

**The Role of the Holy Spirit in Discipleship in a hostile world:
an exegetico-theological analysis of John 16:7-15**

By

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any academic institution for a degree.

Rudi Boshoff

September 2015

Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [*rightly handling and skillfully teaching*] the Word of Truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 (AMP)

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Abstract

This thesis examines verses 7-15 in Chapter 16 of the Gospel of John to see if what Jesus said specifically describes the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in triumphant Christian discipleship in a hostile world throughout the Christian era. The key words *Symphērō* and *Paraclete* are capable of translation in different ways, and each different rendering changes the significance of the chosen passage. This is examined in both its historical and literary context, as these have a significant impact on the meaning of the passage. The preferred translations 'advantageous' and 'a strong person coming alongside, someone to help in times of trouble, someone summoned to give assistance', have a deep relevance for our understanding of the pericope, Jesus' last teaching to His disciples, on the role of the Holy Spirit to believers in a hostile world, and its application to our own situation.

Believers living in this era of hostility needs to understand what Jesus meant with his farewell discourse and the impact the Holy Spirit has on everyday Christianity.

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Abbreviations

AMP	Amplified Version
ASV	American Standard Version
BBE	Bible in Basic English
BDAG	Bauer Danker Arndt Gingrich Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament
CEV	Contemporary English Version
DRB	1899 Douay-Rheims Bible
EDNT	Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament
ESV	English Standard Version
GNB	Good News Bible
GW	God's Word Bible
ISV	International Standard Version
JB	Jewish Bible
KJV	King James Version
LITV	Literal Translation of the Holy Bible
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
RV	Revised Version
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
Webster's	1833 Webster's Bible

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

In John 16:7-15 Jesus describes some of the key roles of the Holy Spirit in relation to discipleship. This is especially pertinent because the passage is set within the context of the hostilities believers would experience in the world. However, the passage contains a number of challenging interpretive issues. First of all, there are some variations in the English translations of the key word *sympherō* in John 16:7. Some translations use the word 'better' (GNB, CEV), some translations use 'advantage' (ESV, ISV, LITV, NKJV) while others use 'expedient' (Webster's bible, RV, ASV, DRB, KJV).

Firstly, it may appear that there is no difference between these three translations, but closer inspection shows that the choice of translation results in a significant different theological understanding of this passage. Carson (1991:534) argues that Jesus' valuation of what is for his disciples' 'good', and indeed for our good, ought to temper longings of the 'Oh-if-only-I-could-have-been-in-Galilee-when-Jesus-was-there!' sort. Carson stated here that the disciples were filled with deep grief over their impending loss and they needed something to hold on to. Hence the reason for Jesus saying in verse 7: "I tell you the truth". He continues that the same Jesus insists it is better to be alive now, after the coming of the Spirit. Carson states here, that it is a normal inclination for Christians to want to have lived in Jesus' times, to walk with Him and to talk with Him, but Jesus says it is better, more advantageous, to live in the era of the Holy Spirit. I must agree with Carson here that it is normal for any Christian who gets saved to imagine how life would have been if he/she was one of His disciples. The longing of "if only I was with Jesus" exists for all Christians. Jesus insists in verse 7 that "He is telling the truth", that the era of the Holy Spirit is better for His followers.

Borchert (2002:164) states that, 'the coming of the *Paraclete* will be good, or to the disciples' benefit, although they do not understand the significance of Jesus' statement at that time'. Borchert (2002:165) continues by stating that the "I tell you the truth" is an assertion by Jesus to His disciples that their concern or grief over His

departure will only be seen as a benefit or advantage after His departure. On the other hand, it could be argued, that because the beloved disciple John wrote the book with hindsight, after the Holy Spirit had come, he could understand Jesus' statement. It is always easier to look back at history with the present in mind and understand why certain things happened, or was said by individuals, and I can imagine that this is what John saw when He wrote this piece and remembered Jesus words. Borchert does not state the fact that John wrote after the coming of the *Paraclete*. In addition, Borchert (2002:165) does not take a clear stand on which word should be used in translating *sympherō*, but rather emphasises what triggered the coming of the *Paraclete*, which he believes was the atoning death and departure of Jesus. I however agree with Borchert's (2002:165) view that the act of Jesus' glorification set in motion a number of significant consequences, one being the inauguration of the era of the *Paraclete* and the beginning of Christian discipleship.

Lange and Schaff (2008:472) argue that *sympherō* should be translated as 'expedient', as it shows the divine necessity that Jesus had to depart from this world. This approach is in contradiction to Carson and Borchert above. Carson (1991:534) and Borchert (2002:165) expresses the view that Jesus was adamant that it would be to the disciples benefit with the expression "I tell you the truth", However, the word expedient (Soanes and Stevenson 2004:expedient) means that it is only suitable to achieving a given end.

Given the differences in commentary positions on the use of *sympherō* as seen in The Gospel According to John by DA Carson, The New American Commentary by GL Borchert and The Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, to name but a few, a careful examination of the philology of this word is likely to shed significant light on the understanding of the passage.

Secondly, it is not immediately obvious whether what Jesus says in the passage applies primarily to the historical disciples of the pre-crucified Christ alone, or by extension applies to His future followers. Jesus is talking to his disciples in the upper room and uses the singular or plural second person pronoun "you". Köstenberger (2004:491) on the one side of the argument argues that the world has no biblical moral values and requires the Spirit to expose their sin. Therefore, Köstenberger

argues that the passage must be relevant to all future followers as Christians of all time need to expose the hypocrisy of the world.

Von Wahlde (2010:698), on the other side of the argument, appears to suggest that the passage applies to the disciples of the pre-crucified Jesus, and so concludes that Jesus was making the point that the historical disciples would not be able to bear the full weight of the truth without the Spirit. Thus, there are subtle differences in how interpreters regard the applicability of what Jesus says regarding the role of the Holy Spirit in discipleship.

Given the disagreement, it is a helpful exercise to decipher which aspects of the role of the Holy Spirit in discipleship applied only to the historical disciples, and which aspects apply to all future disciples.

Thirdly, there is no unanimous agreement among translators regarding the background and meaning of Jesus' description of the Holy Spirit as *Paraclete*. Some translations like the ASV, the Bishops Bible, the LITV, the KJV, the RV and the Webster's Bible translate the *Paraclete* as the 'Comforter', while others like the BBE, the ESV, the GNB, the GW, the ISV and the NKJV translate it as the 'Helper'. Shelfer (2009:131) argue that 'there has been no cohesive legal definition for all of the appearances of the *Paraclete* in scripture', and proposes that 'the term is a precise copy for the Latin legal term *advocatus*, meaning a person of high social standing who speaks on behalf of a defendant in a court of law before a judge'. Keener (2003:1031) agrees with this view, and states that 'the frequent forensic term of the *Paraclete*'s witness and defence in the context of a synagogue trial is probably to be preferred here'.

Hoeck (2012:24-26) recognises these different translations, and discusses the different meanings across the translations to establish the validity of the meanings they give to the *Paraclete*. He concludes, with his opinion, that the rudimentary meaning to be retained should be, 'a strong person called in to help in times of trouble'.

The combinations of the problematic issues with regards to the variations of the meaning of *sympherō*, the questions about the background and translation of *Paraclete*, and the setting of establishing whether the passage applies to future

believers in Jesus result in a wide range of possibilities for our understanding of the passage. These combinations affect the assessment of why Jesus in His farewell discourse used these words to comfort His disciples. This, therefore, needs to be investigated holistically in order for us to understand correctly what Jesus meant at that time.

Finally, it is not immediately clear how the functions of the Spirit with regard to the world described in the passage relate to His functions in discipleship. This is even more relevant given the theme of suffering and persecution in Jesus' farewell discourse. It would appear that a clearer understanding of what Jesus meant by *sympherō* is a key step in clarifying these issues.

This provides the background for the present mini-thesis to seek to clarify what Jesus meant with his teaching on the Holy Spirit and persecution in the farewell discourse. By doing a thorough exegetico-theological analysis of this passage, I demonstrate why Jesus said that it is better/advantageous/expedient for the disciples to have the Holy Spirit, rather than Himself in bodily form.

1.2 The Key Questions

There are three primary questions which need to be asked and answered:

- What is the contextual background of the 'farewell' discourse?
- In the light of the context and concepts in the passage, what is the best rendering of the translation of *sympherō* and the meaning of Paraclete?
- What are the exact roles, according to the passage, that the Holy Spirit plays in discipleship today?

1.3 Elucidation of the Problem

This thesis is about John 16:7-15 and explores the reasons why Jesus comforted His disciples. He explained to them the role the Holy Spirit will play in their lives after He leaves. He emphasises the benefit of the Holy Spirit by using specific Greek words, namely *Symphero* and *Paraclete*. The words found in the Greek, *Symphero* and *Paraclete*, has various renderings in different translations. This thesis does research

into the meanings of the Greek words along with several other important words found in the pericope. The meanings of *Symphero* and *Paraclete*, read with the farewell discourse genre in mind and the theological themes as background, leads to an application for us as followers of Christ today.

In the pericope Jesus mentions several aspects of the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples under persecution. These roles are also researched to see which roles were only applicable to the immediate disciples and which are still applicable to us today and in extension to all future disciples. Resolving these issues all impinge upon understanding the sense in which the words *symphero* and *Paraclete* operate.

1.4 Value of the study

Jesus starts in John 16:7 saying: “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth...” because He wants the disciples to hear and understand that what He is about to tell them is of extreme importance. From here He goes on to explain to them that it will be better/expedient/advantageous (*Symphero*) for them to have the *Paraclete* rather than Himself while being persecuted. The use of the Greek *Symphero* and *Paraclete* shows the intent that Jesus had when He wanted His disciples to hear and understand the role the *Paraclete* will play in discipleship in a hostile world.

In researching this passage the interpretation of *Symphero* and *Paraclete* will shed more light unto the farewell discourse and the application that is applicable from Jesus’ last words to His most loyal and faithful followers. This study shows how indispensable the Holy Spirit is to believers everywhere, and of all times.

1.5 Research Methodology

The appropriate model for this thesis is an exegetical study. The research mainly follows the design that Smith (2008:171-176) proposes for doing an exegetical study. It also adds insights from Fee (2002) and Erickson (2005). As Erickson (2005:17) states that "the message comes to us wrapped, like the Holy Infant, in the swaddling clothes of history, language and culture". We need several tools to unwrap this message. These tools, according to Erickson (2005), include the original language, the level of engagement and understanding the history and culture. Here are some of the key principles of Smith's approach.

The research begins with an introduction that also sets out the reasons for the choice of passage and explains their delimitations. This step is important to narrow down or define the subjects the passage covers and sets the agenda for what is discussed. It also includes explanations of the significance of the text, as well as other scholarly perspectives on the text.

After the introduction is a discussion on the literary nature and structure of John's Gospel. This includes an examination of the genre, the structure of the book, the composition, as well as any features in the text that might influence its meaning.

This is then followed by examination of the context of the passage including the general background of the book, the historical context of the book, the literary context of the book, as well as the theological themes of the book that pertains to the passage under study. Fee (2002:5) proposes that there are two basic questions to ask and that is questions of content (what is said) and of context (why it is said). I agree with this formulation and have added the theological themes to give more clarity to our understanding of the message the author wanted to convey.

After exploring the context of the book, a closer look into the set pericope is needed. Part of the task of delineating the context is to do a contextual analysis, and to look at the historical setting within the pericope as well as the literary context (Fee 2002:16). Then a verbal analysis and literary analysis follows, and lastly, a look at the exegetical synthesis of all of the above.

A number of tools are used to help in the exegesis. First are the various translations, for example, the NKJV, the NIV, the AMP, the CEV and others. Then the Lexham English-Greek reverse interlinear Bible is used. Dictionaries and lexicons that are consulted include, the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT;1964), the Bauer Danker Arndt Gingrich Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (BDAG;2000), as well as the Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Design by Louw and Nida (1996).

