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*But when the the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. John 16:13*

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## How Jesus Loves: Loss is Gain

We live in a world of challenges. So many of us are suffering with loss and wrestling with questions of faith, or wondering how we will even make it through tomorrow. I know that God is good, but often it is a challenge to know what to do next. I pray that in our message today we will find guidance for our daily walk with the Lord as we increase in our dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

When Solomon became King over the great and powerful kingdom of Israel, he was offered a gift from the Lord. He could choose anything he wanted. He did not choose riches or power, he asked for wisdom. He asked to understand what is right and how to apply that in leadership over that great kingdom. As a young man, he was out of his depth and God gave him that gift. God gives the gift of wisdom to those who ask for it.

And Jesus promises this to His disciples in the passage we are reading today. Several times throughout the upper room discourse, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will guide the disciples into truth, that He will testify and teach the truth, and remind of and speak the truth. The Holy Spirit himself is truth. He is a gift to the disciples.

Let's read the passage. John 16, beginning in verse 12. "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 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. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why he said the spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you. But when he the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth."

### What the Disciples Need.

The disciples are needy. Earlier, Jesus comments on their silence. They were peppering him with questions. But here at the beginning of Chapter 16, he comments to them, "You're silent. You're

not asking me any questions anymore.” They are feeling overwhelmed by the things that Jesus has revealed to them. Jesus even says, “You can't bear anymore.” And he uses a word that talks about carrying a heavy burden, such as when someone is carrying a body. Just as Jesus is weighed down through carrying the cross, the disciples are weighed down by the words Jesus is sharing. And they can't take anymore. He's leaving.

The Disciples need Time.

They need time to process what Jesus has shown them. And they don't have the time right now. They need a guide to walk with them through this uncharted territory before them. Jesus is giving them the mission and they need someone to lead them through it. Jesus tells them that the Holy Spirit will guide and lead them in all truth.

The word truth is used very picturesquely here. Recall the story of the Ethiopian eunuch on his way home from Jerusalem. Philip appears next to him and hears the Eunuch reading from Isaiah Chapter 53 and says, “Hey, do you understand what you're reading?” And the Ethiopian says, “How can I know without someone to lead me and guide me into what this means?” And so Philip climbs up and sits beside him. Not unlike the paraclete who comes alongside us. Philip guides him through the Scriptures and explains the truth.

The Disciples need Help.

The Spirit is given by Jesus as a help to the disciples in their time of need. They are experiencing impending loss. But Jesus says, “You're going to get something better. You're going to get the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth.” He will help you as you move forward in this difficult life. There are three different ways that we see the Holy Spirit's help in this particular passage.

The Spirit Reminds.

Earlier in John 14:26, Jesus talks about what having the Spirit will mean. The Spirit will remind them of the details of their time with him. Jesus says in 14:26 “The Advocate, [the Holy Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything that I have said to you.”

So the first thing that the Holy Spirit is providing help for is in *remembering the facts*. At the end of his book, John says Jesus did and said so many things he could probably fill the whole world with books about his life. How can the disciple remember those words that are recorded for us in the Scriptures? How can they keep the facts straight about the life of Jesus Christ?

Well, Jesus himself told them, “The Holy Spirit will remind you,” it's important for us to really grasp hold of this foundational truth. Ours is a historical faith. This is the truth, verifiable, and corroborated by witnesses. We don't have dreams recorded without foundation. We don't have a philosophy to build our lives on that may contradict another's philosophy, and we have to choose one. We have a faith built on facts and history. These are facts the Holy Spirit was faithful to call to the mind of the disciples as they recorded them.

It is a faith built on real life, heard in spoken words, and seen in physical deeds. We have a faith built on an actual death on a wooden cross, a burial in a borrowed tomb, and a resurrection and Ascension witnessed, recorded, and corroborated. I believe it was Martin Lloyd-Jones who wrote, "We are not saved by ideas. We are saved by facts, by real events." The Holy Spirit was given to the disciples to remind them of the facts and record them for us.

If you are under the impression that this is just one of many ways to salvation, I encourage you to look into the history, research the facts, and be affirmed in the work of the Holy Spirit in giving us this body of truth.

The Spirit Reveals *the* Truth.

Another commentator wrote, "The fact that Christ died is history. But when you say Christ died for our sins, now you're getting into theology." Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will be given to the disciples to lead them, to guide them into all truth. It's important because even at this point, they didn't truly understand what was going on. Jesus would die, rise again, and they would still be waiting for Jesus to establish a kingdom with visible political and military power. But they still didn't get it. And they are the ones who will convey to the rest of the world the truth of what this actually means and why it was accomplished. And Jesus will not be there with them to guide them into that truth.

Instead, he ascends to the Father and sends the Holy Spirit and He promises. The Holy Spirit will *reveal the truth*. And by the way, that little word "the" is extremely important. He doesn't just reveal any old truth, he reveals *the* truth. How much do we need that? It's not just in our day that people question truth. How is one person's truth more valid than another's? Recall the words of Pontius Pilate. When Jesus speaks to him of truth Pilate answers, "What is truth?" And then Pilate makes a very bad decision based on the preservation of his power, rather than basing his decision on truth.

