

(1) Does it strike you as strange to say that to have the Holy Spirit inside us is better than having Jesus beside us? If so, why? What are some of the reasons why it is, in fact, better and to our “advantage” to have the Holy Spirit indwelling all Christians on the earth rather than to have Jesus living physically on the earth in one place at any one time?

(2) Talk about the ways you may have avoided interacting with non-Christians because you thought that the Holy Spirit would deal with them directly, without your involvement. What in our passage in John 16 would lead you to believe that this isn’t what Jesus had in mind when he spoke of sending the Spirit to “convict” the world?

(3) Does your presence in the world have the effect of making non-Christians feel uncomfortable? Give some examples from your experience. What would be a good and godly way of having this effect on the world and what would be some bad and unhelpful ways in which this might occur?

(4) Talk about what it means to say that non-Christians don’t “believe” in Jesus. Do you see examples in their lives where unbelief goes beyond mere intellectual disagreement with the claims of Christ? Also talk among yourselves about the virtual consensus among non-Christians that everyone is saved, that judgment is only reserved for people like Hitler or persistent child-molesters.

(5) How do we guard against using what Jesus says of the Spirit in vv. 12-15 to justify creating “new” doctrines and “new” ethical rules for life, beyond what the Bible already records for us?