The preliminary analysis is followed by a look at the significance of the passage from a theological viewpoint that brings application into the picture, identifying what the text means for us today. As Fee (2002:36) argues that the task of exegeting the passage is to make the point of the passage for the present day congregation. The

exegetical study concludes with a summary. This brings together all the relevant data into one conclusion answering the key problems set out in the introduction.

1.6 Hypothesis

The research demonstrates that in John 16:7-15 "advantageous" is the best translation of *symphêro*, and that the rendering of *Paraclete* is "someone coming alongside side to help in times of trouble". This rendering enables the explanation of the theme of the passage that describes the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in triumphant Christian discipleship in a hostile world throughout the Christian era.

1.7 Structure

The following is the structure of the contents of each chapter:

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter, a brief explanation of the problems is set out, together with a justification of the need for the exegetical study, and a description of the methodology. The value of the study is also stated.

Chapter 2: The Context of the Passage

The context is discussed in this chapter, from the historical and literary context to the theological themes of the book; as well, the social situation and the farewell discourse are discussed. The authorship is also examined in this chapter as well as the date that the Gospel was written in. The situation that the first readers found themselves in is also discussed along with the purpose of the book.

Chapter 3: Grammatical Analysis of the Passage

In this chapter the research conducts a literary and verbal analysis and putting it all together in the exegetical synthesis. It also discusses the significant words found in the passage and what meaning the author had for his intended readers. This chapter also has an in depth exegesis of each verse.

Chapter 4: Theology and Application of the passage

In this section the study discusses the theology of the pericope as well as its applications for today. The passage in particular raises an important question as to its application to a contemporary South African setting and the chapter is devoted to exploring that specific aspect.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter every previous chapter is summarised and concluded into an overall application for the world we live in today.

Chapter 2

The Context of John 16:7-15 within the Book of John

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will testify on the historical context of John 16:7-15 within the book of John. Part of the historical context is the examination of the authorship of the gospel and the date that it was written in. In understanding the author and the intended audience it will help to shed light on the intended meanings of both *sympherō* and *Paraclete*. This will then show the purpose the author had when he wrote his account of the life of Jesus.

This chapter will also research the literary theological context looking at the literary structure of the Gospel and the major themes of the Gospel to understand how the theological themes relating to the passage fits into the purpose of John's Gospel. Part of the literary structure is the farewell discourse and its genre as part of the book. A conclusion will end the chapter and outline the reasons for the following chapter.

2.2 Historical Context

2.2.1 Authorship

Both Guthrie (1961:252-253) and Kruse (2003:24-25) discuss the internal and external evidence for the authorship of the gospel. The internal evidence shows that there are traces of authorship found in the book, even if the author does not state his name anywhere. The author's detailed knowledge of Palestinian topography and features in conservative Jewish debate reflects personal knowledge and not just a dependence on Jewish sources (Carson and Moo 1992:236).

In several places in the Gospel of John the disciple who wrote the Gospel refers to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (Jn 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). These references suggests that the author was one of the disciples of Jesus. To investigate the identity of this disciple it is needed to look at the external evidence found in the witness of the early church fathers.

Kruse (2003:24-26) gives a chronological account of the witness of the early church fathers' testimony to the authorship of the fourth gospel. First is the testimony of Papias (c. AD 60-140) who was the Bishop of Hierapolis in the Roman province of Asia. Papias is mentioned in the writings of Irenaeus (d. AD 202) and Eusebius. They describe Papias as the 'dear disciple of John' and ascribe the authorship of the fourth gospel to the apostle John.

Secondly, Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150-215) attributed the writing of the fourth gospel to the apostle John, and also stated that John knew the Synoptic Gospels, but chose to write a 'spiritual gospel' (Kruse 2003:25) to complement the facts that the Synoptics had already made known.

Third is the letter written by Polycarp in about AD 190 to describe the burial of John in Ephesus. This was later corroborated by Eusebius (Kruse 2003:25). Fourth is the Muratorian Canon written AD 180-200, where it is affirmed that the fourth gospel was indeed written by the disciple John (Kruse 2003:25).

Lastly is the witness of Irenaeus. In a passage, he claims to have known Polycarp, who in turn knew the apostle John and stated that John lived in Ephesus until the time of Trajan (AD 98-117). He goes on to assert that 'John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned on His breast, published a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia' (Kruse 2003:25).

A number of scholars do not accept the view that the author of the fourth gospel was the apostle John. Edwards (2003:26) for example argues that the term "beloved disciple" in John 21:24 along with the plural term 'we know', cannot convincingly identify with any specific individual from early Christianity. Koester (2000:723-724) also argues that the high priest's household connections (Jn 18:15-16) might suggest that the beloved disciple was actually a Judean and not a Galilean like John. However these arguments have not found unanimous acceptance among conservative scholars, most of whom still accept the traditional view regarding authorship. As Carson (1991:68-69) states that the support for a Johannine school of authors for the fourth gospel is solely based on the internal evidence and virtually dismisses the external evidence (evidence outside the fourth gospel). Köstenberger (2004:3) notes that Robert Kysar, who was a strong supporter of the Johannine

School for the authorship of the fourth gospel, has in fact confessed personal regret at the 2002 session of the Johannine literature convened under the auspices of the Society of Biblical Literature for having endorsed such an hypothesis.

The authorship of John's gospel cannot be determined with certainty but the relevance is important. To accept that it was written by a close disciple of Jesus shows that the writer of the passage was relaying what he heard directly from Jesus, if not verbatim. This has another implication in the fact that the passage could refer to the historical disciples only or to all Christians. For if the passage applies to only the historical disciples then the writer was a direct beneficiary and so we should find attempts to delineate this more clearly in the passage. If on the other hand it applied to all Christians then John would be attempting to relate this to his first readers. Thus establishing the authorship is important for the exegetical task. This study accepts that the apostle John wrote the gospel.

2.2.2 Date of Writing of John's Gospel

It is important to understand the intent of the author in writing the gospel as part of the historical context, as it will influence the meaning of the content. Part of deciphering this intent is based on the time at which it was written, as the time (historical setting) provided the spark that led to the writing of the gospel.

By the end of the nineteenth century it was commonly believed that the Gospel of John was written in the latter half of the second century AD. That is, until the discovery of the Rylands Papyrus 457 (Guthrie 1961:297). This small fragment contained five verses from John 18, and was carbon-dated to the early part of the second century AD, which suggests that the fourth gospel was probably written in the latter half of the first century AD. This still leaves a date between AD 55 and 95 (Carson and Moo 1992:264). This date can be narrowed down if the inference is that John 21:19 shows that Peter has already glorified Jesus through his death. Peter died in AD 64 or 65 in Rome under Nero (Carson and Moo 1992:643).

It is now generally believed that the writing of the Gospel of John occurred in the last decade of the first century (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:1180; Morris 1988:1104; Marshall 1996:601). The date of the writing of the gospel is important, as it sets the scene for the reasons behind the writing, and therefore shows the intent the author

had in writing his version of the life of Jesus. This is explained in more detail in the next section.

2.2.3 Historical Setting

The immediate socio-historical context of the Gospel of John is important for two reasons. Firstly, it shows the conflict that caused the persecution of the disciples after Jesus left. Secondly, it shows the reason why Jesus had to teach the disciples about the benefit of having the Holy Spirit with them after He leaves. Jesus knew what would happen after His resurrection and wanted to prepare His disciples for it.

The Jewish religious setting at the time of the farewell discourse shows the synagogue leaders of the time consisting of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Elwell and Beitzel (1988:1670) state that 'the Pharisees are consistently depicted in the Gospels as Jesus' antagonists'. They did not want to let go of their rule of the Jewish religious society, and Jesus was a threat to their rule under the High Priest through the Sanhedrin. As the people increasingly followed Jesus, the Sanhedrin was losing its power over the people. Their threats of expulsion from the synagogues had limited impact. Jesus' teaching that God can be worshipped anywhere (Jn 4) showed this. That the Sanhedrin was losing its power over the people is clear from the blind man's responses to the Pharisees' questions in John 9.

John records in his gospel this growing conflict in such a way that he first shows by way of introduction (the prologue) that Jesus is the Son of God. Then through the recording of the various signs performed and discourses with people the conflict grows even more intense. Even some of Jesus' disciples leave him in John 6:66. Later in the study, the literary context of the Gospel will take a closer look at the narrative setting and the words John chose to use in his Gospel.

Tradition has it that the apostle John wrote his gospel while residing in Ephesus. If he had the churches in the area in mind this gives a different setting for the readers of the Gospel. The Greek emphasis in John results in the Gospel being 'sometimes called the Gospel of the Hellenists' (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:1181). At the time of the writing of the gospel (between AD 65 and 95) the church was in turmoil, with the widespread persecution of the church (Guthrie 1961:297; Carson and Moo 1992:264). These persecutions took place under the Roman Emperor Domitian (AD

81-96), and this was one period of several persecutions that Jesus foresaw and spoke about in His farewell discourse. As the old generation was dying, John wanted to fill the gaps in the Synoptic Gospels with a different witness recording to show that the readers had to believe in Jesus (Morris 1979-1988:1106). With retrospection, the apostle John wanted to encourage the new believers with the news of the Holy Spirit, by recording the farewell discourse.

The farewell discourse is set in the context of the Passover time (Köstenberger 2004:399). This is significant, as John uses it to blend in the Passover feast aspects and how the Passover links with the message of Jesus.

The Passover celebrates the deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:1618). The Passover is rich in sacrificial symbolism. With the sacrifice of the Passover lamb in the narrative of the exodus of Israel from Egypt, the lamb's blood gives redemption for the firstborn of the family. In John 13:1 the apostle John tells his readers that the story occurs just before the Passover feast. He chooses to highlight this time to point the readers to the events that follow, and their significance in the farewell discourse. It is typical at the meals celebrating the Passover for the host to give a speech and commentary on the Passover (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:783). Thus Jesus' farewell discourse may also be regarded as His commentary on the events in history, as well as what was about to occur, namely His death, resurrection and exaltation.

2.2.4 Purpose

Examination of the purpose of the Gospel involves establishing the mood for the particular passage this research is studying. The theme of the gospel of John is seen in John 20:31 where John clarifies his purpose for writing stating: 'these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God' (Freeman 2003:935; Elwell and Beitzel 1988:1182; Marshall 1996:597). The purpose of the Gospel shows that John wanted his readers to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The farewell discourse where Jesus encourages His disciples in the face of persecution with the news that another comforter is coming to walk alongside them, and help them fulfil the mission that Jesus had while on earth, is part of the purpose that John had when he wrote the Gospel.

To understand that the purpose of the Gospel is for the reader to believe in Jesus is helpful for our understanding of the words *sympherō* and *Paraclete*, because as disciples of Jesus living today we will also face persecution as we attempt to convey the same message that John had, to our listeners today. Persecution in our world today is very much a reality and the role the Holy Spirit plays in that is shown in the farewell discourse John recorded in his Gospel.

2.3 Literary-theological Context

2.3.1 Literary Structure

Marshall (1996:597) and Cross and Livingstone (2005:888) state that the structure of the Gospel can be broken into three sections. The first is John 1-12 which is Jesus' public ministry or his revelation to the world. In this section Jesus does various signs to show the public who He is. He also instigates various discourses with people to give more of a revelation of His reason for coming to earth.

Secondly is John 13-17 where Jesus reveals Himself to His disciples. This is also called His private ministry to His followers (Marshall 1996:597). It is in this section where the piece of this study comes out of. It also includes the farewell discourse and the teachings on the Holy Spirit.

Lastly is John 18-21 which is the passion and resurrection, also known as the glorification of Jesus.

2.3.2 Theological Themes found in the Gospel of John

This subsection looks at the theological context of the book of John and how it impacts the interpretation of the chosen passage. Because the chosen passage deals with the persecution of the disciples as well as the role the Holy Spirit will play in discipleship during persecution, this chapter will first look at the reason for the persecution.

