

The Spirit Will Guide You Into the Truth

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Please consider donating to this work in the San Francisco Bay Area online at ChristChurchEastBay.org. My name is Luther George. I'm a 9th grader at Oakland Tech and I'm in the youth group.

My name is Eli Gilbert. I'm an 8th grader at Claremont Middle School and I'm in the youth group. A reading from the gospel according to John. John 14 verses 16 through 18.

And I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever. The Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him.

He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Continuing with verses 25 through 26. All this I have spoken while still with you, but the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said to you.

[1 : 16] John 15 verses 26 through 27. When the advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who goes out from the Father, he will test about me and you also must testify for you have been with me from the beginning.

John 16 verse 17 through 15. Be very truly, I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the advocate will not come to you.

But if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment. About sin, because people do not believe in me.

About righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer. And about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

But when he, the Spirit of Truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own. He will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

[2 : 28] All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you. He will glorify me.

This is the gospel of the Lord. Thanks to you, Lord Christ. Thank you so much for that reading, Eli and Luther.

And good morning, Christ Church. It's good to be with you. And is it warm in here? Could someone turn the heat down back there? We're going to melt if it stays like this, or I am at least.

If you're a guest today and you're new at Christ Church, we're delighted to have you. We'd love to meet with you after the service and connect with you over our coffee time. I have three weeks until my sabbatical begins, so this is my moment to form a connection with you for a little while.

I will be here on April 17th, Easter Sunday, and then April 24th, which is a time when we'll celebrate our 16th birthday as a church. It should be really fun.

[3 : 31] As Andrew said, the mission of our church is to lead people into a deeper relationship with Christ and his church through community and for the city. And part of that mission is that we don't really talk about sports here at this church.

Particularly, we don't talk about college basketball. We especially don't talk about the Final Four, the Duke-UNC rivalry. And if you're here to talk about that today, I don't want to talk to you because sports are dumb.

Sports are just dumb. Okay. All right. Well, you can tell my team lost last night, so let's just get into the good news, shall we?

We're looking at the farewell discourse, the Gospel of John, chapters 14 to 17. And it's the upper room. It's Thursday night before Jesus' Good Friday crucifixion.

And he's been saying to his disciples that he's going to leave them. And the result is that they're full of trouble in their hearts. Because they know that they can't continue the work that Jesus is entrusting to their hands unless Jesus is with them.

[4 : 39] And without Jesus, the mission is going to be impossible. And so they have sorrow in their hearts because if he leaves, we're totally helpless. We don't have the power we need to carry out this ministry.

And so Jesus, in this discourse, he's anchoring them in something bigger than themselves. He's anchoring them in the being of God and the heart of the triune God.

And so that's why in John 14, he's talking about his father. In my father's house, there are many rooms. And then in John 15, he's talking about the son, that I am the true vine and you are the branches.

And then in John 16, he begins talking about the Holy Spirit. And this is really the most concentrated teaching we have from Jesus on the Holy Spirit in the four Gospels. And Jesus is comforting these grieving disciples who are preparing for his departure by saying, the spirit of truth is going to come and he's going to take my place.

And this is how I will continue to be with you, my disciples, during my time of physical absence from you. So as we dive in to learn about this mysterious person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, I want to encourage you also to be thinking ahead to next week.

[5 : 57] We have this congregational meeting. And one of the things we're going to do in that meeting is nominate new elders and deacons for this church. And, you know, as we think about what are the character and competency qualifications for somebody who's ordained to lead in the church, there's a lot of ways to answer that question.

But surely part of the answer is that that person would be full of the Holy Spirit, that they'd be a person who walks with the Holy Spirit and is led by the Holy Spirit and bears the fruit of the Holy Spirit that we're going to be learning about.

So I want you to keep that in mind as well. Well, what does Jesus teach us in the Farewell Discourse? What we learn is that the Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus through the apostles to us and through us to the world.

The Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus through the apostles to us and through us to the world. And I want to begin with the idea that the Holy Spirit speaks to us about Jesus.

