) All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father, and the Father loves Jesus and has given Him everything. The Holy Spirit will take what Jesus has and declare to Jesus' disciples everything that they need to know about Him as the Truth and the things that are to come.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What can keep us from stumbling?
2. What might you say to someone who said that they became a Christian because they wanted security and all of their daily needs and requests to be met by Jesus?
3. Why do some people ridicule and persecute Christians?
4. Why was it an advantage or benefit for Jesus to go away?
5. What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do in the world?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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