The persecution came about because of the ruling religious factions being threatened by Jesus proclaiming to be the Son of God. If the people follow Jesus it would diminish their hold over the people. This leads to the theology of Christ or Christology found in the Gospel.

The overall purpose of the book (Jn 20:31) is to show that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and the author wants the readers to believe in Him, and in doing so, receive eternal life. The Gospel has many references to Jesus as the Son of God (3:16, 17, 18, 35; 5:18). The Gospel reveals Jesus as the Son of Man, who is from above, sent into the world by God, and will return to God (3:31, 32, 34; 13:1, 3; cf., De Silva 2004:417-418). In the Gospel of John Jesus refers to Himself as 'the I am' (6:35, 48; 8:12; 10:7, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). Through these 'I am' sayings Jesus reveals Himself as the bread of life, the light of the world, the gate of the pasture, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth and the life, and the true vine (Kruse 2003:40). Jesus uses the absolute 'I am' deliberately to imply His divinity (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:1182). The people understood this and wanted to kill Him for blasphemy (Jn 8:58-59).

Another way John shows in his Gospel that Jesus is God, is the use of the term 'signs' instead of miracles as used in the Synoptic. Elwell and Beitzel (1988:1468) state that a miracle is an act in which God reveals Himself to man, but a sign refers to an act which occurs as a token or pledge of God's control over events and as a revelation of God's presence with his people. It is God speaking, and this leads people to recognise that God is at work and thus revealing Jesus' true nature. John 21:25 says: 'there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written'. This shows that John carefully selected the miracles that Jesus performed and calls them signs.

Kruse (2003:45) state that the main purpose of the book is also evangelistic as the key verses 20:30, 31 shows. John wants to get his readers to believe in Jesus as the son of God, and the way, the truth and the life, and through that faith have eternal life, the essence of Jesus' Messianic mission. Köstenberger (2004:13) and Elwell and Beitzel (1988:1182) call this the salvation theology running through the Gospel. This is, in part, also one of the causes of the persecution. As a result, the people wouldn't look to the high priest and the different Jewish sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees for any normal blessings they would need, but look to Jesus as the way.

Salvation in itself always asks the question of the derivation of salvation, from what and by what means (Carson 1991:97)? John very clearly shows that Jesus came to

save the world (John 3:17; 12:47) and that only through Him can we have eternal life. John also shows us from what we need salvation. That is slavery to sin (John 8:34). Jesus came to take away the world's sin (John 1:29, 36). The theme of salvation goes hand in hand with the theme of eternal life. Eternal life is explained in John 17:3 as knowing God through Jesus Christ (Kruse 2003:42-43). This involves a relationship with God, knowing Him.

2.3.3 Farewell Discourse

This study looks at John 16:7-15 as it is part of the farewell discourse (Jn 13-17) in the Gospel of John. Köstenberger (2004:9) states that the farewell discourse is so named because it was the last teaching, recorded by John, that Jesus gave to His disciples before His crucifixion. This discourse takes place in the upper room immediately after the last supper.

Köstenberger (2004:398) explains that the entire section (Jn 13-17) is controlled by one purpose. Jesus wants to prepare His followers for the immediate future. That is, the trauma and loss resulting from His crucifixion and burial, and the time of persecution after His ascension. The unique character and structure of the farewell discourse sets the study of John 13-17 in perspective.

The structure of the farewell discourse is relevant to this study as it shows the flow of thought Jesus had in building up to His teaching on the Holy Spirit and discipleship in a hostile world.

The structure of the farewell discourse shows that it consists of three parts (Köstenberger 2004:9). In Chapter 13 the messianic community is literally cleansed by the foot-washing, and secondly figuratively cleansed by Judas' departure. Chapters 14-16 show preparation when instructions regarding the coming *Paraclete* and His ministry to the disciples are given.

Chapter 13 may be divided into the following sections. First, the background is established in verses 1-5 and sets the scene apart from the preceding narrative (Köstenberger 2004:401), and brings focus to this final discourse. After the setting, Jesus now continues to wash His disciples' feet in verses 6-11. From verse 12-17 Jesus presents the lesson that He intended to teach His disciples. Then the

description of the betrayal predicted by Jesus in Chapter 13 is given in verses 18-30. This sets the stage for Jesus' instructions to His followers.

The next section (13:31-16:33) is the actual farewell discourse, and consists of the following sections. Jesus explained that His followers cannot follow Him immediately (13:31-38), and still asserts that He is the way to the Father (14:1-14). Jesus announces the imminent coming of the Holy Spirit, the *Paraclete* (14:15-31; 16:4b-15). Jesus instructs the disciples that they must remain in close relationship with Him, just as branches derive their life from the vine (ch. 15). Once Jesus has left, the disciples are warned that the world's hatred will centre on them, but they must bear witness regardless (15:18-16:4a). The Holy Spirit (*Paraclete*) will be sent by Jesus to help/counsel/advocate for them (16:7-15). Though Jesus' followers will mourn His crucifixion, their sorrow will turn into joy when they see the resurrected Christ (16:16-33).

There are several possible approaches to the structure of the discourse in Chapter 16. Some scholars like Köstenberger (2004:470) and Knowles (2001:523) include verses 5 and 6 as part of Chapter 16:7-15 under a heading of the work of the Spirit. Others like Borchert (2002:163) treat verses 4-6 as a bridge between the previous section explaining why Jesus will go away, and the next section answering their fears.

The disadvantage of seeing verses 4-6 as part of describing the work of the Holy Spirit is that they don't actually have anything to do with the work of the Holy Spirit, and cannot be seen in the same section. The advantage of viewing them as a bridge is that it makes sense that Jesus first warns about the coming persecution and then gives the answer to the coming persecution in the following verses. This study agrees that verses 7-15 are about the work of the Holy Spirit, but believes verses 4-6 should be seen as a bridge between sections, and therefore are excluded from the study. Carson (1991:542) states that verse 15 is seen as the end of the section as verse 16 is the transition to the prediction of His death and resurrection.

With regards to the genre of the farewell discourse, the study finds that the farewell discourse itself has a specific genre. Köstenberger (2004:397-398) and Borchert (2002:73-74) write about the genre, and state that it is similar to the patriarchal

deathbed blessings or testament of Moses in his final words in Deuteronomy. There are instructions on virtue, to 'love one another' (13:34; 15:17), there is talk about Jesus' impending death or 'departure' (13:33, 36; 14:5-6, 12, 28), and there are words of comfort for those He leaves behind (13:36; 14:1-3, 18, 27-28). Testaments also tend to predict the future as occurs in this passage (Köstenberger 2004:471). Just as Moses spoke of the succession, with power going to Joshua, Jesus announces the coming of 'another helper' to ensure the continuation between His ministry and that of the disciples (15:26-27; 16:8-11). Jesus reveals that the work of the Holy Spirit through the disciples is imperative for the continuation of His ministry (Carson 1991:533). The role of the *Paraclete* in the lives of believers is the focus of the conversation in 16:7-15. That gives understanding to the meaning of *sympherō* in verse 7.

There are important differences between the Testamental genre and that of the Johannine farewell discourse. Common in Second Temple writings are extensive predictions about the future, but this is not as extensive in Jesus' discourse as reported by John. The monologue replacing dialogue in the vine allegory (John 15) is also without precedent in Jewish farewell discourses (Köstenberger 2004:399). In the farewell discourse the perspective changes from the first half of the gospel where John narrates Jesus' ministry. In the first half Jesus' disciples play only a minor role as disciples of 'Rabbi Jesus'. In the farewell discourse Jesus presents His mission to the world carried out through the power of the Holy Spirit. Now the disciples rise from lowly helpers to be partners in the ministry. Köstenberger (2004:399) suggests that the parallels between the farewell discourse and Moses' parting instructions show that Jesus is 'cast as a new Moses', who institutes the new covenant with future believers.

These three observations – the character of the farewell discourse, the shift in perspective from the earthly to the exalted Jesus and the pattern of the farewell discourse after the Moses Deuteronomic farewell discourse, show the literary context of John 16:7-15 as part of Chapters 13-17 (Köstenberger 2004:400).

Carson (1991:480) writes about the genre of the passage and the fact that it should not be called the farewell discourse, because in normal instances the person saying farewell is not expecting to return. When John writes his gospel, both he and his

readers knew the outcome of the issue, that Jesus came back from the grave and promised to return personally at the end of the age. Carson does, however, recognise that the 'discourse coheres well within the historical setting the evangelist establishes for it', and as such it is just misnamed, and the name given to it does not change the valuable information found in it. Carson suggests that it is in the same genre as 'testaments' of famous men of the ancient world, which was a genre well known in the Hellenistic world, and also very common in Jewish literature.

Lacomara (1974:65-84) read the farewell discourse as a covenant renewal ceremony similar to Joshua 24 and Deuteronomy 29-34. As Asumang (2010:346) states that there is little support for the idea that the farewell discourse should be read as a pre-war battle cry from Jesus.

Based on the fact that the farewell discourse occurs in the context of a meal setting (Jn 13:2), Witherington (1995:231-231) proposes that the farewell discourse should be read similar to a Greco-Roman banquet complete with a closing symposium in which Jesus offers the religious rites associated with such meals.

Establishing the genre of the passage is very important, as it sets out the author's intentions for the passage, and provides the parameters by which the passage must be interpreted. Jesus predicts how the world will deal with His followers, and as such the predictions are not limited to the immediate followers, being the twelve, but extend to all future followers. This modifies the genre to a prophetic commentary, and covers both the predictions and implications for future believers.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the historical and literary theological context of the book of John, and how it fits in with the key passage of Chapter 16, with which the study is concerned. It identified the reasons for the conflict which formed the background to the passage, and how some specific themes and theological ideas in John's Gospel are related to those of the passage. The discussion on the farewell discourse shows the emphasis that John placed on Jesus last teaching and the genre clarifies whether the promise of the Holy Spirit was for the immediate disciples or for all disciples of all time. The next chapter will take a closer look at the literary structure,

and the words and grammar chosen by John to aid him in creating the picture of His Gospel.

Chapter 3

Literary Analysis of John 16:7-15

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the study will examine the details of the passage, by doing a verbal analysis of significant words that influence the meaning of the text. After the significant words follows an exegesis of the passage verse by verse and ends with the exegetical findings. The exegetical findings will answer the research questions, before the conclusion brings it all together, and creates the approach for the next chapter.

3.2 Verbal Analysis of John 16:7-15

In the verbal analysis it is important to examine the text by looking at any significant words used. In this study the most significant words that are relevant to the investigation are the words *sympherō* and *Paraclete*. The words *sympherō* and *Paraclete* are significant because it shows the role of the Holy Spirit has in a hostile world (*Paraclete*) and the reason why Jesus states that it will be either better, advantageous or expedient (*sympherō*) for believers to have the Holy Spirit. A further investigation into other significant words is also necessary to get a holistic view of the content.

3.2.1 Significant words

A discussion of the significant words will show the meaning of these words and the context in which they are used. This will clarify the questions asked in the background and bring light to the chosen passage. The criteria to make a word significant are, if (a) it influences the key theme(s) of the passage, or (b) if it appears to be repeated on several occasions in the passage, or (c) if it links with an important theme in the whole gospel, or (d) if it is a rare or unique word in the gospel. Following these criteria the significant words to examine will be *sympherō*, *Paraclete*, convict, world, sin, righteousness, judgment, believe and Spirit of truth.

3.2.1.1 *Sympherō*

The first significant word to discuss is found in verse 7, and it is the Greek word *sympherō*. The word *sympherō* is significant because it influences the key theme of the passage namely the importance of the Holy Spirit to disciples of Jesus. It also links with an important theme of the Gospel. The Christology in the Gospel, discussed in the previous chapter, shows the ministry that Jesus had on earth and now Jesus is saying it will be better, more advantageous or expedient for the disciples to have the Holy Spirit in furthering that ministry.

