

## **Our Lord's Last Bequest — The Spirit Of Truth.**

Text: John 16:5-14

Suggested Hymns:  
397, 262, 128, 132, 512

- 1) Only The Holy Spirit Is Able To Reveal The Truth
- 2) Only The Holy Spirit Enables Us  
To Believe The Truth.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is John 16:5-14, <sup>5</sup> *“But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’* <sup>6</sup> *“But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.*

<sup>7</sup> *“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.* <sup>8</sup> *“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> “of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> “of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> “of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

<sup>12</sup> *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> “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. <sup>14</sup> “He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

In His farewell address, delivered to the Twelve in the night of the betrayal, Christ bequeaths the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

The word “Comforter” doesn’t exhaust full meaning of original word. The word Jesus used is “Paraclete.” It comes from root meaning “to call one to aid and help,” thus “to entreat,” or “to implore.”

Ancient Greeks used it legally to denote “advocate,” “one who intercedes on behalf of another.” Paraclete is thus intercessor, defender, and mediator. In broadest sense it signifies helper, or best friend.

Another name given to Him by Christ is “Spirit of Truth.” Our text says, *However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.* In this expression is comprehended the whole function of this Third Person of the Trinity.

“*He will guide you into all truth*” means that it is in this, that the Holy Spirit proves Himself to be a Helper because He guides into all truth.

Did the disciples need this guidance into truth? Yes, they needed it above everything else. For three years they had been sitting at Jesus’ feet as disciples, literally, as His pupils. They had learned many things from this matchless Teacher, yet they did not know all that they needed to know.

What they had learned from Jesus was still inadequate to their needs. It was incomplete. They knew some truths, those pertaining to His Person; but with the great truths, those pertaining to His suffering, death, and resurrection, the deep meaning of these and the great hopes which centre in them, they were still unacquainted.

Likewise they were still ignorant of the true nature of His kingdom and the manner of its extension. In verse 12 Christ suggests there were yet many things for them to know, many particulars of truth yet to learn, before they could go into all the world, and testify of Christ before Jew and Gentile.

But how? Who would teach them? It would not be Christ Himself because He had just announced the withdrawal of His physical presence from them. Nor could they learn these truths of themselves. They could not reason them out. Left to themselves, they could not only, not learn more truth, but would lose the little learned thus far, and fall into error.

For their own salvation as well as for work assigned to them — building up Christ’s Kingdom on earth — they needed to know the whole truth. The one to give it to them, according to Christ’s promise, would be the Holy Spirit. He would be their Teacher from now on.

He would “*guide them into all truth,*” just as a guide leads the way, by steady progress. He would continue to teach them where Christ left off. The end or purpose of His teaching would be “all truth.” Under His guidance the disciples would be steadily advanced to an ever fuller knowledge of truth.

Thus the Holy Spirit would be a helper to them, a true paraclete, especially in witnessing the truth before a hostile world. This hostility is revealed in John 16:2, <sup>2</sup> ***“They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.”***

Do we need to know the truth as the disciples needed it? Yes, we do. We read in John 8:32, <sup>32</sup> ***“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*** Without the knowledge of the truth there can be no freedom for us, no escape from the bondage of sin and death, and no liberation from the tyranny of the devil.

And for truth, the full and complete truth necessary to life and salvation, we are dependent on the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit can help us find it. Let us therefore consider *Our Lord’s Last Bequest —the Spirit of Truth*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. Our Lord’s Last Bequest —The Spirit Of Truth Only The Holy Spirit Is Able To Reveal The Truth**

People cannot find the truth by themselves. Many people have tried; but human speculations and philosophies always leave the person stranded in uncertainty and in doubt. They always lead into blind alleys, and always come to a dead end.

Man cannot of himself arrive at truth for the simple reason that he is by nature spiritually ignorant and foolish. He is dead. He cannot therefore think in spiritual terms.

