

Into Thy Word Ministries Bible Study www.intothyword.org

General Idea: *Do not fall away; I, Jesus Christ, am here for you!* The instructions of our Lord are meant for our learning and growth as well as for spiritual nourishment, comfort, and hope. We will be hurt, we will be persecuted, kicked out of prideful churches, hated by those who hate Jesus—who want to live their lives their way and do as they see fit. These pious fraud people will even rationalize that they are serving God and doing the right thing. These prim and proper hypocrites will see their will as His by getting rid of the good people whose hearts are after Christ and whose wills are surrendered to God's. They hate them because they love sin; thus, they want you gone and dead so their arrogant, full and puffed-up selves can lead the way, because they do not know the One, True God. So, be warned and take comfort that even when it does not look like it, God is in charge and who you are in Christ and what you have in Him is far greater than anything you can lose here on earth. All this is temporary, but Christ and our place in Him are eternal. *I will send you the Great Counselor, the Holy Spirit to teach you the Truth, lead, direct, inspire, comfort, and help you. He will help you convince others of me and for me, of God and His righteousness and the judgment to come.* Even in these harsh times, you will prevail to give Christ the Glory!

Contexts and Background

These original Disciples were Jews; their Jewish leadership, because of their fear of conviction and pride, were against them. Jesus warns them of this and in so doing, warns us too. There is also a warning to those who think they serve God by promoting themselves or claiming to have new teaching or seeking to use the Holy Spirit as a manipulating tool for their misplaced conjectures or claiming to hear Christ directly and then not do His Word rightly that they are in Judgment! We must see how the Holy Spirit operates to be our guide, and not our pride.

Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings

- *Go astray / offended.* Meaning to be scandalized or greatly offended; the Gospel is Truth and truth offends those who do not like it. Thus, there is no need to make the gospel more relevant or easier or simpler than it is; it will offend anyway when it is true (Psalm 95:8-10).
- *Out of the synagogue.* This meant they faced betrayal and expulsion from their homes, fellowships, and families. This was the severest form of punishment, to be detached from their places in the community and social interaction with anyone who was a fellow Jew. It would have been devastating, being cut off from family, friends, work, and inheritance rights as well as losing any legal or personal rights (Ezra. 10:8; John 9:24-34; 11:50; 12:42; Acts 7:59; 7:59; 9:1-4; 12:2; Rom. 10:2).
- *Service to God.* Being persecuted is a way of worshiping God in the extreme, the honor of living and even dying for His sake (Isa. 66:5;).
- *Have not known the Father.* The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are Three in One and are intimately interlinked as One God in Three beings. You can't know God unless the Holy Spirit draws you to Christ (John 5:17; 6:43-47).
- *Warned you.* We will be confronted and persecuted by pious, fraud hypocrites—religious people, prideful leaders, those in sin, and those who love only themselves; so, let's not be surprised (Gen. 4; Luke 11:47-51; Acts 4:8).
- *Good that I am going away.* Yes, it was disturbing to the Disciples and to us what Jesus had to do for us! If Jesus had not lived to fulfill the Law and then died as a sacrifice to redeem us, we would be doomed because there would be no Gospel (Matt. 1:21; John 14:16-26).
- *Counselor / Helper / Advocate / Paraclete.* Meaning a legal representative who helps by coming alongside, who consoles or comforts, strengthens or advocates. It refers to the Holy Spirit who comes alongside us as our comforter, which is the role model for our actions too. The Holy Spirit is also the "successor" of Christ walking the earth, but not a replacement. He helps to carry on the work of our

Lord in and through us. For a Jew, this meant being inspired or filled with the Spirit for God's mission like the Prophets of old. But here, in context, it is much more; the Holy Spirit is also our Advocate who defends us, like in a heavenly court where Satan is the prosecutor, God is the merciful Judge, and Christ pays our penalty. He illuminates our minds, prompts our prayers, shows us the opportunities, and inspires our messages as we connect Christ to others in our encounters. In context, this is also a concrete description of the Trinity because the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, each exhibited here, are equal, distinct, and are active as One God in the work of our redemption (Gen. 1:2; Ex. 20:6; Deut. 5:10-29; 6:5; 11:1-22; 13:3-4; 19:9; 30:6-14; Psalm 31:5; Isa. 11:2; 65:16; Matt. 10:20; John 4:23-24; 9:35-41; 13:33; 14:5-31; 15:26; 16:7-13; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 2:14; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19; 1 Pet. 1:11; 1 John 2:1).