The word *sympherō* is sometimes translated as 'better' or as 'advantageous' or even as 'expedient'. Arndt, Danker and others (2000:960) argue that it means to bring together, to be advantageous, to help, to confer a benefit, be profitable or useful. The word *sympherō* occurs 18 times in the New Testament with nine times being in the Gospels and Acts (Jn 11:50; 16:7; 18:14; Matt 5:29-30(2); 18:6; 19:10; Ac 20:20; 19:19), eight times in Pauline literature (1 Cor 6:12; 10:23; 7:35; 10:33(2); 12:7; 2 Cor 8:10; 12:1) and once in the book of Hebrews (Heb 12:10).

Depending on which translation one uses these 18 occurrences have different renderings in each of them. For example the GNB and the CEV translate it as 'better' while the ESV, the ISV, the LITV, and the NKJV translate it as 'advantage'. The Webster's bible, the RV, the ASV, the DRB and the KJV on the other hand translate it as 'expedient'. Balz and Schneider (1990:289) argue that the most significant usage of *sympherō* is found in the meaning 'useful' or 'advantageous', and when it is used in this way the direction or goal of the advantage or benefit is indicated by a *hina* clause as seen in John 16:7; 11:50; Matthew 5:29, 30; 18:6 (Arndt, Danker and others 2000:960). Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich (1964:Vol 9:69) state that the older Greek literature used the word *sympherei* which literally meant 'to gather' or 'to bring together', and later it changed to the imperfect *sympherō* meaning 'useful' or 'advantageous'.

A simple investigation into the three English translations, 'better', 'advantage' and 'expedient', also clarifies the matter. The first translation of the word *sympherō* is 'expedient' as seen in this rendition: 'Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away' (ASV). Soanes and Stevenson (2004:expedient) argue that the word means 'convenient and practical but possibly improper or immoral and it is suitable or appropriate'. Merriam-Webster (2003:expedient) says that it means

'suitable for achieving a particular end in a given circumstance', and it is 'characterised by concern with what is opportune, especially governed by self interest'. Considering that the word *sympherō* speaks about the condition the disciples will be in with Jesus, as opposed to the condition they will be in with the Holy Spirit, if this translation is correct, then the disciples' circumstances will be appropriate for the ministry of the Holy Spirit through them after Jesus ascends to heaven. This rendition seems to imply that we are only used as a means to an end and not the end in itself.

John 16:7 with the word translated as 'better', the passage reads: 'but I am telling you the truth: it is better for you that I go away' (GNB). The word better here is used as an adjective, and according to the Oxford English Dictionary (Soanes and Stevenson 2004:better) means more desirable, satisfactory or effective, more appropriate. The Webster's Dictionary (Merriam-Webster 2003:better) also states that it means greater than, or an improvement, more favourable or attractive. To use the word 'better' is to imply that the circumstances for the disciples with the Holy Spirit will be better than if they had Jesus with them. This makes sense because Jesus is somewhat restricted in His bodily form and the Holy Spirit is not.

Another point to consider in choosing the appropriate English rendition is to look at the change in the external circumstances after Jesus' departure. When Jesus was in His earthly ministry He experienced a gradual increase in hostility. At first people accepted the works He did, the miracles, and couldn't wait to hear every word He spoke. Then they became uneasy with His teachings about life, and having to view Him as the only source for life, salvation and the way to the Father. The hostility climaxed in His crucifixion. After His departure the disciples did not experience the same gradual increase in hostility, but an instant desire by their adversaries to stop them at any cost, by either imprisonment or death. This is what Jesus meant in John 16:1-6 when He said that the persecution will increase, and therefore the role of the Holy Spirit would be extremely important for the disciples and the ministry they must do in the world.

To then consider the word 'better' in the light of the function of the Holy Spirit in times of persecution is to understand that it will be better for the disciples because the Holy Spirit will plead their cases, like a lawyer would plead, before their adversaries. The

Holy Spirit would judge not just them, but also their enemies, and assure them of their righteousness before the Father.

When the word *sympherō* is translated as 'advantageous' as seen in the NKJV, John 16:7 is rendered as: 'Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away'. Advantage in the Oxford dictionary (Soanes and Stevenson 2004:Advantage) means a condition or circumstance that puts one in a favourable position. The Webster's (Merriam-Webster 2003:Advantage) again says that it is a superiority of position or condition, a circumstance of benefit. This implies that it would be to the disciples' advantage to rather have the Holy Spirit than Jesus while on earth, and the apostle John then goes on to explain why. This makes just as much sense as the translation 'better' as the disciples' condition with pre-resurrected Jesus is limited, but not with the Holy Spirit living inside of them, considering that the hostility towards the disciples after Jesus' departure will be different from what Jesus experienced. The ministry of the disciples is what makes having the Holy Spirit more 'advantageous', because they can spread out, as seen after the death of Stephen in Acts 7 and start to reach the world as Jesus commanded them to do in the great commission.

After comparing these three words and investigating their meanings individually, my opinion is that the translation 'expedient' does not holistically show the difference that Jesus is indicating between the era of Jesus' physical presence with the disciples and that of the Holy Spirit's ministry in and through them. The translation 'better' on the other hand, is too general and does not precisely indicate the sense in which *sympherō* attempts to show the difference between the era of Jesus' physical presence and that of the Holy Spirit's ministry. Jesus was attempting to comfort and reassure the disciples that His absence and their impending persecution was part of His plan. This meant that He had to assure them that they would triumph through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In this light the translation 'advantageous' captures the heightened meaning that Jesus intended to convey with *sympherō*.

We can then take this meaning through to the theology of the Holy Spirit and the role the Holy Spirit has in continuing the ministry of Jesus through His disciples. In other words it is to the disciples advantage that they have the ministry of the Holy Spirit with them when they face persecution in a hostile world.

3.2.1.2 *Paraclete*

The next significant word to look at is the word *Paraclete*, that is translated as 'Helper' in the BBE, the ESV, the GNB, the GW, the ISV and the NKJV and as 'Comforter' in the ASV, the Bishops Bible, the LITV, the KJV, the RV and the Webster's Bible. The term *Paraclete* is significant because not only is it the key theme of the passage but it is a rare and unique word in the Gospel.

The term *Paraclete* or *Paracletos* is only used five times in the New Testament, and all five times are in Johannine literature (Arndt, Danker and others 2000:766). It is used four times in the Gospel (John 14:16; 15:26 (2); 16:7), and once in 1 John 2:1 where it is used for Jesus. In the Gospel it is used only in the farewell discourse, when Jesus tells His disciples about the Holy Spirit and the role He will fulfil with them after Jesus' ascension. In 1 John 2:1 the apostle uses the term to denote the role Jesus plays when we sin, as that of our advocate before the Father.

Ladd (1974:329-330) and Horton (1973:122) both agree to the meaning of *Paraclete* in 1 John 2:1 as advocate as that is the context of the passage because Jesus is enthroned in heaven at the right hand of the Father pleading on our behalf. But they both also state that it is the context that gives it that meaning. Ladd goes on to state that the Johannine *Paraclete* is primarily a teacher to instruct and lead the disciples rather than an advocate to defend them. I agree with Horton (1973:122-123) that the Holy Spirit in John's Gospel is not primarily an attorney or even an intercessor. In John 16:8-11 the context shows that He is not an advocate and especially not a prosecuting attorney seeking to gain a conviction. The context shows that He is the representative of Christ that is sent to convince men and women of the truth and to bring them to repentance.

In Job 16:2 Job calls his friends 'miserable comforters' (NKJV) and the word in Greek LXX is *paraklitores* and speaks about the act of comforting, not the person fulfilling the role of a comforter. Arndt, Danker and others (2000:766) suggest that the *Paracletos* originally meant in the passive sense a *Paraclete* meaning 'one who is called to someone's aid'. Latin writers like Tertullian, Cyprian and Novatian rendered it, in its New Testament occurrences, with the legal term *advocatus*. In pre-Christian and extra-Christian literature it had for the most part a more general

meaning as 'one who appears on another's behalf, a mediator, an intercessor or helper' (Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich 1964:801).

Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich (1964:801) further explain that when this is used as a noun it is in the sense of a 'person called in to help, someone summoned to give assistance', it gives the meaning of a helper in court, an advocate. In the socio-cultural role of Jesus' times an advocate was someone who pleaded on behalf of someone else. Normally they were good orators. Many Jews were largely ignorant of Roman law and the Roman language, and as such had to employ Roman advocates to plead their cases in Roman courts. An example of this is found in Acts 24:1 where the Jews employed Tertullus 'the orator', a Roman advocate, to accuse Paul before Felix (Easton 1893: Advocate).

Balz and Schneider (1990:28) in the EDNT translate it as 'a legal advisor', 'a counsellor' or 'a helper'. Louw and Nida (1996:141-142) recognise it as a title for the Holy Spirit, and say that it is 'one who helps, by consoling, encouraging, or mediating on behalf of'. They do, however, state that this term covers a wide area of meaning, and the traditional rendering of Comforter or even Helper is too limited for what the Holy Spirit really does. Even the concept of a legal advocate seems too restrictive. That is why I agree with Hoeck (2012:24-26) that the rudimentary meaning to be preferred should be, 'a strong person called in to help in times of trouble', and the trouble could be legal, non legal, emotional, material or spiritual.

3.2.1.3 Convict

Another significant word is the word 'convict' and it means to 'prove in the wrong' (DeHoog 1988:770). This word is significant because it influences the theme of the passage, the *Paraclete*. The Greek word used is '*elénchō*' and means to show or demonstrate, and even to the further legal sense of 'proving guilty'. Arndt, Danker and others (2000:315) continue on the same trend and state that it is to expose to the point of recognising wrongdoing, to convince.

However, the New Testament usage is simple and straightforward, but outside the New Testament the usage is very complicated. In Homer, the classic Greek poet,

'*elénchō*' still means 'to scorn,' 'to bring into contempt'. Later it means 'to shame' by exposure, or opposition (Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich 1964: 2:473).

In the LXX *elénchein* and cognates are used to translate different Hebrew stems. In Isaiah 50:2 it is used to translate the Hebrew *gě'áráh* and for *oneidismós* in Isaiah 37:3 it means 'to rebuke' or 'to shame' (Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich 1964:Vol 2:473).

It is obvious that it is a term used in legal circles and could show the import of the passage. Here it is to prove the world's guilt and to put it to shame if it does not believe in Jesus.

3.2.1.4 World

The Greek word used is *kósmos*, and as Arndt, Danker and others (2000:561) and Elwell and Beitzel (1988:2163) point out, it refers to the world God created with design and order. The world we live in. This word is significant because it also influences the theme of the passage, the *Paraclete*.

Louw and Nida (1996:106) take it one step further and say that it has a figurative extension of meaning to show the world system and people estranged by God. I find this view of Louw and Nida difficult to accept within the passage, because it would change the meaning of the text to exclude believers from being 'convicted' of what follows in the text. It appears to me that in Jn 16 *kósmos* includes all people in this world, believers and non-believers alike.

The Greek *kósmos* appears 186 times in the New Testament with 78 of them in Johannine literature and 37 in Pauline literature. The Synoptics have 15 occurrences and 5 in the other New Testament writings (Balz and Schneider 1990:Vol 2:310). The occurrences in Johannine literature show different meanings. Sometimes as seen in John 1:10; 14:31; it speaks about the world God created. Other times as seen in John 3:17; 7:7; 14:17; 19; 27; 15:18; 19 it speaks about the evil world that needs to be saved. Other occurrences as seen in John 12:19 speak about the people in the world.

3.2.1.5 Sin

Arndt, Danker and others (2000:50) state that the Greek word used here is *hamartia* and means committing errors or mistakes ranging from involuntary errors to serious offences against another person or a deity. It is 'a departure from either human or divine uprightness'.

