

**Spirit Convicts the World**    Sixth Week of Easter    Tuesday, May 23, 2017    8:15 AM  
Acts 16:22-34;    Jn 16:5-11    (in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation)

Again we are continuing the Farewell Discourse of Jesus, and the theme is the gift of the Paraclete, the Advocate. But in today's particular reading an aspect of the Holy Spirit that is rarely thought of is being featured, namely, **the role of the Spirit in convicting the world**. We don't usually hear this terminology, but one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of three things, of its wrongness in other words. That's what conviction is about, **that the world is wrong about three things**.

The first, in regard to sin, **sin is first and foremost unbelief**. The first commandment in the Decalogue is not to have false gods, carved images, before the One True Spirit. This is sometimes called idolatry. But idolatry itself is derived from something more fundamental: unbelief. And the Spirit's gift is to convict the world of its fundamental sin. **The fundamental sin of the world is unbelief, unbelief in the true God**, the true God who is perfectly revealed in Christ. And yet in spite of the perfect revelation in Christ, Christ himself is rejected and crucified. The idea is that even that to some degree was through ignorance. **Jesus said on the Cross, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." But now with the gift of the Spirit there is no more "knowing not."** The Spirit penetrates between every crack and crevice of the human makeup. The word of God can go between joint and marrow, soul and spirit. So now the world loses its basic defense, which is ignorance.

Secondly, **righteousness**, because **Jesus' going to the Father is** in a way the proof, if you want to call it that, **the demonstration, of his fundamental goodness and the rightness of his teachings and the authenticity of his works**.

And then about **condemnation** because the Spirit shows what is really condemned in the life, ministry, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ, what is really condemned is the ruler of this world. That now becomes blatantly obvious to everyone except those who forcibly, violently, willfully turn away from the Spirit. **In Christ it is now obvious through the power of the Spirit that the evil one really is evil**. The ruler of this world really is the evil one, and that those will follow the rule of the world are following the evil one. The Spirit testifies to this and convicts the world of it.