- *Convict / reprove.* Meaning to expose facts, show fault, or tell someone real truth to be set right when they are doing something wrong and to summon him/her to repentance. One of the prime roles of the Holy Spirit is to illuminate Jesus to people so they can know of His existence, work, and saving grace. He is the prime testifier of Christ to the world and we are the vessels He uses to accomplish God's purpose (John 3:16-18; 15:22-24; Rom. 1:18-28).
- *Guilt.* The Holy Spirit convicts, exposes sin, and prepares people to receive Jesus. Because of Christ, we are not condemned; but, those who refuse Him will be. It is the world that is on trial; how the verdict goes is how we plead. If we plead the Blood of the Lamb and accept His grace, we are found not guilty, because He paid the fine that we can't ever possibly pay (1 Cor. 2:10).
- *Sin.* Rebellion against God. Here referring to the willful unbelief of people not to recognize God or accept His provisions of grace. The greatest sin is unbelief that we would take to the grave, were we never to repent and receive His forgiveness of sin and thus our undeserved salvation (Neh. 9:30).
- *Righteousness.* Meaning conformity to God's Law, both from our heart and deeds—inside and outside. No one can attain this apart from perfect adherence to the law; Christ does this for us, as He is the only one in all of human history who could do it. No one can attain it without Divine intervention; righteousness to please God must come from God Himself. Jesus is our heavenly advocate who constituted us by covering us in His righteousness by His sacrificial death so we are not judged or condemned, rather saved (Psalm 4:3; Isa. 28:17; 32:17; Matt. 5:6; 24:45; John 12:31; Rom. 1:17; 3:21-23; 12:1; 1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 3:6-7; Eph. 1:3-4; 3:17; 4:20-24; Phil. 3:9; Col. 2:7; 1 Thess. 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:22-24; Heb. 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2:9; 4:1-2; 1 John 2:1-6).
- *Judgment.* Our Counselor advocates for us, and becomes the prosecutor to those who stand and come against us. He is our defender and the convector and accuser to those in sin, pride, and who hate God and His children. We can take comfort that God is in charge and He will defend His children and repay the evil for their deeds. Satan already has been defeated; His verdict of condemnation has already been given (Jer. 50:34; 51:36; Lam. 3:58-66; Psalm 43:1; 50:8; John 12:31; Col. 1:15; 2:15; Heb. 2:14; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 20:2-10).
- *Do not believe.* Meaning a failure to believe, as people who could but will never see themselves as sinners, thus will *not believe* (Rom. 1:21-22).
- *Prince of this world.* Another name for Satan meaning the leader of evil and prince over his vast army of subordinates and demons who carry out his orders and who are in conflict with God and Truth and His followers—us. Satan rules with tyrannical power. This is referring to his influence over the governments and political arenas of this world, that he is the one who is the ruler and guards his position. He is instigating the leaders to kill Jesus, yet Jesus is still in full control. Satan can influence and entice us; but, he has no hold on Christians because of what Christ does for us (Daniel 10:12-11:1; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2; 6:12).
- *Bear.* Meaning more than you can presently comprehend or know. The Romans, who had a sophisticated and fair (in theory) legal system, provided no public defenders or prosecutors. A defendant or plaintiff had to hire a "counselor" (lawyer) or a "rhetorician" (accuser) to bring charges or defense to a Judge. So, to one who did not have money or connections, this was a very fearful

prospect; yet we are told not to fear because God is our advocate. The Devil may bring charges against us, but God sends His Spirit as our defense (Matt. 5:22).