You can look in chapter 14. He lays some stuff down in chapters 14, 15, and then really unpacks it in chapter 16. But chapter 14, verse 16, Jesus says, I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of truth.

[7 : 22] So first of all, the Spirit is a who and not a what. The Spirit is a person and not an impersonal force or thing. And as a person, he's an eternal person, not a created person who just kind of shows up here on the scene in the first century.

Jesus is talking about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who existed before creation and has been related to one another in an eternal, unceasing outpouring of love, each with the other.

And so Jesus says, I'm going to send you another advocate. I've been your advocate these three years. I'm going to send you another advocate who's going to be just as helpful to you as I've been to you.

And then he says, if you turn to chapter 16, verse 7, Jesus says, Very truly I tell you, it is for your good, it is to your advantage that I go away.

For unless I go away, the advocate cannot come. But if I go away, I will send him to you. Now that's a striking statement because if you're like me, you often think, if only I could have been with Jesus, if only I could have seen his face or heard his voice, if only I could have watched him feed the hungry and heal the sick and raise the dead, if only I could have sat at his feet like Mary and leaned on his shoulder like John, how could it possibly be better for Jesus to go away?

[8 : 52] How could it possibly be more for us to have less of Jesus? How could that be for our good? Well, I want us to keep in mind that there were two limitations to Jesus' physical presence.

First of all, Jesus' presence was local, meaning that he could be separated from his disciples and their fellowship could be interrupted. If Jesus went down to Galilee or went down to Jerusalem, some of them stayed behind in Galilee.

If the disciples went out to fish on the sea and Jesus stayed on the land, they couldn't be together. And if you think about it, if Jesus were still on earth today, we would not be able to get near him. All the planes, all the ships, all the roads, they'd be packed and there'd be really, really long lines and you'd be at the back of the line. But what the Holy Spirit does is he universalizes the presence of Jesus and makes Jesus available to every disciple in every church everywhere.

Pretty awesome. Jesus' presence was local, but Jesus' presence was also external, meaning that he was not able in his ministry to enter into the personalities of his disciples.

[10:06] He wasn't able to change them from within to get into their thoughts and their passions and their motives and their desires. But we learn here that the Holy Spirit internalizes the presence of Jesus.

Jesus says the Spirit will be in you. And this is why the apostles go on and on about this. This is Ephesians 3. It says Christ dwells by his Spirit in our hearts.

Or 1 Corinthians 6 says that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. And what that means is that when congregations get together to worship, Jesus is here in our midst by the Holy Spirit.

That when two or three disciples get together to pray, Jesus is there in their midst by the Holy Spirit. And that when you as a Christian are alone, you're actually not alone because Jesus is with you by the Holy Spirit.

And that's why Jesus says it's to your advantage, it's for your good that I'm going away to send you the Holy Spirit because he's going to universalize my presence to the church and to every disciple.

[11:17] They're going to have the internalized presence of Jesus. Well, what does the Holy Spirit do when he's inside of us? What is his ministry within us?

Well, let me just repeat a few of these verses we heard. John 14, 26, Jesus says, The Spirit of truth will teach you everything you need to know by reminding you of everything I have said to you.

Chapter 15, verse 26, Jesus says, The Spirit of truth will testify about me. And then in chapter 16, verse 13, he says, The Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth, speaking what he hears from me and making known what he receives from me and bringing glory to me.

So I like to think of the Holy Spirit as the floodlight. When floodlighting is done well, the lights are so subtly placed in front of a building that you can't see the fixtures.

And it's meant for us to just be able to see the building that the floodlights are illuminating. So think about like the Campanile at Cal at night. It's lit up at night, right?

[12:33] You're not paying attention to the lights themselves, but to the thing that's being lit. And the Holy Spirit loves nothing more than to light up Jesus Christ, to illuminate Jesus.

Jesus says, He will glorify me. So the Holy Spirit is this self-effacing, never advertising himself, always glorifying Jesus person.

How do you know if you're in a Spirit-filled church or with Spirit-filled Christians? Well, because are they centered on Jesus or are they centered on some other center? That would be the way to answer that question.

