

John 15:26-16:15 –Pentecost

1. It's all about the transformation

It's all about the transformation.

We are totally obsessed with transformation. It's just a matter of

For example weight loss transformation – this headline from the Daily Mail on 7th May, 2015 –
“Mum wears my skinny jeans now!': Mother and daughter celebrate turning 21 and 40 after losing a combined weight of 11 stone in a year.” << Ppt >>

Or transforming the place in which we live.

From the website news.com.au – the headline from 10th May, 2015 –

“What on OMG moment! The first renovation reveal on House Rules is an amazing transformation.” << Ppt >>

Or, for those in the corporate world, transformation in business leadership,

For example, from the Globel and Mail website, the headline on 4th May, 2015

“Real leadership is about transformation” << Ppt >>

However, there is one area, where we stand opposed to transformation,

In fact, we use a totally different word – ‘radicalization’.

When it comes to young Australian men and women joining the Islamic State we use, radicalization.

So, the Sydney Morning Herald, on 15th May, 2015, the headline reads,

“ASIO issues ‘call to arms’ for families to spot radicalization of teenagers”. << Ppt >>

We're all for transformation – houses, businesses, bodies, to name a few.

We're not too thrilled about radicalization – with some very good reasons.

But what if there was a transformation that made these efforts look like kids in the sand box?

What if there was a change that was so foundational of theses transformations seem trivial?

Hold that thought – and I'll come back to it in my conclusion...

2. Testifying in the Crucible (15:26-16:4)

We jump into John's gospel, at a point where Jesus gives his final instructions to the disciples. And in the crucible of Jesus' final hours, he instructs the disciples of the events that will unfold. The key statement, the summary found in the opening sentences of our reading. So I'll read again.
<< 15:26-27 >>

There is an advocate who will come.

Advocate meaning a voice that speak on behalf of someone else.

And this advocate will speak on behalf of the Father, sent by the Son, to the disciples.

And when this advocates comes, the disciples will testify

The disciples will bear witness to what they have seen and heard, and touched.

The disciples will be put into the proverbial witness box,

They will give an account of their actions, their reasons, and their motives
for believing that this man, Jesus is God's promised Messiah.

In fact, the testimony of the disciples will result in them being thrown out of synagogues,

It will result in them being killed, and those doing the killing think they are doing a service to God.

But their service to God is fundamentally flawed

– because v. 3 – “they have not known the Father or me.”

The disciples will pay the price for their witness, their testimony

Which is a sober reminder for us.

And yet, this is not simply a death cult, where the leader sends others to mindless slaughter.

The opposite.

Jesus is fully aware that just as he faces that lonely hill of pain, outside Jerusalem,

So too the disciples, his closest followers will face their own deaths for his sake.

3. Comings and Goings (16:5-16:7)

But before Jesus goes, not only to his death, but also to glory with the Father,
He then explains the sequence of events that must take place. << vv. 5-7 >>

These comings and goings mark a radical shift in the very nature of God's relationship with his people.

These comings and goings rupture the fabric of Israel's relationship with God,
And replace that prior mode of operation with something radically different.
For Jesus is talking about the very promises God made through the prophets coming to reality.

<< Joel 2:28-29; Ezek 36:25-27; Jer 31:31-33 >>

As the disciples sat in the upper room, they could not comprehend the magnitude of these events.

4. The Spirit comes to:

And so Jesus spells out further what it means for this advocate to come.

As you can see in your talk outline – the spirit comes for three reasons

- to prove, to guide and to glorify

a. Prove the world wrong (16:8-11)

The Spirit proves, convicts, the world wrong – in three ways.

First, the spirit continues the work of Jesus in his confrontation with the world.

As Jesus confronted the world, and said “Here I am – I am the access point to God”

So people were confronted –either he is right, and he is the mediator b/w God and man.

Or they rejected him – and refused to accept that he is ‘the way, the truth and the life’.

So, this convicting, this proving continues by God’s spirit.

That is, as the disciples bear witness to Jesus, the Spirit convicts the world of its rejection of Jesus.

<< Illus’n – the difference b/w ignorance and ignoring – the world chooses to ignore Jesus >>

And that is the work of the spirit – the conviction to reject Jesus is the spirit at work.

Second, the Spirit proves the world wrong in regards to righteousness,

Because Jesus “going” to the Father will be the ultimate act of righteousness.

It will take the God’s own son to lay down his life – the king who come to die

Third, the spirit proves the world wrong, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

Jesus’ death is not the devil’s greatest triumph but the devil’s ultimate defeat.

Jesus’ resurrection proves that the power of sin, the power of the devil, the power of death

no longer have any influence over him.

b. Guide you into all the truth (16:12-13)

On the positive side, the Spirit will lead the disciples into all truth.

Not that the Spirit is some kind of ancient predecessor to Google, or Wikipedia,

as a source of unlimited quantities of information.

But rather, that the Spirit is the source of the qualitative and relational knowledge of God.

That is, there is no deeper, no more personal, no more intimate knowledge of God,

Than that given by God’s Spirit.

c. Glorify Jesus (16:14-15)

And therefore, the third reason that the spirit comes is to glorify Jesus. << vv. 14-15 >>

The Spirit glorifies Jesus by taking from what is Jesus' and making it known to the disciples. That is, when the disciples receive the Holy Spirit, they will then understand, they will then know.

And therefore, Jesus will be honoured by the disciples because they will understand who he is.

It is the reason why John writes this gospel because he is convicted of the reality of Jesus, And out of this conviction then writes to persuade his audience of this fact – that Jesus is the Son of God.

How much more, the Holy Spirit – gives the knowledge of Jesus to the disciples, so that they will comprehend the greatness of Jesus, and testify to him.

So, the Spirit convicts the world, guides the disciples into all truth, and glorifies Jesus.

5. The transformation by the Spirit

So then, returning to the question from the start

- what is the most radical transformation in the world?
- what transformation makes all other ones that we obsess about today look miniscule?

The answer is the transformation by the very spirit of God.

a. From scared followers to bold witnesses

The transformation by the spirit of God turns the disciples from scared followers to bold witnesses. That is, as Jesus dies on the cross, the disciples are a fractured group of scared friends. After, Jesus resurrection, after the Spirit is poured out upon them, They become the 'sent ones', the apostles, the one who boldly declare Jesus is the Son of God. They provide us with the greatest insights into the life, mission and purpose of Jesus. As we read their accounts of Jesus life and death in the gospel, the apostles bear witness to Jesus. As we read their letters we come to know Jesus as our Lord and our Saviour.

b. From Judean sect to universal church

Second, the outpouring of the spirit marks a radical shift in the way God operates in the world. No longer is your connection to Abraham of primary concern. No longer is your connection to the temple and the priesthood of Aaron the mediators to God. Now, the great in-gathering occurs, so that people throughout the world, throughout history, Can now be part of God's family – part of the universal church.

c. From Sydney-siders to Local lights

And finally, this transformation means that we no longer are defined by our heritage, or our location, or our job, or our house size, or our family connections.

We have been transformed so that we are part of God's kingdom,
More we have been transformed so that we shine as stars in the dark world around us.

Let's pray.