**Interpretation of John 16:8-11**

**Joh.16:8-11** And having come, That One will convict the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment. **9** Concerning sin, indeed, because they believe not into Me, **10** and concerning righteousness because I go back to the Father and you see Me no longer, **11** and concerning judgment because the ruler of this world has been judged.

The conviction (or reproof) of the Jewish authorities (“the world”) by the Encourager (i.e., Holy Spirit) would come in three parts:

1. concerning sin, because of their unbelief
2. concerning righteousness, because Jesus goes back to His Father and is seen by His disciples no longer
3. concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged

The Encourager will convict the Jews concerning sin because of unbelief. This is the third time that John’s Gospel speaks “concerning sin.” The first relates to blasphemy against Jesus:

**8:46** Who of you convicts Me concerning sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

Sin is imputed to the Jews by these questions. In effect, “You dare to call Me a sinner, when your unbelief in truth is such an obvious sin?” A fuller context provides:

**8:42** Jesus said to them, “If God was your father, you would have loved Me, for I Came forth and have come from God, for neither have I come from Myself, but That One sent Me. Why do you not get to know My speech? – because you cannot hear My word. You are from the father the devil – and you desire to do the passions of your father. That one was a murderer from the beginning, and he stood not in the truth, because there is not truth in him. When one might speak the lie, he speaks from his own things, because he is a liar – also his father. And because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Who of you convicts Me concerning sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is from God hears the words of God. On account of this you do not hear, because you are not from God.”

This context shows the devilish nature of the Jews’ response to and treatment of Jesus. They were the ones guilty of sin. They were liars and murderers, like their fathers – including their devil-father.

The second text “concerning sin” is more directly in line with 16:8-9.

**15:22** If I did not come and speak to them, they were not having sin. But now they have not an excuse concerning their sin.

Jesus had said earlier that He had many things to speak and to judge concerning those who would die in their sins (8:24-26). Having spoken the truth to them, Jesus now speaks a judgment against those who did not believe in Him.

The next point of conviction, “concerning righteousness”, is based on Jesus’ return to the Father and not being physically with His disciples any longer. This is a bit obscure, but can be made clearer from the context. Verse seven was a statement from Jesus about the necessity of His return to the Father in order to send the Encourager. So that answers the “because” part of the statement. Now as to how the Encourager would convict the world of the Jews concerning righteousness, it would be through His endowment of believers with gifts of holy spirit – evidences of God’s righteousness being with the faithful.

When Stephen was hauled into a court of the Jews, his testimony by holy spirit brought the Jews into legal conviction for killing the Righteous One, Jesus (Acts 7:51-54). Their rage at and stoning of Stephen proves the depth of their rebellion at the conviction. That generation continued to follow the pattern of old – resisting the Spirit of God and killing His prophets.

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John’s Gospel is noteworthy for its use of opposites:

* Jesus vs. the Jews (the world)
* Jesus coming forth vs. Jesus going back
* from God vs. from the devil
* truth vs. lie
* light vs. darkness
* righteousness vs. sin
* good vs. wicked
* save vs. judge
* life vs. death
* love vs. hate
* belief vs. rejection
* seeing vs. blindness
* joy vs. sorrow
* peace vs. trouble
* free vs. enslaved

**Joh.7:7** The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me, because I testify concerning it that its works are wicked.

**Joh.8:14** And Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I should testify concerning Myself, My testimony is true, because I have known from where I came and where I go back to. But you have not known from where I come, nor where I go back to.” **8:18** “I am One testifying concerning Myself, and the Father Who sent Me testifies concerning Me.” **8:21** Therefore He said to them again, “I go back and you will seek Me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go back you cannot come.”

**8:26** I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He Who sent Me is true, and I – what things I heard from Him – these I speak unto the world.

**10:25** Jesus answered them, “I told you and you do not believe. The works which I do in My Father’s name, these testify concerning Me.”

**15:22** When the Encourager may come, Whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of the Truth who comes out from the Father – That One will testify concerning Me.

**18:23** Jesus answered him, “If I spoke evilly, testify concerning the evil. But if well, why do you hit Me?”

**5:30** I cannot do anything from Myself. Even as I hear I judge, and My judgment is righteous, because I seek not My desire but the desire of the One having sent Me.

**17:24-25** Father, those whom You have given to Me, I desire that where I am they also may be with Me, so that they may see My glory which You have given to Me, Because You loved Me before *the* overthrow of *the* world. Righteous Father, even the world did not know You, but I knew You and these knew that You sent Me.