If I don't accept the idea that there is a body of truth against which I evaluate my beliefs and actions, then when my foundation is pulled away, all that remains are decisions based on power, gain, and selfish motivation rather than what Jesus might have to say.

And I mentioned Jesus here because that's important. Jesus told the disciples, "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life. Little side note, when Jesus says "I am the way, that's the same root word that's used here for the Holy Spirit "guiding" you along the way. The Holy Spirit guides you along the way of Jesus. When Jesus says, "I am the Truth and the Holy Spirit will guide you into the truth," the Holy Spirit points us to Jesus. in John 8:32, when Jesus is confronted by His adversaries, the religious powers that want to eliminate Him, Jesus says, "Seek the truth. When you know the truth, the truth will set you free." Jesus is talking about himself. And so, yes, I agree with the statement, "We are not saved by ideas, but by facts." But we must remember, the facts are about a person and the one who saves us. It is our confidence in Jesus, in his

death and resurrection. Last week we talked about how the resurrection is the moment that distinguishes the validity of everything that Jesus has said up to this moment.

The Spirit Remains/Abides.

Our confidence rests on the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but it also rests on the relationship that we have with Him, who is the Truth. So he emphasizes to the disciples, “He will guide you into the truth.” We are not talking about the full body of scientific and medical knowledge. In fact, God receives glory when we research and discover the world around us. We are talking about everything necessary for life and godliness, (2 Peter 1:3). We have received everything that is necessary for life and godliness through our knowledge of him.

Where do we get our knowledge of him? We get our knowledge of him through this truth recorded for us under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as He works through the disciples. Contained in these words is all that we need for life and for godliness. Peter describes to Timothy that Scripture is given to us under the inspiration of God to teach, to correct, to train, and to bring us up—to prepare us for every good work.

The Spirit Reveals All Truth.

The Holy Spirit remains to continue to lead them along the way. Here's what we read at the end of verse 13, “He will tell you what is yet to come.” Sorry, but this is not an apocalyptic idea about the distant future. Jesus is talking with the disciples about how they are going to live, not so much about the things that are going to come. John uses a term here to describe an event that is in the near future. It's a rare term in this particular form. John only uses it in one other place, In John 18:4, we see Judas leading the mob into the garden and Jesus, *knowing what was about to happen*, says, “Who are you looking for?” Jesus knew what was around the corner. He knew the events that were about to take place that were coming as a shock to the disciples.

But he was completely aware of the things about to happen, the things right around the corner. We might see the things that are at hand. This is what the Holy Spirit is going to tell the disciples about and that's another great word. You know, it's so simple. We can go back to the story of the Samaritan woman in John chapter four. Jesus begins his conversation with her and they get into the realm of disputable ideas about worship. And she says, “Well, we're supposed to worship on this mountain, but the Jews say, We're supposed to worship in Jerusalem but the Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will tell us about it. He will explain what's going on here.” And Jesus talks with her. It's also used to describe the apostles going to the church in Antioch and telling them everything God had done on the missionary journeys. It's not just telling; it's getting into the details and laying out the facts. The Holy Spirit is going to explain and lay out the facts about the things that are about to happen.

What are the things that are about to happen? It's the cross. It's the burial, it's the resurrection, it's the glorification of Jesus Christ. These things that the disciples don't understand but are

right around the corner. The Holy Spirit is given to them, so that as those things are taking place, the disciples will begin to understand that's what's happening.

And that's exciting. It might not be exciting as knowing the lottery numbers or knowing when Jesus Christ is coming back, but it sure is exciting when something happens that I didn't expect and I am confronted with a challenge and don't know the solution. Jesus made a promise. "You have the Holy Spirit and He will tell you about these things that are taking place and lead you along the way."

## How Does the Spirit Help Us Remember?

The disciples took the truth and the revelation of the Spirit and recorded it for us. We have it in the Word. How does the Holy Spirit help us now?

*He Illuminates the Word for us.* That idea is lighting up the Word for our understanding. There are times we open the Word and think, *I have no idea what I just read.* That's when we depend upon the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The Psalmist prayed Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your word." That is a great thing to pray every single day before you open the Word of God.

*He applies the Word.* That conviction works to apply these truths to our lives. You know when you are reading, and a verse jumps out and grabs you by the throat and shakes you? I remember the first time for me. We were in Bible quizzing and studying the book of Galatians--memorizing Galatians one. And Paul writes, "Am I now trying to win the approval of men or of God, or am I still trying to please men? Or am I a servant of Jesus Christ?" I was in junior high school and was all about making sure that people around me were happy. I was all about doing things that I thought would make other people like me. Honestly, it's a problem I have to this day. But the Holy Spirit took His word and said, "Tom, that's you."