Well, how does the Holy Spirit illuminate or glorify Jesus? Jesus says five times, He calls the Holy Spirit the paraclete. Paraclete.

And that word in Greek means one who comes alongside of us. Sometimes it's translated as a helper, a comforter, an encourager, a counselor.

[13:34] It's one who comes alongside us and brings us to Jesus. And Jesus says three times that this Spirit is the Spirit of truth who will teach and testify and speak.

So that when the Holy Spirit comes on the day of Pentecost, we find Him to be a speaking Spirit, a declaring Spirit, a teaching Spirit. And He will continue the teaching of Jesus after His death, His resurrection, His ascension into heaven where we can see Him no longer.

Jesus' teaching ministry will be carried on by the Holy Spirit. If you're familiar at all with the Acts of the Apostles, it's really a book that's a theology of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

And if you look at Acts chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost, what happens is that tongues of fire come to rest on the apostles. And it's a vivid picture of this speaking Spirit who comes and touches the lips of His church, comes and touches the organs of speech of His disciples so that the flame of Jesus is resting on them that the Spirit, that Jesus might speak by His Spirit through His church.

And what happens at Pentecost next is that they all begin to open their mouth. And they all begin to speak in different languages about the wonderful works of God done in and through Jesus Christ. [15:03] What happens on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit comes? The Apostle Peter preaches a really long sermon. Not a three-pointer, a five-point sermon, longer than any of you could possibly bear to listen to.

And what is that Spirit-inspired sermon about? It's about Jesus. The Spirit is a calling, beseeching, entreating Spirit who says things like this in Acts chapter 2.

He says, God has raised this Jesus to life, and God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah. Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

That's what it sounds like when the Holy Spirit shows up and begins speaking. So the Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus. But also the Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus through the apostles to us.

The Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus through the apostles to us. It's really important to remember that Jesus is not speaking to us in this farewell discourse, but that he's speaking to these 11 apostles.

[16:20] And he says again in verse 26, the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. The Holy Spirit will remind these apostles of Jesus' teachings that they've already heard.

And of course, these apostles are human. Their memories are fallible. Of course, they don't have TVs and smartphones like we do, so their attention spans are far larger than ours.

And in their oral culture, they had a capacity to memorize as far greater than ours. In fact, Jews in the first century learned more by memory than they did by manuscript. And so we can be assured that these apostles had the capacity to remember all the things that Jesus did and said, but we have even greater assurance because the Holy Spirit, it says, came to remind them and be teaching them.

And that assures us of the accuracy of all the things that we have in our New Testament. That here, in a special act of God through the Holy Spirit, He preserved the unique teaching of the supreme intelligence who's ever visited our planet.

The Holy Spirit has given us divine objective truth in the New Testament. And that's what Jesus is teaching us here in chapter 16, verse 12.

[17:45] He says, I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. There's a ton more teaching you apostles need to hear, but I know you can't take it in.

I know you can't carry it. I know it's too heavy a burden tonight. You could not possibly assimilate it to teach it to others at this time because your hearts are so full and so burdened and so troubled with the events that are leading up to my cross tomorrow night.

But, Jesus says in verse 13, when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth and He will speak, He will not speak on His own, He will speak only what He hears and He will tell you what is yet to come.

The Spirit will come to bring the entire truth, all the truth that I taught you and all the truth that I wanted to teach you, all the truth that God sent me into the world to teach you.

And the Holy Spirit, when He comes, He doesn't give a new, independent, secret revelation. The Holy Spirit does not teach a new gospel that's different from the doctrines and the ethics that Jesus taught.

[18:52] We don't become a Christian and then learn the gospel of Jesus and then sometime later learn the gospel of the Holy Spirit. It's all one thing. Jesus says He's going to hear, He's going to speak what He hears from the Father and the Son and He's going to declare to you the things that we find in the gospels, in the apostolic letters and in the Acts of the Apostles and in the revelation given to John, all the stuff that's in the New Testament.