The truth can come only from a source which is the truth. It can emanate only from the Person who is Himself the Truth. And that is the Spirit of God. In our text He is called the ***“Spirit of Truth.”*** Likewise we read in 1 John 5:6, ***And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.***

The truth of the Spirit is revealed to us in His Scriptures. The Bible, the Volume of Truth, is truth unto salvation. The Bible is a Book of many books, recorded in writing by men of different times and conditions. But one Author, as we read in 2 Peter 1:21, <sup>21</sup> ***for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.***

Apostles were led into truth to become infallible teachers. — The Bible's one purpose is to give the wisdom essential to eternal life. It revolves around one person, Christ. Man's eternal weal or woe depends on his attitude towards this Christ.

The position among many people today is to deny that the Scriptures are the revelation of Holy Spirit to men and therefore the absolute truth. But the Scriptures prove themselves to be the truth.

The Spirit's truth as revealed in Scripture is the same truth as that taught by Christ and by the Father. They cannot be different, since the Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son. His teaching is in perfect agreement in every detail.

Out text says that *He will not speak on His own authority*. In other words He has no separate or independent revelation to make.

*Whatever He hears He will speak*. Hear from whom? From the Father and the Son. Thus the Holy Spirit says and teaches nothing without concurrence of, and authority from God. The nature of the union between the Holy Spirit and the other two Persons of the Trinity is such that He teaches nothing independently of them.

*He will tell you things to come*. This is not a promise of ability to predict the future, as some say. "*Things to come*" were those things yet to happen, Christ's suffering and death and resurrection. The meaning and significance of these the Holy Spirit would teach. His explanation would be the same as Christ's and the Father's.

*He will glorify Me*. This is the purpose of the Holy Spirit's revelation. It, too, is in perfect agreement with the purpose of the Father and the Son. All truth given by Him aims to glorify and exalt Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

Here, incidentally, is the test of any teaching or revelation: does the revelation glorify Christ? If not, it is not from the Spirit of Truth and therefore is not truth. The Holy Spirit's mission is to exhibit the fullness of Christ.

Look at the apostles in the Book of Acts. Under the Holy Spirit's guidance they lived wholly in and for Christ. Christ was glorified in and through them,

thus giving proof that the revelation, or teaching, received from the Spirit was truth.

The Truth which the Holy Spirit reveals in Scripture is not accepted by the world because of the false conception of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Our text says that *He will convict the world of sin, ... because they do not believe in Me*. The word “convict” means literally “demonstrate by argument,” “prove,” “persuade by presenting reasons and proofs.” The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin.

He teaches what sin is, wherein it consists, how all-pervasive and universal it is, how venomous it is, and where it leads. The world needs such teaching because its general conception of sin is not only faulty and inadequate but basically wrong.

The Holy Spirit teaches us of all sins in general, but also of one sin in particular, which is unbelief. This is the rejection of Christ and His abundant mercy. This is the sin of sins, the worst and the greatest. The world sins because it does not believe in Christ.

We read in John 3:18, *but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*. Unbelief is the rejection of the grace of God in Christ. This is the reason why sin is sin, and why if it is not removed and forgiven, it condemns eternally.

It is important to stress that finally only one sin, the sin of unbelief condemns, as we read in Mark 16:16, *but he who does not believe will be condemned*.

The Holy Spirit *will convict the world of .. righteousness*. Here again, the world needs this conviction. Its conception is entirely false. People do not understand the nature of true righteousness, that which alone saves.

The righteousness which the Holy Spirit teaches is not moral righteousness, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the only one availing before God, which alone saves sinners.

The expression *because I go to My Father* points to Christ’s exaltation. His exaltation is the proof that His righteousness, which He procured for us by His obedience, suffering, and death, is satisfactory to God.

It first teaches the world about sin and its consequences. It follows up with teaching that the way of escape is the robe of Christ's righteousness.

We read in Acts 13:38-39, <sup>38</sup> *“Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;”* <sup>39</sup> *“and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.”*<sup>1</sup>

The Holy Spirit also teaches the world about judgment, that the prince of this world is judged, his power is taken away, and his hold on men's souls is broken.

