

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**Hollowed Out for the Paraclete**     Sixth Week of Easter     Tuesday, May 8, 2018     8:15 AM  
Acts 16:22-34;     **Jn 16:5-11**     (There are many events that we would rather not experience, but nonetheless are good for us.)

Gradually we are winding down this long farewell of Jesus before his death. First of all, he starts saying that **the disciples** now that they are catching on, and it took them a while, but now that they are catching on to the fact that he is going to die very soon, they **are filled with grief**.

Now life does have a lot of grief in it. There is much sadness, but **some things that appear to be sad are really not in the long run**. There are many blessings in disguise. **There are many events that we would rather not experience, but nonetheless are good for us**. For example, who wants to experience being disillusioned? Let's say with a friend or a business partner or a child or a parent or whatever. It's terrible to be disillusioned. However what's the alternate? To live in an illusion—is that good? **Can anyone actually want to live in an illusion**, thinking something that's not true, believing something that's not true? **That could not be desirable**.

Well here Jesus is talking about **the experience of departure, of loss**. Well loss is a very great disappointment, and loss is a very great suffering. But he is saying **it's actually better for you, because it will empty you out**. And when you are empty, **you can be open to the Spirit**. He says if I remain with you, the Spirit cannot come. Why? Well because they are already full. So it's better if you get emptied out. So, yes, grieve, but don't grieve as if there is no purpose to the grief or no end to the grief. That's why Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted." **Jesus is all about being with grief**, unlike for example Buddhism. In Buddhism there is no meaning in grief. But in Jesus' teaching there is meaning in it **because as it hollows out the heart it makes space for the Paraclete**.

Then he says **the Paraclete will convict the world of three things: sin**, because what is sin really about? Sin is ultimately unbelief. **Sin is the rejection of Jesus himself**. Now there may be

people who acknowledge sin, all kinds of sin, but not really the real one. People may look at the world and see all kinds of terrible things, but not actually realize what's really wrong. **What's really wrong is unbelief, which is also disobedience, since to do the work of God is to accept the one he sent.** So that's the first one.

**Righteousness:** that means who Jesus really is. **Jesus is the righteous one.** But he was not recognized by the religious people or the secular people, not Jewish leaders, not the Romans. The Paraclete will witness to his righteousness, that **he is really the Son of God**, and all the other people in the world who claim religious authority, like the Roman emperors are frauds, and even the high priest.

And **condemnation**, because when it comes to condemnation, **it is not the world that has the right to condemn**, even though it does. And in fact what the Paraclete will show is that **the ruler of the world is really who is condemned.**