And the question is, can we trust these writings to tell us the truth? And I want to suggest to you today that if Jesus gave the Holy Spirit and the authority of the Holy Spirit to the apostles to teach and if He empowered them with His Spirit of truth to nudge their minds as to how Jesus would be responding to all the opportunities and the challenges of these new Christian communities to which these letters were being written, then we have to give those letters final authority in our lives.

We have to believe those words as words that are coming straight to us from the resurrected, ascended Jesus Himself. We are not at liberty to selectively affirm words that fit our own paradigms

and then to ignore or even reject words that we simply don't like.

You guys tracking with me? So, the same thing applies not only to the apostolic letters but to the gospels because these are the result of the Holy Spirit bringing to remembrance all the things that Jesus said and all the things that He did climaxing in His Good Friday and Easter Sunday work. And the Holy Spirit doesn't just give us this cold and lifeless book. What the Holy Spirit does is He takes this firm word of the scriptures and He gives us a fresh word for our spirits.

[20 : 58] When the Holy Spirit comes we call upon Him to teach us through the New Testament which is the end product of the Spirit's work in the apostles and we ask the Holy Spirit through this external objective word to give us an internal subjective word for our spirits.

And what we need to hear today the Holy Spirit makes this Jesus not just a historical figure of the past but a living contemporary who speaks to us today.

The Holy Spirit applies the historical revelation of Jesus to our present experience and He renders the truth of Jesus active and alive in our hearts.

The Holy Spirit interprets to us the words and the works of Jesus and takes what belongs to Jesus and makes it plain to the church. And that's how you know the Holy Spirit's working when that's happening among us.

The Holy Spirit doesn't just enable us to look backward to memories about Jesus. The Holy Spirit enables us to look upward at the living Christ Himself and to look forward to the kingdom in which Jesus is leading us.

[22 : 16] So do you want to know the Holy Spirit? Do you want to have a relationship and experience the power of the Holy Spirit? You've got to spend time near the hot spots of the Holy Spirit.

And the hot spot is the scriptures that the Spirit produced. The Spirit of God produced the Word of God and you've got to create and develop a daily discipline to digest those scriptures and to make them a part of your life.

A predictable pattern for reading the Gospels and the epistles of the New Testament. And when you do to ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into the truth that He's revealed to illumine and glorify Jesus for you and to enlighten your mind to understand it because He knows Jesus best and He knows you best and He knows how to take what belongs to Jesus and make it yours.

And we should be saying to the Spirit as we're reading Spirit, what do you want to say to me? What do you want me to do? What do you want me to say as a result of what you're speaking?

And don't be surprised if the Spirit comes back to you and says, well, keep your eyes fixed on Jesus and see what a capable, competent Savior He is for you and trust Him.

[23 : 37] Live for Him. Don't let Him down. Follow Him. Serve Him with all of your life. That's the kind of stuff the Spirit says over and over and over again and as much as possible we should try to read the Word of God created by the Spirit of God with the people of God because that's again the hot spot of where the Spirit likes to show up and do His work on the world, on the earth and in the world.

The Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus and likes no other topic more than that one and the Holy Spirit speaks about Jesus through the apostles and really no other organism but that organ.

He speaks through the apostles to us but finally the Holy Spirit not only speaks through the apostles to us about Jesus but He speaks through us to the world about Jesus.

Now I have much more to say to you more than you can now bear. This could be a really long sermon but I'll try to keep it short when the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost we see Him as a missionary spirit.

He's a witnessing spirit and that's what Jesus is telling us in verse 8. He says when He the Spirit comes He will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.

[25 : 06] The Spirit is a powerful advocate who goes before the church to bring the world under conviction and in bringing the world under conviction to expose the falsity of the world's most fundamental ideas.

All people everywhere have ideas about what's right and what's wrong. All people everywhere draw lines to mark off that which is good from that which is bad that which is true from that which is false that which is worthy of honor and that which is worthy of condemnation and Jesus is saying the Holy Spirit is going to come do three things.

First of all how do people here where we live how do they answer that question of what's most wrong with the world? What is the greatest sin of the world?