Our text says, *“And when He has come, He will convict the world of ... of judgment: of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”* God's justice demands that He execute judgment, and that He condemn the sinner. But sin is already condemned. The fear of condemnation is removed, because the ruler of this world is rendered powerless.

Just as God has taken the power from the devil, so He will also judge and destroy all his cohorts, which are those people and principalities and influences in league with him.

All enemies of soul (the world and our sinful flesh) shall be vanquished as the devil has been already. We read in Matthew 25:41, <sup>41</sup> *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’* And in John 12:31, <sup>31</sup> *“Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.”*<sup>2</sup> Their cause is doomed. To adhere to them is like holding onto a sinking ship.

Thus the Holy Spirit proves Himself to be our Helper. He has revealed all truth, full truth necessary for salvation. He will help us through the Word to bring this message home to other people.

## **2. Our Lord's Last Bequest —The Spirit Of Truth Only The Holy Spirit Enables Us To Believe The Truth.**

This is implied in the expression *“He will guide you into all truth.”* To guide us into truth suggests that He opens our understanding to comprehend it.

Man cannot comprehend the saving truth by himself. Revelation of the Spirit's truth is spiritual, and can be discerned only spiritually. The Truth cannot enter the heart and mind as other knowledge does, through the physical senses.

We read in 1 Corinthians 2:4-12, <sup>4</sup> *And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,* <sup>5</sup> *that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

<sup>6</sup> *However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.* <sup>7</sup> *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,* <sup>8</sup> *which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* <sup>9</sup> *But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

<sup>10</sup> *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.* <sup>11</sup> *For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.* <sup>12</sup> *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*

To natural man truth is foolishness. He cannot distinguish between it and error. Pilate's sneering *“What is truth!”* is universally asked. Natural eyes are covered with a thick film, which hides truth from the eyes. Man is incapable of coming to faith. He is Spiritually dead. He cannot lift even a little finger toward his own understanding.

Yet we must have faith. The Truth must be accepted before it has value. You may read a revelation of the truth a dozen times each year; but it is no good unless you believe it. Salvation is dependent on faith in Christ.

Paul and Silas said to the jailer, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”*<sup>3</sup> Christ said to Nicodemus, *“Whoever believes.”* *“He who does not believe the Son shall not see life.”*<sup>4</sup> But where does faith come from? Not from self. Not from any human power or agency.

The Holy Spirit alone can remove this film of spiritual blindness. He alone can guide us into truth, and enable us to understand it. Until He has removed the

spiritual blindness and created spiritual sight, man cannot see the beauty, comfort, and the meaning of the Gospel of the Cross.

We read in Job 32:8 that *the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding*. The Holy Spirit has called us *“out of darkness into His marvelous light.”*<sup>5</sup> We read in 1 Corinthians 12:3, *<sup>3</sup> Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

Likewise we read in 2 Corinthians 4:6, *<sup>6</sup> For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

So the Holy Spirit proves or shows Himself to be the Paraclete, the Helper. He has revealed the truth, given us the understanding of it, and aroused us to faith in it.

In the light of this help which He gives let us understand Christ's word, *<sup>7</sup> “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.*

It may have been well if Jesus remained on earth to preach matchless sermons, heal our sick, and give sight to blind. But one thing we would not have if He had remained is the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit.

And not having Him, we would have little understanding of the truth, and no faith in it. And not having this, we could have no peace of conscience, no freedom from sin, no hope, and no certainty of everlasting life. We would be unable to witness successfully to the world.

Our human reason may argue that great blessings would have come if Christ had remained visibly on earth. But greater blessings have come as a result of His return to the Father.

By His departure we may think that a blessing apparently has been taken away; but by His bequest of the Spirit of Truth a far greater blessing has been given. Truly, it has been expedient for us! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.



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<sup>1</sup> See also Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:21-25; Rom 4:5, 25; Rom 5:18; Rom 10:4.

<sup>2</sup> See also Colossians 1:13

<sup>3</sup> Acts 16:31

<sup>4</sup> John 3:36

<sup>5</sup> 1 Peter 2:9