In the Old Testament sin appeared as the power that deceives humanity and leads it to destruction, and whose influence and activity can be ended only by sacrifices (Arndt, Danker and others 2000:51; Gen 18:20; Ex 29:36). In Romans 5:12 Paul writes of sin in personal terms. Wiersbe (1996:362) believes that the sin John refers to here is the sin of not believing in Jesus. Lange and Schaff (2008:474) go one step further and say that the 'unbelief should be the object not the sin', showing that they agree that the sin John refers to is the unbelief in Jesus. John uses the term *hamartia* in John 9:41 again to refer to the sin of not believing in Jesus. In other Johannine literature (1 John 3:4, 5; 5:16, 17) the term is used as Arndt, Danker and others (2000:50) state above.

This word is significant because it influences the theme of the passage, the *Paraclete*, as well as the theme of a belief in Jesus needed in the Gospel. The concept of sin is a theology on its own and the meaning here shows what the author wanted his readers to understand about the role of the Holy Spirit after Jesus' departure.

3.2.1.6 Righteousness

The Greek word used here is *dikaiosyne* and means the quality or state of judicial correctness with focus on redemptive action (Arndt, Danker and others 2000:247). Righteousness is a right standing before God. In Greco-Roman culture the theme was often found in honorary inscriptions to show the person was lawful and fair. It is significant because it goes hand in hand with the key theme of the Gospel.

Elwell and Beitzel (1988:1860) state that righteousness is the 'fulfilment of the expectations in any relationship, whether with God or other people'. Louw and Nida (1996:743) confirm that righteousness is 'doing what God requires', in other words fulfilling the expectation that God has of us, that we will do what is right.

This term is only used twice in the Gospel of John (16:8, 10), but elsewhere in the New Testament it always refers to righteousness in relation to God. I agree with Louw and Nida, and Arndt, Danker and others that it refers to our state of being before God, whether we are blameless before Him or not.

3.2.1.7 Judgment

The Greek word used is *krisis* and speaks about the legal process of judgment by a board of judges in a court to decide what is right and what is wrong (Arndt, Danker and others 2000:569).

In the Old Testament the LXX uses the legal term *krínein* meaning 'judging even if it is deliverance or salvation for the oppressed'. In Zechariah 7:9 LXX it is used for true justice (Kittel, Bromiley and Friedrich 1964:Vol 3:923).

The apostle John uses this term 11 times (John 5:22, 24, 27, 30; 7:24; 8:16; 9:39; 12:31; 16:8, 11; 19:13) and all of them describe the judgment by God of mankind. In the other New Testament occurrences (Matt 12:42; 27:19; Luke 10:14; 11:31) it speaks not just about judgment before God, but also judgment by rulers and people in authority.

3.2.1.8 Believe

It is the key word in the theme of John's Gospel and found 60 times in 53 verses. The Greek word used is *pisteuó* and according to Louw and Nida (1996:375) means the extent of complete trust and reliance upon, to have faith in, and in this case to believe in Jesus.

Arndt, Danker and others (2000:816) state that the *pisteuó* used in this sense is the same as used in Habakkuk 1:5 LXX and means 'to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust', to believe. The same word is used in both passages as the writers both wanted their readers to believe in the power of God.

3.2.1.9 Spirit of Truth

The initial reading of the text implies that this refers to the *Paraclete*, the Holy Spirit. However, the term used consists of two Greek words namely *pneuma* and *aletheia*.

Pneuma is the generic term for spirit according to Arndt, Danker and others (2000:832-833), meaning that which gives life to the body or an independent non-corporeal being, in contrast to a being that can be perceived by the physical senses. *Aletheia* is the Greek word for truth. Louw and Nida (1996:140) on the other hand look at the term Spirit of truth as a whole, and state that it is a title for the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. I agree with them that this is what the author meant. John uses this term only four times in his literature, three times in the Gospel (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) and once in 1 John 4:6, and all four of the uses refer to the Holy Spirit.

3.3 Exegesis of John 16:7-15

In this section the study will look at each verse separately and explain its meaning.

16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Wiersbe (1996:361) states that Jesus was with the disciples for three years and protected them, but now He was about to leave them as He told them earlier in John 13:33. Then Jesus starts with 'Nevertheless' to point out that He understands that the news He gave them earlier in verses 1-6 could be taken as negative, because they did not see the complete picture that He saw. He wants to encourage them so He places emphasis on the truth, the truth that He wants his disciples to hear and understand now that 'it is to their advantage that He goes away'.

Köstenberger (2004:470) points out that Jesus was grieved that the eleven did not show greater interest in the 'salvation-historical' implications of His departure. The cause of the disciples' grief is largely a preoccupation with their own fate. He knows they are not going to understand it at this point, and therefore emphasises that He is 'telling the truth'. It is to their advantage to have the Holy Spirit come to them. Here the word *sympherō* is used and the discussion above showed that the best rendition is 'advantageous'. It is therefore advantageous for them that Jesus goes away. Köstenberger (2004:470) also states that the crucifixion would expedite God's purposes, and not delay it. Still the disciples cannot bear the news, but Jesus goes

on to explain why it will be more advantageous for them to have the Holy Spirit rather than Himself.

One must keep in mind that Jesus keeps on explaining Himself and what He says by adding more detail (Köstenberger 2004:471). The reason for the advantage is the *Paraclete* that Jesus will send. The disciples do not realise yet that their circumstances are about to change. One moment they are walking with Jesus with many people following them, and they are in the 'in crowd' as part of Jesus' entourage. The next moment, after Jesus' crucifixion they will become outcasts and persecuted unto death. They do not see that picture yet, and Jesus needs to prepare them. In the next verse Jesus explains the reason for the Holy Spirit, and why it will be to their advantage.

The gospel readers must keep in mind that while Jesus was on earth in bodily form the Holy Spirit could not be poured out on believers, as seen on the day of Pentecost, as Jesus had to send Him (Carson 1991:533-534; Borchert 2002:165) . It was God's grand design to have the Holy Spirit on earth in believers to help them fulfil His ministry of saving people (Köstenberger 2004:471; Carson 1991:533). This is the reason for the Holy Spirit 'who comes alongside' the disciples to help them, comfort them, guide them and be with them. Köstenberger (2004:471) clearly states that it was not just advantageous for Jesus to have left, but also necessary.

Wiersbe (1996:362) notes that the Spirit comes to the church and not to the world. The Holy Spirit works in and through the church. He cannot work in a vacuum. Just as Jesus required a body to do His work on earth, so the Holy Spirit needs a body to do His work, and believers are that body, that tool to witness to a lost world.

16:8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Here Jesus explains why it will be to the disciples' advantage if He goes away. He starts to speak about the ministry of the Holy Spirit and what the Holy Spirit will do on earth. In the book of John it is the world that is on trial, not Jesus (Köstenberger 2004:471; White 1998:484-485). The key word here is 'convict', and the study revealed that it means to 'show or demonstrate' and even to the further legal sense of 'proving guilty'. So now the work of the Holy Spirit is to show and demonstrate that

the world is sinful, or righteous and then based on that revelation be judged accordingly. John then explains further in verse 9 what that sin is. In verse 8 John mentions the three things of which the Holy Spirit will convict the world. They are sin, righteousness and judgment. Sin and righteousness stand at two opposite ends of the moral spectrum. The third, judgment, is the outcome of the choices made to either be sinful or to be righteous. The world here, as shown earlier, is all people God created needing salvation.

Carson (1991:534) states that it means to bring someone to an acknowledgment of personal guilt. The Holy Spirit brings about a sense of guilt by exposing the person as someone who hates the light and runs from it. He brings the shame of the evil actions to the person so that the person shrinks from the light, and thereby has to acknowledge their wrong actions and summoning them to repentance (Borchert 2002:165).

16:9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me;

Now Jesus explains in even more detail about the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin. Here John defines what is sin, and as Wiersbe (1996:362) states, sin is not the committing of individual sins as a person could 'clean up their lives' and quit bad habits and live as good, honest people and still be lost and go to hell. But John defines sin as unbelief in Jesus (Lange and Schaff 2008:474). If a person does not believe that Jesus, as the son of God, came down from heaven to live amongst us and then died for us so we can have eternal life, then that person is still in sin and will be judged. What is interesting from this is what people will be judged for. Not for the individual sins but for not believing.

Borchert (2002:166) states that the theme of belief is set in apposition with "receive". He goes further and says that to not believe is to reject Jesus. This charge would be the equivalent of Israel's rejection or rebellion against God in the Old Testament (Ex 32:1-8; Num 25:1-9). Morris (1995:619) is correct when he states that "The basic sin is the sin that puts self at the centre of things and consequently refuses to believe".

16:10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;

Now we have to look at the opposite end of that moral spectrum, and that of righteousness. This is where the difficulty in the translation comes in, as Carson (1991:537) states that to 'convict the world of righteousness sounds strange'. The word 'convict' has a negative connotation of someone who is guilty of something, but someone who is righteous is guilty of nothing. The word used for convict *elénchō* means to show or demonstrate. In other words the Holy Spirit will show or demonstrate to the sinner what righteousness is. Wiersbe (1996:362) states that the Holy Spirit will show the sinner the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

John further states that Jesus explains to them that they need righteousness by believing in Him as He goes to the Father to be an advocate on their behalf and plead their case before the Father. Believing in Jesus as their saviour, their advocate makes them righteous (Köstenberger 2000:472).

The question to ask then is: how does the Holy Spirit fulfil this through the disciples and eventually through all believers? Carson (1991:538) states that this kind of conviction is driven home through followers of Jesus who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, live their lives in such conformity to Christ that the same impact on the world is achieved as if Jesus was living out His life before the world. Therefore the same conflict that Jesus had in His ministry on earth is the same kind of conflict that believers can expect to see while the Holy Spirit uses them to convict the world of their unbelief.

16:11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Jesus explains to them that they have to be judged, because the ruler of this world is judged. Jesus was referring to the judgment of Satan that was effected by His death on the cross (John 12:31), and although Satan is the prince of this world he is a defeated prince (Wiersbe 1996:362). When a lost person is truly convicted by the Holy Spirit, he will see the evil of unbelief and confess that he does not measure up to the righteousness of Christ. He will also realise that he is under condemnation because he belongs to the world and the devil (Eph 2:1-3). When believers follow God they submit themselves and their lives to Him, but if a person does not follow God they are automatically in subjection to the ruler of this world, and if he is judged, then so are they (Borchert 2002:167).

I agree with Borchert (2002:167) when he says that the *Paraclete's* task here is portrayed in the court of God like a counsellor and a judge in bringing judgment to the world and its rebellious prince. This section is not unrelated to John 5:22 where Jesus is given authority to render all judgment by the Father. In the midst of a hostile world, the disciples are clearly shown that to take the side of the world is hardly an option because of its dire consequences.

16:12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

Jesus knows that the disciples won't be able to understand everything He has to go through without the divine enlightenment the Holy Spirit can give. As Wiersbe (1996:362) explains, the mark of a great teacher is someone who can give you the right amount of truth at the right time. The Holy Spirit is our teacher today, and He follows that same principle. He teaches us the truths we need to know, when we need them, and when we are ready to receive them (Carson 1991:539-540).

He will bring everything to their remembrance and put it all in perspective (Jn 14:26). He will teach them why Jesus had to do what he did. Then only will they understand and be able to share it with others.

16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

The disciples will understand it because the Holy Spirit will show them the complete picture. He will put the truth together like a puzzle and guide them to understanding. Jesus must have given the disciples a lot of teaching when they lived together and walked together everywhere they went. It would have been impossible for them to remember everything, and that is why part of the Holy Spirit's ministry to believers is to bring to remembrance what God has said to them as in the case of the disciples, and in our case what we have read in the Word.

Köstenberger (2004:473) explains that the Spirit will only speak of what He hears. He follows the model set by Jesus in His relation to the Father. This way He also tells us

of what is yet to come. By following the leading of the Holy Spirit believers are directly disciplined by Jesus.

