

Pentecost

YOU CAN HANDLE THE TRUTH

John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

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Analysis by Paige G. Evers

26 [Jesus said,] "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. 27 You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. 16:4b "I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. 5 But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; 11 about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. 12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

DIAGNOSIS: We Can't Bear the Truth

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *Silent*

The disciples remain silent as they listen to Jesus' long talk in the upper room. He says he must go "to him who sent me" but they can't bring themselves to ask where he is going (v. 5). They are overwhelmed with sorrow (v. 6). Their grief has practically glued their mouths shut. They have nothing to say.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *Survival*

The disciples' silence stems from the sorrow in their hearts at hearing what will happen to Jesus, but there's something else, too. They are worried what will happen to them. They might proclaim loyalty to Jesus now, but once he is arrested their lack of faith will dictate their actions, just as Jesus predicted (see 13:36-38). Fear and unbelief are at the root of their sorrow.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *Sinful*

As his speech continues, Jesus warns that the way that the disciples and the world have understood "sin and righteousness and judgment" (v. 8) is about to be turned upside down. Jesus announces, "the ruler of this world has been condemned" (v. 11). He isn't the only one. No amount of grief over Jesus or worry about themselves can reverse the disciples' condemnation before God because of their sin and lack of faith in his Son.

PROGNOSIS: We Share the Truth

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *Going Away*

Jesus telling his disciples that he must "go away" (v. 7) is what caused them to sink into sorrow and self-preservation, but his going away is the only thing that will save them. Jesus is going to the cross. There he will take on the disciples' sin,

sorrow, and unbelief. There he will hand over his righteousness to them. After that, he will make Pentecost happen: he will send the Advocate from the Father, the Spirit of truth (vs. 15:26 & 16:7).

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *Transformed*

Once the Holy Spirit is with the disciples, he will replace the sorrow, selfishness, and lack of faith in their hearts with “all the truth” (v. 13). The Holy Spirit will transform their unbelief to belief, their sorrow to trust in their crucified and risen Lord. Unlike before, when Jesus was speaking to them and they couldn’t bear to hear his words (v. 12), with the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit the disciples will be able to bear the truth of their condition. They will understand that they need Jesus to save them.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *Testifying*

The disciples’ understanding must not remain in their hearts, however. Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit who will testify to what he has done. But the testimony, the witnessing to God’s great act of love and grace in the cross, is only beginning. “You also are to testify,” Jesus tells the disciples, “because you have been with me from the beginning” (v. 27). Just as the Advocate will illuminate to the disciples what Jesus has done for them by dying on the cross, rising from the dead, and going away (vs. 13, 14 & 15), the disciples are to declare this good news far and wide. Empowered by the Spirit, they will declare to the ends of the earth that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21).