And Jesus says in verse 9 He says the Spirit's going to come and prove the world wrong about sin because people do not believe in me. The Holy Spirit is going to show that our rejection and condemnation of Jesus was a failure to respond to the coming of God in the flesh.

The Holy Spirit is going to come and show that the root wrong in the world is a refusal to believe in Jesus. A refusal to trust in God's Messiah who was sent to reveal the Father's love for the world.

[26 : 25] The Holy Spirit Jesus says is going to come and show that this persistent ongoing refusal to believe in the greatest of all world realities namely Jesus is the greatest of all wrongs.

That that is the basic evil out of which all other evils flow. And then the second thing the Spirit is going to come and do is Jesus says well how do people around you how do they answer that question of what's most right in the world?

What is the reality and the event and the fact that is the most right thing that's ever happened in human history? And Jesus says in verse 10 the Spirit's going to come and He's going to convict the world that it's wrong about righteousness because I'm going to the Father where you can see me no longer.

The work of the Spirit is to come and show us that Jesus' career His life of obedience to the Father His crucifixion to atone for the world's sins His resurrection to conquer death His going to the Father to rule over all things in heaven that these are the most important helpful just and right deeds that have ever been done for the world.

And you see by the world's understanding of righteousness Jesus was found to be in the wrong. The greatest of all religions the greatest of all governments at that time said Jesus is wrong and they put Him on a cross.

[27 : 54] But in God's higher tribunal in the higher law court of God Jesus was found not to be in the wrong but to be in the right. And Jesus' cross reveals that the one hanging there is He is the righteous one of God.

And that by His hanging there He's won a victory of the righteousness of God over human sin. And that everybody who places their faith in Him we share in His status of being people who are not in the wrong but who are in the right with Him.

This is what the Holy Spirit does. You want to know the third thing He does? He convicts the world that it's wrong about what's wrong. He convicts the world that it's wrong about what's right.

And then Jesus says that you know how do people around you answer this question about who wins in life's great contest between what's right and what's wrong.

Between sin and righteousness. Between just and injustice. Between good and evil. Who ultimately wins? And Jesus says the Spirit comes in verse 11 and He convicts the world that it's wrong about judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

[29 : 18] The prince of this world the evil one the dark power who enslaves people and holds people in bondage that same power that came to condemn and to destroy Jesus on His cross.

Well guess what? The resurrection the resurrected Jesus shows us that the power of that evil one has been definitively broken and that He has been dethroned and that that dark power that prince of this world He has been soundly judged and condemned so that all those whom He was condemning can be set free and all those who were in bondage can be liberated and have a new life.

That's what the Holy Spirit comes to show us. Sorry I've only got a couple more sermons and then I'll go on sabbatical you don't have to put up with my passion too much longer but this missionary spirit this witnessing spirit He convicts the world in order to convert the world in these three major areas of what's wrong with the world what's right with the world and who ultimately is judged to be victorious and who ultimately is judged to be defeated and Christ Church I just want to encourage you today that you have this missionary spirit that residing within you is this witnessing spirit that the holy life-giving spirit of God is in you that according to Romans 8 the one who the spirit who raised Christ from the dead is living in you right now and that through your words and your works through the words and works of this disciple community this mighty spirit this mighty advocate who wants to bear witness to Jesus through your lives and through what you do and what you say this mighty spirit wants to bear witness so that people look upon this hated and humiliated one on his cross and with us they come to confess actually Jesus is Lord the Holy Spirit brings the power of God and the truth of God to bear so that people look at Jesus cross of shame and defeat and they come to

believe with us actually that is his throne of glory and victory in this world the spirit of the father the spirit of Jesus the spirit of truth wants wants wants to perform his own miracles in the hearts of people here in the bay area so that they are brought to recognize Jesus as the one he is and he wants to perform those miracles through us through us may it be so the holy spirit longs to speak about Jesus through the apostles to us and through us to the world may we be empowered to do that very thing in the name of the father the son and the holy spirit amen