Wiersbe (1996:363) clarifies that believers do not study the Word of God to argue religion with people, but to know God better. As believers witness in a hostile world, the Holy Spirit uses the Word He has taught them to share Jesus with the lost. Believers must be witnesses, it is the Spirit's job to convict the world.

Another part of the work of the Spirit is to guide believers, because their lives do not belong to them anymore. 'It is no longer they that live but Christ who lives in them' (Gal 2:20) through the Holy Spirit (Kruse 2003:327). I agree with Borchert (2002:170) that it is in this combination of farewell and hope of guidance that contemporary readers can find great significance for their lives of discipleship.

16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

The Holy Spirit has a continuing function to bring glory to Christ. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ by taking His true identity as the Son of God, and makes it known to believers. This shows unity between the Father and the Son (Bryant and Krause 1998).

Borchert (2002:171) states that to be authentically Christian in a hostile world, according to John, is not to be pneumatically centred, nor Christocentric but theocentric. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus just as Jesus did the will of the Father. The trinity is united in purpose and mission. Disciples are called to follow the mission of sharing Jesus in a hostile world. While doing so they will not escape the wilderness of hostility and persecution, but they will have (1) another Paraclete, (2) one who will teach them, (3) one who will witness with them, (4) one who will serve as their attorney and judge in the world, and (5) one who will guide them authentically in truth.

Borchert (2002:171) continues that this message was intended for the anxiety filled disciples when Jesus shared it, but when John wrote it down, his intention was that this fivefold message concerning the *Paraclete* would have continuing implications for his own readers therefore, derivatively for us today.

16:15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Both Köstenberger (2004:474) and Carson (1991:541) agree that the Father is shown as the ultimate source of both Jesus and the Holy Spirit. There is continuity between the ministries of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Just as Jesus brought glory to the Father (7:18; 17:4), so the Spirit glorifies Jesus.

There is also continuity between the Father/Son and Son/Spirit in self-disclosure. Jesus is the revelation of the Father (1:18; 5:19-20), and here in this verse the Spirit 'takes of what is Jesus' and gives it to the disciples and also to us.

Because the Holy Spirit's work is to show believers Jesus, He always has to point to Jesus. His work is to glorify Jesus, because if 'Jesus is lifted up, He will draw all men to Him' (John 12:32). The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to believers (Kruse 2003:327).

Jesus shows here that whatever He has in the Father, believers also have in Him. This is a powerful statement, as it shows the grace given to believers through their faith in Jesus. Grace is getting all the blessings of God because of what Jesus did.

3.4 Exegetical Findings

The study in this chapter has shown that Jesus knew the disciples' circumstances would change, from being loved by people as Jesus' followers, to being persecuted for being so. He wanted to warn His followers that the time was coming that persecution in a hostile world would be a very real part of their lives.

He encourages them with the news about the Holy Spirit coming to walk 'alongside them' and be with them. He explains that the Holy Spirit also has a ministry like Jesus, and that they are part of fulfilling that ministry on earth working with the Holy Spirit.

There is widespread agreement that many followers of Jesus, even today, feel persecuted while living in societies where there is freedom of religion. Because believers live in a hostile world they need the ministry of the Holy Spirit as part of their everyday lives.

3.5 Conclusion

The literary context shows the genre that John records in the farewell discourse to explain that Jesus was closing His ministry on earth and paving the way forward for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Jesus willingly sacrificed His life, no one had the power to take it from Him, and therefore even the timing of the event was according to His decision. In the next chapter the study will look at the theology found in this pericope, as well as the application we can get from it for our lives today.

Chapter 4

Theological Significance of John 16:7-15

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter conducted a verbal analysis of the passage, and established the genre and the setting of the farewell discourse. Now the study will show the significance of the passage for Christians today by looking at the theology the passage highlights, as well as its pastoral application for believers in a hostile world. The chapter will flow in the following manner. After a summary of the key theological ideas in the passage, an exegetical synthesis of the work so far will be set out, and its application to contemporary Christian doctrine and practice explained.

4.2 Key Theological Ideas in John 16:7-15

In John 16:7-15 there are several theological ideas worth discussing. The present study has already discussed some of the general theological ideas pertinent to the rest of the book of John. These include the theology of Christ, evangelism and salvation. The present section will examine some of the specific theological issues that are relevant to the pericope. As a summary, these include, (a) the role of the Holy Spirit, (b) discipleship in a hostile world, (c) the doctrine of the Trinity and (d) realised eschatology. The chapter will take each one and explain how the passage shapes each of these theological themes.

4.2.1 The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit in John 16:7-15

The theological focus in this passage is on the work of the Holy Spirit, and therefore it is the central theology to discuss. To understand the Holy Spirit we need to understand what the difference is between the theology of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and that in the New Testament. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came upon people at various times for specific purposes (Guthrie 1981:512). An example of this is seen in Numbers 11:25: 'Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again' (NKJV). The prophet Balaam experienced the same thing when the Holy Spirit came upon him to prophesy in

Numbers 24:2. Saul also had that experience in 1 Samuel 10:10, as well as Jahaziel in 2 Chronicles 20:14 (Kealy 2000:601).

There are passages in the Old Testament that point to people being filled with the Holy Spirit, in a similar fashion to the New Testament's explanation of what being filled with the Holy Spirit means. Pharaoh in Genesis 41:38 says of Joseph, 'Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?' (NKJV). Another place in the Old Testament where someone was filled with the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit was not just resting on Him for a specific purpose, is in the building of the Ark, the tabernacle, the mercy seat and the furniture of the tabernacle. God says that He filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God to perform these artistic works (Ex 35:30-31). His assistants, however, were not filled with the Spirit as he was. These instances are similar to the situation in the New Testament, in the sense that the person is filled to fulfil a function of glorifying God. However, in the New Testament the filling of the Holy Spirit is for ministry in spreading the gospel, to be witnesses for God (Pretorius and Lioy 2012:37-38; Morris 1986:261; Ladd 1993:323).

There are several other people in the OT who were also filled with the Spirit like Micah (Mic 3:8) and Ezekiel (Ez 3:22-24), but the purpose was always to prophesy to people who needed to hear the words of God (Horton 1984:58). In the New Testament the Holy Spirit comes to make His home within believers when He dwells in them. The idea of a single temple where God can be worshipped has changed as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman that 'the time has come when the true worshippers of God will worship in spirit and in truth' (Jn 4:23-24; cf.; Marshall 2004:499). The Old Testament infilling of the Holy Spirit was for a specific purpose, to either prophesy and speak God's words, or to fulfil a function that God had at that time, as seen in Joseph with Pharaoh's dreams or in the building of the Ark. In the New Testament God wants to live in the heart of believers, to come and make His home in them, to have a closer relationship with them, and to equip them to make disciples who are like them in their relationship with Him (Pretorius and Lioy 2012:58-59) .

The plan of God to bring the Holy Spirit to believers to come and make His home in them, has been God's plan for humanity since the beginning of time (Pretorius and Lioy 2012:35, 70). There are several prophecies in the Old Testament, the most

famous one that manifested in Acts 2:4 on the day of Pentecost being the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:28). It has been God's plan to pour the Holy Spirit on all believers and to live with them, inside them. He wants to have fellowship with His beloved people.

In 1 Corinthians 6:19 Paul speaks about the believer's body becoming the 'temple of the Lord', and that the believer's body 'does not belong to himself' but to the Lord. This shows the main difference, as the Holy Spirit in the New Testament does not distinguish between Jew or Gentile, but between believer and unbeliever, and then He always comes to fill the person and to make His home with them, giving them purpose to witness to others and to spread the gospel (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:988).

In John 16:7-15 Jesus speaks about the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and unbelievers in several ways. In verse 7 is the word *Paraclete* that points to the Holy Spirit coming alongside believers to help them. This is a vital role the Holy Spirit plays in the lives of believers who face persecution in a hostile world. As seen in the previous chapter the word *Paraclete* means 'a strong person called in to help in times of trouble', and the trouble could be legal, non-legal, emotional, material or spiritual. When believers are persecuted in a hostile world it could mean trouble with all of the above, and the work of the Spirit is to be there as helper and friend.

Another role the Holy Spirit fulfils is seen in verses 8-11 when the Holy Spirit convicts the world of the sin of unbelief (Pretorius & Lioy 2012:51). As Horton (2005:125) states, the world wants to deny sin, righteousness and judgement, and either wants to set up its own standard of what is right and wrong, or just completely denies the principles of the gospel that set the standard of what God says is right and wrong. The Holy Spirit through conviction convinces unbelievers that they are in need of salvation offered through Christ, and believers that they should repent for their actions. Without Him they cannot be righteous and will be judged, just as the ruler of this world is judged.

Then in verse 14 the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus. Pretorius and Lioy (2012:48-49) state that this is the principal work of the Holy Spirit and every believer's greatest need in every area of Christian activity. Without the empowering of the believer by the Holy Spirit the kingdom of God cannot be extended and

therefore God cannot be glorified. This will be discussed in the next section in more detail to show why the glorification of Jesus is needed in a hostile world.

4.2.1.1 The Holy Spirit and the Glorification of the Son in the Hostile World

The study started to look at the theology around the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the previous section. In this section the specific work of the Holy Spirit in a hostile world has to be examined, and how it affects the contemporary believer. But first some clarification of what the hostile world is will be helpful. Merriam-Webster (2003:hostile) describes it as marked by opposition or resistance and an unfriendly environment, as well as having an intimidating, antagonistic or offensive nature. Space does not allow examining into detail why the world is hostile towards believers. I shall therefore take it as self-evident, and will look at the work of the Holy Spirit in a hostile world from that viewpoint.

Why is it necessary for the Holy Spirit to glorify the Son in a hostile world? Jesus said in John 16:14 that 'the Holy Spirit will glorify Him by taking what is His and give it to the disciples'. Marshall (2004:507) points out that the Holy Spirit does this by continuing Jesus' work and pointing people to Him. This role the Holy Spirit fulfils even today through believers everywhere. This hostility of the world towards the disciples and contemporary believers alike, happens because the world does not recognise who Jesus is or the one who sent Him. Believers are hated just as Jesus was. This can be seen positively, as believers do not belong to this world. Believers have a responsibility to point to Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit (Pretorius and Lioy 2012:50). The Holy Spirit shines His light on the truth, the way and the life in Jesus, because unsaved people living in this hostile world have become used to living immoral, degrading sinful lives. The Holy Spirit convinces/convicts people to show them that they need to decide between right and wrong, living God's way with Him, or being their own gods living without Jesus.

What then is the role of believers in this regard? As the purpose of believers is to witness about Jesus and be the shining light that the hostile world needs, the Holy Spirit has made a way to help and support believers in doing that (Thielman 2005:706). Paul speaks about the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 and this shows the character of Christ (Marshall 2004:452). Paul calls it 'fruit' because a

hungry society living in a hostile world looking for peace and truth can come and be drawn to believers because of this fruit. Pretorius and Lioy (2012:48-49) stated that without God's kingdom being extended there can be no glorifying of God. The fruit of the Spirit is the way believers can extend the kingdom of God by giving 'food' to a hungry hostile world (Horton 2005:178; Ladd 1993:556).

4.2.1.2 The Holy Spirit as *Paraclete* in a Hostile World

The name *Paraclete* has been seen in the previous chapter to be a strong person coming alongside to help in times of trouble. This is exactly what believers need in a hostile world, but how does the Holy Spirit accomplish this part of His role? Jesus said in John 14:16 that He will send 'another' *Paraclete*, which suggests that He was already fulfilling that role to the disciples (Ladd 1993:330). Now Jesus says in 16:7 that it will be advantageous (*sympherō*) for the disciples to have the Holy Spirit with them being their *Paraclete*.

Harris (1994:200-201) points out that the world cannot receive the Spirit or know Him. That is why we as believers are called to witness (Matt 28:19-20) to this hostile world (Thielman 2005:702). It was seen previously that a hostile world does not want to recognise right from wrong or live by any moral standard. It is the believer's responsibility to uphold that standard, but needs the power of the Holy Spirit to do so.

