

Cantate

The world understands neither Jesus, the Father who sent Him, nor the Holy Spirit whom He sends.

Jesus says *"I am the way, the truth, and the life no one comes to the Father but by Me."* How often does Jesus say, *"I tell you the truth"?*

Now, before His passion, He promises to send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. Christianity is all about truth. Truth doesn't change. Notions change but not Truth *"Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words will not pass away."*

But it is not enough to know that truth exists and that it will never change.

We must also know what it is. This, Jesus gives by sending His Holy Spirit.

Thus He reveals a threefold truth concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment.

This revelation is written in the apostolic Scriptures and preached in the "One, holy and apostolic Church."

And the first thing we need to know about this truth is that it is centered in Jesus.

The way that the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth, is that:

"He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."

The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ. He takes what is Christ's and makes it your own.

He does not speak of Himself. He speaks of Christ that you may know the truth.

The truth is not centered in morality, as important as morality is.

At a time of moral relativism it is enticing to set aside the truth about Jesus and how He is our Savior in order to build a moral majority.

Many people of goodwill agree with us about such matters like the sanctity of human life, and marriage, and Ten Commandments as the backbone of society.

Religious conversations typically center on questions of right and wrong.

But the Holy Spirit teaches that this does not constitute spiritual unity.

Jesus did not come into this world merely as a new lawgiver better than Moses.

He came to testify to the truth. And the Spirit of truth, whom Jesus sends to us from the Father, is not primarily a teacher of virtue. He is a teacher of Christ.

In teaching us about Christ, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of three things: sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Why is the world wrong about sin? What is it about the world's view of sin that makes it false and why must the Holy Spirit show this to the world?

Jesus states it simply: *"Because they do not believe in Me."*

The Holy Spirit does not convict the world of sinning against the Ten

Commandments even though they still stand as God's holy unchanging law.

The Holy Spirit teaches that sin goes much deeper than the occasional misdeed.

The root of every misdeed is unbelief... not believing in Jesus, the one true God.

We should fear and love God so that... That is the sin that condemns sinners.

Sin doesn't consist in violating outward rules of conduct. Sin is a turning away from God to worship ourselves and the things we make and do.

The Holy Spirit reveals what sin is as He shows us how Jesus, the Lamb of God, bears all our sin away.

To persist in unbelief is the sin against the Holy Spirit. Every other sin can be forgiven, but when Jesus is rejected the forgiveness of sins is being rejected.

There is salvation in no other name than in the name of Jesus.

Thus the Holy Spirit convicts the world of righteousness. And this is your righteousness: That I go to the Father and you see Me no more.

The world does not understand righteousness and cannot understand this.

Our blinded minds think that righteousness has to do with our actions and words.

The Holy Spirit convinces us that your righteousness has ONLY to do with Jesus.

And most particularly, your righteousness has to do with His passion.

He suffered the penalty we had brought upon ourselves by our unbelief.

Your disobedience is overcome by Christ's obedience.

In obedience He actively did all that God's law commanded us to do.

In obedience He passively suffered all that we, by our sins, deserved to suffer.

This is the righteousness of God for you.

Here is what the Holy Spirit says to those who are trying to earn a place with God in heaven by their own works of righteousness.

Do you think that your works are better than Jesus' works?

Do you love more purely? Do you submit more patiently?

Do you serve more dutifully? Do you speak more truthfully?

Do you think that your works of righteousness can compare to Jesus' works of righteousness? Are you willing to stand before God clothed in your own good deeds? What will God see? How will He respond?

The Holy Spirit urges this world to toss aside all reliance on its own works and to trust instead in Christ's works. His works constitute a righteousness that is flawless.

God sees what Jesus did in our stead as He lived and died for us.

The Father takes pleasure in the righteousness of His only begotten Son. He sees His Son's righteousness and it meets with His approval.

And if you want to find approval from God you must have Christ's righteousness. You must have Christ. If you don't have Christ through faith you aren't righteous before God and you stand under God's judgment.

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of judgment: the ruler of this world is judged. Satan is called the ruler of this world. He rules Adam and everything of Adam. He rules as He ruled in Eden--by means of his false teaching and all of the devil's false teaching boils down to the religion of works righteousness.

Emancipate yourself from God. Go it alone. Do it your way and become like Him.

The Holy Spirit is given to reveal that this is all a sham.

For the Truth is that the Prince of this world, and all that he stands for and all whom he rules stand condemned.

On the last day, this will be revealed for all the world to see with their own eyes.

But today, this is revealed already to you through the Word and Spirit of Christ.

Thus you are comforted that nothing can keep you away from God.

Not our sin because it is forgiven for Christ's sake. Nor your lack of righteousness because you have Christ's righteousness.

Not God's judgment because it is the devil who is judged.

This simple truth is at the very heart of Christianity.

This is the truth in which we can live with confidence and die in peace. Amen.