- *Spirit of truth.* The Holy Spirit is the Supreme Interpreter of Scripture. He testifies about Jesus to us and to the world as real, authentic, true Truth—and nothing but the Truth! He even enables us to live out and perform Christ's teachings on His terms so we are enabled to trust and understand Him and His call. He does not steer a true follower into interpretations that contradict His Word or fail to have logical consistency from the understanding, application and teaching of Scripture. The problem is our pride and will and lust for what we want that gets in the way. The good news is that His Word is here and available. God's Truth is faith and reason that is intertwined and given to us and we are given the rational capacity to understand it and the ability to have faith and trust Him when we do not. He does not give us information or duty that we can't understand or apply (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:12-15; Rom 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:9-12).
- *Guide.* This is not about science and knowledge; rather, it involves preparation for faith by His lead and command. We are to have a trusting and prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit, for He inspired the Word in its inception and inspires us now in our understating and application of it. In fact, we can't properly grasp or apply His Word without His guidance in it (John 14:26; 15:26; 2 Peter 1:21; Eph. 4:18; Rev. 1:19).
- *Truth.* This means the knowledge of *who*, *why*, and *what* concerning Christ, and it is true Truth. It is not bound to or by any human reason or tradition and can't be corrupted; but we can misrepresent it (Psalm 25:5; 43:3; John 5:8; 14:6; 15:15; Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:1-8; 2 Tim. 2:15; James 1:18).
- *Speak only what he hears.* The primary role of God the Spirit is to "showcase" Christ, never to point to Himself. The same goes for a servant of God; he/she is to point to Him, not to self. The distinction is pride. Does one point others to Christ wholly or to themselves? When a person or ministry emphasizes the Holy Spirit to the diminishment or exclusion of Christ, you will know they are false and not of God.
- *Bring glory / glorify me.* The Holy Spirit will never ever draw attention to Himself; He only promotes the glory of Christ. If any preacher does or says otherwise, he is not of God! The plan and scope of creation and redemption center upon Christ as Creator, Savior, and LORD. Then the Holy Spirit brings Jesus' teachings to us by the Bible and helps us understand it (John 15:26; 1 Cor. 2:4).
- *Making it known.* This is the doctrine of the "Illumination of the Holy Spirit," the process where the Holy Spirit enables us to understand His Word the Bible and then apply it to our lives. The Holy Spirit gives us the essential illumination to be able to read and understand and glean the wondrous insights of the Bible. He gives us God's revelation so we will appreciate the things of God and their true value and significance. He enables us for logical, full comprehension with the correct intended meanings and fruitful applications of Scripture so we can have the faith and gumption to act on them (Psalm 82:5; 119:18; Matt. 11:25; Luke 24:16-32; 1 Cor. 2:12-14; 3:14; Eph. 1:18-19; 4:1; 1 John 2:20-27).
- *Belongs to the Father.* An expression of the Sovereignty and intimacy and Triune Nature of God; God who does not have to, shares His love and possessions, which is exemplified and shared by our intimacy and empowerment in Him. We are His friends (Gen. 18:17; Amos 3:7; John 17:10)!

Devotional Thoughts and Applications

This essence of who God is and what He did must pour into us from Christ and then stream out of us so we can touch others with God's love. This love is the definitive work of our God and the power we have as Christians. We are to be empowered by God's love through all situations and circumstances. Then, we can practice the true love that we are given, which is the turning of our backs to what we want and our concerns and instead facing forward to others. This requires us to surrender our will to His.

Our partnership with God though faith is demonstrated by substance and connection. It is confirmed in how we choose to live our lives and touch others for Christ. It shows how our character, from our spiritual formation, is applied. If we ignore our brothers and sisters in the Lord or those in the world who are in need while we boast we are in Him, what good is our faith? Our pious demonstrations would

be ineffectual, and even detrimental to others. Faith is not a substance meant to stand unused; rather, it is to be employed and infused by Christ (Luke 3:21; John 1:32-34; 3:34; Acts 1-21 John 3:16-20)!

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. How did you say goodbye as a child? How does Jesus say goodbye to His friends?
2. What have God's directives meant to you for learning and growth? What has the Bible done for you regarding spiritual nourishment, comfort, and hope?
3. Have you ever considered that you may be persecuted, kicked out of churches, lose a job, or perhaps even lose your life through people who are prideful? How does this make you feel?
4. Why do some people insist on living their lives their way and doing as they see fit regardless of eternal ramifications? How and why must the Holy Spirit operate to be your guide—not your pride?
5. How would you explain the process and role of the Holy Spirit in this passage? How does He enable you to understand the Bible and then apply it to your life?
6. Why do we need the Holy Spirit's divine illumination to be able to read and understand the Bible? Why, if we can read the newspaper, can't we read the Bible without His help?
7. Have you ever seen a pious fraud in your church? Hopefully it is not you! How have you seen people rationalize they are serving God and doing the right thing when they are actually acting contrary to God's will and order?
8. Do you feel that you have been warned about trials and tribulations? How can you take comfort that even when it does not look like it, God is in charge?
9. How would you define a hypocrite? Why do such people seek to get rid of the good people whose hearts are after Christ and replace them with people like themselves? What can you do to avoid doing that yourself or allowing it in your church?
10. What would it mean to you to be more empowered by God's love through all situations and circumstances?
11. How can you allow the essence of who God is pour into you, and then stream out so you can touch others with God's love?
12. How can you better appreciate the things of God and their true worth? How can you be better at comprehending the correct, intended meaning of a passage? How can you be better with your fruitful applications of Scripture?