Ladd (1993:330) states that the nature of the *Paraclete* is the same towards us as Jesus was towards His disciples. He cared for them, He fed them spiritually and prayed for them constantly. The Holy Spirit also prays for believers when they are weak by interceding for them through 'groaning and utterances' we cannot understand (Rom 8:26). Without the Holy Spirit believers cannot understand the bible. We need the Holy Spirit to teach us what the Word of God means, and how to apply it to our everyday lives.

4.2.1.3 The Holy Spirit as Guide in the Hostile World (John 16:7-15)

In verse 13 the role of the Holy Spirit is exclusive to believers to guide them into the truth. Pretorius and Lioy (2012:53-54) explain that the gospel of John focuses truth on the Father's revelation of Himself in the Son, and that the Holy Spirit does this by

teaching believers in the same way a personal tutor would mentor a student. This role of the Holy Spirit is vital for believers in a hostile world where heretical doctrines inspired by Satan are rampant.

Verse 13 speaks not only about the Holy Spirit guiding believers into truth, but also of His role to tell believers of what is to come. Ladd (1993:332-333) says that this phrase not only speaks about prophetic events of the end time, but also to events that were to be in the future experience of the disciples. Carson (1991:540) points out that Jesus never spoke on His own initiative, but said what the Father told Him to say. In the same way, the truth the Holy Spirit guides believers into comes from Jesus being the Truth.

4.2.2 The Trinity in John 16:7-15

This passage shows us two aspects of the Trinity, the relationship between the three Persons and the nature of the Trinity. The passage contains primordial concepts of the Trinity by referring to God the Father, Jesus and the Spirit in close proximity in the same thought units (Plantinga 1979-1988:917). In John 16:13-14 for example, Jesus shows us the dynamics of the relationship between the Father, the Son and the Spirit (Turner and McFarlane 1996:1210; Achtemeier 1985:1099; Manser 2009:1512). Jesus said that He does nothing of His own, but only that which His Father in heaven shows Him (Matt 11:26; 26:39; John 5:19, 30; 12:49-50; 7:18). In John 16:13-14 Jesus declares that the Holy Spirit will take of what is His, and declare it to the disciples. Understanding the nature and purpose of the Trinity shows the role the Holy Spirit has in continuing the ministry of Jesus through His followers.

Just as Jesus obeys the Father and does what the Father says He must do, so the Holy Spirit does and says what Jesus commands, and in the same way we have to listen and obey the commands of God. This shows the same relationship in the Trinity as the believer has as an extension of Jesus on earth (Plantinga 1979-1988:917). The Holy Spirit has a role to fulfil in communicating the will of God the Father through Jesus to us (Turner and McFarlane 1996:1210). Pretorius and Lioy (2012:82) state that Jesus commissioned the Holy Spirit to rule and administer the church. The Holy Spirit now reveals God's will to the church, which becomes an extension of Jesus on earth (Turner and McFarlane 1996:1210).

The nature of the three Persons of the Trinity is to complement one another in their functions (Gregg 2000:1336). John 16:7 shows Jesus sending the Spirit. Verse 10 shows Jesus sitting with the Father, and verses 13 and 14 show that Jesus gives of what is the Father's to us through the Holy Spirit (Manser 2009:1512). In the rest of the New Testament we see examples of this pattern in which the three Persons are mentioned in close relationship in the same thought unit (Plantinga 1979-1988:917). In Galatians 4:6 for example, Paul writes that the Son sends the Spirit to live in believers, and causes them to cry to the Father (Ladd 1993:330). Paul also writes in Ephesians 2:18 that we have access to the Father through Jesus by the Spirit. Peter (1 Pet 1:2) wrote that believers are chosen by God the Father through the sanctification of the Spirit for the work of Christ (Gregg 2000:1336). Paul (Rom 8:26, 34) attributes the same intercessory functions to both Jesus and the Spirit. It is a similar phenomenon that we find here in our passage.

Ladd (1993:330) points out another part of this nature of the Trinity, that the Holy Spirit will come; so also Jesus will come into the world (John 5:43; 16:28; 18:37). The Holy Spirit comes from the Father, just as Jesus does (John 16:27-28). The Father gives the Holy Spirit at Jesus' request and the Father also gave the Son (John 3:16). The Father sends the Spirit in the same way He sent His Son. In many ways the Spirit is to Jesus as Jesus is to the Father (Gregg 2000:1336).

4.2.3 Discipleship in a Hostile World According to John 16:7-15

The term disciple used in scripture means a student, pupil, or learner who follows another person or way of life and submits himself to the teachings of that leader or his way of life (Nasselqvist 2012:Disciple; Elwell and Beitzel 1988:629; Nelson 2000:348). Elwell and Beitzel (1988:629) continue by saying that the term 'disciple' is used exclusively in the Gospels and the Book of Acts with exceptions in Isaiah. However, wherever there is a teacher and those taught, the idea of discipleship is present. Jesus commanded his disciples to go into the world and make disciples (Matt 28:19-20), to teach people to follow Him and be like Him.

Hostility occurs when people have differing ideas about what truth is, and neither party wants to give up or compromise on their idea of the truth. When the Holy Spirit brings conviction about the truth, the person convicted is forced to either accept what

the Holy Spirit says is truth or come against it, bringing conflict. This hostility can be small in nature when the person only disagrees inside himself, or be as large as persecution, as is seen in the Gospels and Acts.

When a person starts to follow Jesus and believes in Him, he or she becomes His disciple, and there is a disciple-teacher relationship established. In John 16:7-15 Jesus explains the role the Holy Spirit will perform as another helper or teacher, and that He will take over the master role from Jesus as His representative on earth (Ladd 1993:330). The Holy Spirit teaches the truths of the scriptures to Jesus' followers and guides them to be witnesses to establish God's kingdom on earth. This naturally places each and every disciple in the line of fire as the Holy Spirit uses them to convict unbelievers.

As disciples of Jesus, believers have to love others as they love themselves, and at the same time be the reason conviction comes upon unbelievers (Elwell and Beitzel 1988:629). This causes even more hostility. Disciples of Jesus living in a hostile world have a duty and responsibility to live moral, straight lives that reflect God's presence in them. This is very often seen as hypocritical in the eyes of the world, as Christians are not perfect, but also make mistakes. Christians have to preach the Word of God, and sometimes they also fail in life and this adds even more hostility.

4.2.4 Realised Eschatology in John 16:7-15

The Gospel of John emphasises a realised eschatology (Kruse 2003:40-41) where the present experience of the blessings regarding salvation thought to be realised only in the future are said to be experienced in the present. John shows that those who believe already have eternal life (3:36; 4:14; 5:24; 6:47, 54) and have passed from death to life (5:24). The apostle John says that they have received the promised Spirit (7:39; 14:16-18, 26; 16:13) and have escaped condemnation or judgment (3:18; 5:24).

In the passage itself Jesus explains the functions of the Holy Spirit in the disciples living in a hostile world where they will be persecuted for their belief. The role of the Holy Spirit to judge and to speak the truth, speaks about conviction on the world and the ruler of this world (Kruse 2003:41). The idea of conviction explains why

persecution will come, as those who do not accept the truth will naturally come against it, bringing conflict.

Marshall (1996:599) states that the Holy Spirit comes to the church to take the place of Jesus as 'another counsellor' and to glorify Him, and in this way the church can already partake of eternal life. Smith (2011:482) states that the present reality of a life of faith is not just eternally long but also eternally rich, and the bliss of such a life is experienced in the Christian community, where believers abide in Christ and love one another. Kruse (2003:42) speaks about the believers who live for the future eschatology, a time when Jesus will come again, and all the blessings that will come with Him. Believers going through persecution in this hostile world finds comfort in knowing that their blessings will come in the future. Christians should not forget the blessings they have right now while on earth through the Holy Spirit living inside of them. Both realised and futurist eschatology have value and neither should be ignored or replaced by the other.

4.3 Exegetical and Theological Synthesis

John 16:7-15 shows that the Holy Spirit is another 'comforter' sent by Jesus to be alongside us and to help us on earth to fulfil His purposes. This is, however, not without its challenges as Jesus warned His disciples. Jesus said that persecution will come because the world hates Him. And because the world hates Jesus it will also hate His followers. But Jesus does not leave believers helpless: He sent His Holy Spirit to come and live in believers, to comfort them and to keep them till the end. The word *sympherō* indicates an advantage or a state of being better off in the latter than in the former. Believers cannot afford to go through this life without the Holy Spirit. Christians face persecution for many reasons, and having the help of a counsellor or advocate beside them in times of persecution is crucial to them being effective in the work for which God has called them.

The Holy Spirit has a ministry to fulfil, and John 16:8-11 shows what exactly that ministry is. He judges sinners to convince them they need forgiveness. Then He points to Jesus as the only way for salvation. When the sinner then repents He makes them righteous, and comes to make His home with them, to have a relationship with them, to come alongside them and help them. When the sinner under conviction rejects the conviction of the Holy Spirit, hostility occurs. This is

unfortunate but inevitable. Jesus warned that persecution will come as the world hated Him and so they will hate His followers.

Then Jesus goes on in verse 13 to explain more of the work of the Holy Spirit: that He will guide believers into all truth and reveal the scriptures to them. The Holy Spirit will also reveal to believers the future, if needed, to help guide them to do the will of God for their lives. Through all of this the Holy Spirit has the function of glorifying Jesus and bringing men to a place where they are confronted with what is right and what is wrong, and being forced to choose life or death.

4.4 Application

The Bible has no meaning or worth if believers do not take it seriously and apply it to their lives. The bible is living word. It has the power to transform us if we allow it. James explains how that happens in James 1:22 when he says that 'we must be doers of the Word and not just hearers'. Believers must apply the scriptures in their lives and allow the Word of God to change them.

It is the same with this passage. There is an application to be found in John 16:7-15. In this passage Jesus is very clear that it is to the disciples' advantage/benefit that He goes to the Father and sends the Holy Spirit to them. The reasons are part of this passage. It shows that the Holy Spirit will help them with all the trials and tribulations they might face and whatever help they need will come from Him. The objective Jesus had in sending the Holy Spirit to believers was to further His ministry on earth, and has to be seen as an ongoing situation. The world we live in is hostile towards followers of Jesus, and these followers need the Holy Spirit to witness of the glory of the Son and the message of salvation.

People in the world grow up with a certain belief system acquired from their parents, which they in turn inherited from their parents. A Muslim boy will start out his religious life as a Muslim; the same is seen in a second generation Christian, until he is confronted and convicted by the Holy Spirit to make the choice of serving God for himself and not because his parents taught him to do. South Africa is called the rainbow nation not just because of the diversity of race, but also for the diversity of religion found in our country. Although we have a democratic free country and religion may be practised freely, the hostility is far from over. At the time of writing

this thesis the government is in the process of trying to remove all references to God as well as any discussions on religion from the public school system, in the same way the United States of America did in 1962.

Present-day Christians living in this hostile world still have a purpose to fulfil, that of spreading the Good News (Marshall 2004:507; Harris 1994:219). Jesus continues to save today, He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8). Because Jesus' ministry hasn't changed and is still in the process of bringing salvation to the lost, the Holy Spirit still has a role of furthering the same ministry, and therefore it does not make logical sense that Jesus would send the Holy Spirit only for the disciples left by Jesus after his ascension. Kruse (2003:41) and Pretorius and Lioy (2012:75) make it abundantly clear that the Holy Spirit is sent for all believers present and future.

Because the Holy Spirit comes and abides in believers, and makes His home in them, the most important aspect is that of relationship between the believer and the Spirit. They cannot have the Holy Spirit living inside them, if they do not have a relationship with God. The first step in this relationship is the theme of the Gospel of John, and that is to believe (Kruse 2003:44). People must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He came from heaven to die for their sins and to set them free to approach God as His adopted children. When people believe in the saving grace of Jesus and they surrender their lives to Him, they become born again as Jesus told Nicodemus (Jn 3:3-18; cf.; Harris 1994:207; Guthrie 1981:527).

Therefore, the first step in applying this passage is for the person to consider the claims of Jesus in the Gospel, then believe that He is who all the witnesses say He is. The person then becomes born again by giving his or her life to God, and asking Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to come and live inside them and to become their helper, counsellor, advocate and friend: to come and have a relationship with them. As Guthrie (1981:527) states, 'the believers' whole spiritual existence depends on the activity of the Holy Spirit'.

The Holy Spirit gives believers the assurance of their relationship with God. Without this aspect of the Holy Spirit's work, believers would not be able to approach God in confidence and faith, knowing that He hears them, and sees them as His children. Children are not servants in God's house, they are family. He is their Father and they

must look at Him and realise in their hearts that they are His children. And so the relationship continues.

Jesus states that the Holy Spirit will guide believers into all truth (v.13), that He will tell them things to come and declare Jesus to them. Without a relationship with Him, this is all impossible.

The most important application from this passage is the necessity for a relationship with the Holy Spirit. This starts with a submission to the saving power of Jesus and becoming His disciple. After the act of salvation has taken place, every believer should hunger for a relationship with the Holy Spirit. Jesus calls believers His friends (John 15:15) and on that basis they have a relationship with Him. This means that Christians must share their lives with the Holy Spirit, and talk with Him every day. They should recognise His existence with everything they do.

4.5 Conclusion

After looking at the theology found in our pericope it is clear that a relationship with the Holy Spirit is vitally needed to be an effective minister of the Gospel of Jesus living in this hostile world. The ministry of Jesus is still to save, and so the Holy Spirit still has the ministry of Jesus to fulfil by glorifying Him. It is then a fair conclusion that the more the world is hostile towards believers, the more we need the *Paraclete* to come alongside us and be with us, leading us, guiding us and teaching us all truth. The next chapter will be the conclusion of the study putting all the questions raised and findings in perspective.

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusion

The findings of each of the chapters is now summarised, then followed by a brief discussion of the implications of the findings and a conclusion.

5.1 Summary of Chapter 1

The first chapter is the introduction to the study and states the key points and reasons for the selection of the passage. The objective of the study is to clarify the meaning of the words *Symphērō* and *Paraclete*, and to explain what the author's intension was when he used these words. From this the study proceeded to see if the understanding of these two words applies to the disciples of Jesus only, or to all future disciples of Jesus as well. My hypothesis was to show that John 16:7-15 specifically describes the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in triumphant Christian discipleship in a hostile world throughout the Christian era.

5.2 Summary of Chapter 2

In this chapter the historical context of the book was examined, including the authorship of the book of John, and the date it was written. This chapter includes the historical setting in which the passage is situated, as well as the purpose the author had in writing his account of the life of Jesus. After discussion of the historical context the literary context showed the literary structure, as well as discussing some theological themes in the Gospel and the genre of the farewell discourse.

The gospel of John is one of the books in the bible that speaks the most on the topic of the Holy Spirit and discipleship. To understand the fourth gospel it first helps to look at the person who wrote it. The internal evidence in the Gospel does give a strong indication that the gospel was written by the apostle John, but because it is not conclusive, the external evidence has to be taken into account. Combining the internal and external evidence, it is persuasive that the apostle John, the brother of James and the son of Zebedee, wrote the fourth gospel.

With regards to the date of the writing of the gospel, it is now generally believed that the writing of the gospel occurred in the last decade of the first century. The date of the writing of the gospel sets the scene for the reasons behind the writing and shows the intent the author had in writing his account of the life of Jesus.

The historical setting shows that the time of Jesus was very complex. Palestine was under Roman rule, and while the Roman rule was accepted voluntarily the Jews still had to comply with much of the local procurator's authority. Then there was the Jewish religious setting as well. The Jewish religious councils were consistently depicted in the gospel as the antagonists of Jesus. He was a threat to their rule of the Jewish religious society. As the people followed Jesus, the Sanhedrin was losing its hold over the people and the stage was being set for conflict. The historical setting has quite a large influence on the content of John 16:7-15 as Jesus speaks in His farewell discourse about the persecution stemming from the conflict, trying to prepare the disciples for what was coming.

The purpose of the Gospel sets the mood for the setting of the selected passage. The theme of the Gospel in John 20:31 shows that the author wants to create a belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. John portrays Jesus' human and divine nature throughout the gospel as well as the relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. John emphasises belief in the Father as well as the Son.

The literary structure of the gospel shows the flow of the argument John made to prove that Jesus is the Son of God. John builds on the historical setting with the literary structure to emphasise the conflict Jesus experienced while ministering in a hostile world.

The farewell discourse (John 14-17) is so named because it was the last teaching recorded by John that Jesus gave to His disciples before His crucifixion. The genre of the farewell discourse has been disputed, as it indicates the author's intent for the passage and provides the parameters by which the passage must be interpreted. In this farewell discourse Jesus predicts how His followers will be treated in the world, and as such the predictions are not limited to the immediate disciples but also to the future followers. This modifies the genre to a prophetic commentary and covers both the predictions and implications for future believers.

5.3 Summary of Chapter 3

In this chapter the literary analysis of John 16:7-15 was done by first examining the literary context of John 13-17. After this a verbal analysis of the chosen passage John 16:7-15 was done by looking at significant words. Then followed an exegesis of the passage ending with exegetical findings from the passage.

The passage chosen for this study, John 16:7-15, raises some pertinent and relevant questions. Why are there variations in the translation of *sympherō*, and what did Jesus mean when He introduced the Holy Spirit as the *Paraclete*? The verbal analysis of the word *sympherō* shows that Jesus was attempting to comfort His disciples and reassure them that His absence and their impending persecution was part of His plan. This meant that He had to assure them that they will triumph through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Looking at the three renderings in different translations: 'better', 'expedient' and 'advantageous', clarity is needed. The significant usage of the word *sympherō* is found in the meaning 'useful' or 'advantageous'. The term 'expedient' means 'convenient and practical but possibly improper and suitable or appropriate'. This rendering would imply that humanity is only a means to an end and not the end in itself.

The term 'better' means 'greater than or an improvement, or more appropriate'. If the term 'better' is used for *sympherō*, the meaning implies that the circumstances for the disciples with the Holy Spirit would be better than if they had Jesus with them. This makes sense, as Jesus is bound to a bodily form while the Holy Spirit is not.

The term 'advantageous' means 'a condition or circumstance that puts one in a favourable position'. This implies that it would be to the disciples' advantage to rather have the Holy Spirit than Jesus while on earth, as the apostle John then goes on to explain why. The ministry of the disciples is what makes having the Holy Spirit more 'advantageous', because they can spread out as seen after the death of Stephen in Acts 7 and start to reach the world as Jesus commanded them to do in the great commission.

After comparing these three words and investigating their meanings individually, my opinion is that the translation 'expedient' does not holistically show the difference that Jesus is indicating between the era of Jesus' physical presence with the

disciples and that of the Holy Spirit's ministry in and through them. The translation 'better' on the other hand, is too general and does not precisely indicate the sense in which *sympherō* attempts to show the difference between the era of Jesus' physical presence and that of the Holy Spirit's ministry. Jesus was attempting to comfort and reassure the disciples that His absence and their impending persecution was part of His plan. This meant that He had to assure them that they would triumph through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In this light the translation 'advantageous' captures the heightened meaning that Jesus intended to convey with *sympherō*.

When Jesus introduced the Holy Spirit as the *Paraclete*, he wanted His disciples to understand why it was more 'advantageous' for them to be under the ministry of the Holy Spirit living in a hostile world. The study showed that the term *Paraclete* means 'a strong person coming alongside someone to help in times of trouble, someone summoned to give assistance'. The Holy Spirit's ministry as *Paraclete* was advantageous for the disciples, and for us living in a hostile world.

The exegetical findings showed that Jesus knew the disciples' circumstances would change, and in the light of this wanted to warn them of the impending persecution. He encouraged them with the news about the coming Holy Spirit and explained that the Holy Spirit has a ministry like His, and that they are a part of fulfilling that ministry working with the Holy Spirit.

5.4 Summary of Chapter 4

This chapter looked at the theological significance found in John 16:7-15 by looking at the theological ideas in the passage. These theological ideas lead to the application derived for everyday life from the passage.

This chapter looked at which aspects of the role of the Holy Spirit in discipleship applied only to the historical disciples, and which aspects apply to the future disciples.

Within this passage the role of glorifying Jesus in a hostile world is not limited to the immediate twelve, but is extended to all believers everywhere. Believers have a purpose to witness about Jesus and be the shining light that the hostile world needs.

Another role the Holy Spirit fulfils is that of *Paraclete*. This is exactly what believers need in a hostile world. The Holy Spirit cares for believers, feeds them, and prays for them constantly. The Holy Spirit teaches believers the word of God, and shows them how to apply it to their lives.

The role of the Holy Spirit as guide in a hostile world is one that definitely cannot be restricted to the immediate twelve, as the world has not ceased to be hostile towards believers and as such they need His guidance. The Holy Spirit teaches believers in the same way a tutor would mentor a student.

The passage in John showed two aspects of the Trinity, the relationship between the three Persons, as well as the nature of the Trinity. Jesus showed the dynamics of the relationship when He said that He does nothing of His own free will but only does what the Father shows Him. Jesus also said that the Holy Spirit will take of what is His and declare it to us. This shows the same relationship within the Trinity as the believer has as an extension of Jesus on earth. The believer in the same way does what Jesus shows him through the Holy Spirit living inside of him.

The nature of the Trinity is to complement one another in their functions. Jesus sits on the right hand of the Father and gives what is of the Father's to us through the Holy Spirit. The Father sends the Spirit in the same way He sent His Son. In many ways the Spirit is to Jesus as Jesus is to the Father.

The final question raised is how the functions of the Holy Spirit with regard to the world described in the passage relate to His functions in discipleship. The study looked at what is meant by discipleship and how the role of the Holy Spirit is needed in a hostile world.

Hostility occurs when people have differing ideas about what truth is and neither party wants to give up or compromise on their idea of the truth. When the Holy Spirit brings conviction about the truth, the persons convicted are forced to either accept what the Holy Spirit says is truth or come against it, bringing conflict.

The passage also discussed discipleship in a hostile world. When a person starts to follow Jesus and believes in Him, they become His disciple and a disciple-teacher relationship is established. In John 16:7-15 Jesus explains this helper or teacher

relationship. The Holy Spirit takes over this master role from Jesus as His representative on earth.

Disciples of Jesus living in a hostile world have a duty and responsibility to live moral, straight lives that reflect God's presence in them. This is very often seen as hypocritical in the eyes of the world as Christians are not perfect but also make mistakes. Christians have to preach the word of God and sometimes they also fail in life and this adds even more hostility. From my experience the Holy Spirit sometimes uses these conflicts to achieve His will as seen in the stoning of Stephen that scattered the disciples to spread the Gospel into every nation.

5.5 Conclusion and Application

The overall conclusion shows that John 16:7-15 specifically describes the pivotal role of the Holy Spirit in triumphant Christian discipleship in a hostile world throughout the Christian era.

The application from the passage is clear. It is to the disciple's advantage that Jesus goes to the Father and sends the Holy Spirit to them and also to the future believers everywhere. The Holy Spirit will help in times of trouble regardless of what that trouble is as long as believers rely on the *Paraclete* in their lives.

The most important application from this passage is the necessity for a relationship with the Holy Spirit. This starts with a submission to the saving power of Jesus and becoming His disciple. After the act of salvation has begun, every believer should hunger for a relationship with the Holy Spirit. Jesus calls believers His friends (John 15:15) and on that basis they have a relationship with Him. This means that Christians must share their lives with the Holy Spirit, talk with Him every day. They must recognise His existence with everything they do.

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