*He Sanctifies us According to the Word of God.* Sanctification is that process by which we are being made to live up to the status that we have been given. If you are in Christ, you are declared holy and granted the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But you know what? I look at how I lived yesterday or the day before, and I'm thinking, *That's not the righteousness of Jesus Christ.*

The Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, is working to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ so that we *look* as though we have been declared to be in Jesus Christ. That's the idea of the Holy Spirit remaining to guide us along the way. Sanctification gets down to the nitty-gritty. Sanctification is how I respond tomorrow in this particular situation when I'm under temptation or challenged in my faith in some way. "How do I live?" The Holy Spirit guides us along the way, applying that precious Word to our lives so that we can live in a way that brings God's glory.

We get the truth and God gets the glory.

In this whole process, there is a cycle in which, “The Holy Spirit will glorify me, [Jesus,] because it is from me that He will receive what He will make known. All that belongs to the Father is mine.” That is why he said the spirit we receive from Jesus will make known to us. One of the things I love about the teaching of the Trinity is that we see the Trinity played out in Scripture and in life.

One example is creation, where God, the Father conceives of creation. But Jesus is the spoken Word bringing everything into existence. And we have the Spirit of God hovering over the deep—the manifest presence of God in creation, salvation conceived by God from eternity past, accomplished by Jesus Christ on the cross, made manifest in lives through the new birth by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus makes it very clear here and throughout the whole book of John, the succession of revelation. Jesus only talks about what he has received from the Father. The Holy Spirit then conveys the things that Jesus has received from the Father. You see that in these verses and again see it throughout the whole book of John.

But the process doesn't start there. The Holy Spirit reveals to the disciples, we pick up the words of disciples and we explain it to somebody else. So we go back all the way to the Father, the source of this revelation through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit in recorded by the Prophets, in the Scriptures A great example in Scripture is that of Timothy. Timothy's grandmother teaches Timothy, and the Apostle Paul comes alongside and disciples Timothy, And now with does Timothy do? He passes that truth on to others who will then be faithful to pass it on even further. Coming from the Father by the Holy Spirit, all the way to us today. It is important that we don't break that chain and just come up with our own truth. This has been revealed and passed on. And if Jesus is responsible to pass on only what He receives from the Father, and if the Holy Spirit is committed to give us only what He receives from Jesus, then how about we be faithful in the act of passing on this body of truth from generation to generation?

It's not our place to come up with new ideas, but rather to be faithful in what we have received. And there's a backward process of giving glory. John 17 talks about the disciples giving glory to Jesus in this passage. Jesus says, “The Holy Spirit isn't doing this to attract to Himself He is doing this to give glory to Jesus, and Jesus passes on all of the glory to the Father.

So we are in a very important cycle of receiving revelation and giving glory. The way that we give glory is by faithfully living out what we have received. And so we come back again to this essential role of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and that is helping us to live it out today.

Because, while I might not care what *your truth* is, I very deeply care what your trouble and need is and how Jesus Christ can meet those needs. You see this beautiful position in which Jesus is leaving His disciples, He's giving them a Holy Spirit, is going to walk with them and

remind them and stay alongside them. He will be with them every step of the way, guiding them in, living out this body of truth. And that is what we receive as well.

Seek Guidance From the Holy Spirit.

Where are you looking for guidance? Be very careful of where we are looking for guidance. Be mindful and attentive to our guide in life. Jesus uses the word leading or guiding in a variety of contexts, and one of those is the blind leading the blind. I feel like we see so much of that in this life. Sometimes we even hear things that might sound wise. Satan is the father of lies. He loves to deceive and loves for that deception to be beautiful and smart and to appeal to our very basic needs. But it's still a lie.

It's very similar to the idea when Jesus talks about the Pharisees as blind guides. These are self-appointed leaders. They ought to know better. But in Jesus' words, they are "wrapping millstones" around people's necks, and placing on their shoulders burdens that they cannot carry. And may the Lord help us because there is so much of this out there. Teachers who ought to be pointing to the truth instead building themselves up in power and in position or popularity. Maybe it's just plain ego, but they're not leading into the Truth or helping us to walk in the way that Jesus laid out for us.

Instead, we seek guidance from the Holy Spirit in the Word that He has given to us. We know we can trust him because it is not out of self-interest. The Holy Spirit is not seeking to bring glory to Himself. The Holy Spirit points us to Jesus.

*Be attentive to the Holy Spirit.* Go to the Word. Everything I need for life and godliness is in the word of God. How does that work when faced with challenges such as job changes, health crises, or relationship issues?

How is the Word of God sufficient in the situation I am confronting today? Well, I go to the word and pray for the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Are my decisions, my thoughts, my actions, in agreement with the word of God? Do they reflect the truth and the commands we have received?

*Seek wisdom.* Remember, the Holy Spirit is given to us to help us understand how to apply this to our lives today. That's wisdom. Wisdom is not just knowing the truth, but being able to live the truth. And so as we go into the Word, I pray that the Holy Spirit will help me understand how to live that today. Sometimes He's going to shake me up with something totally different than I expected.

*Seek the counsel and advice of the Godly.* Scripture is filled with admonitions to turn to other trusted people and to ask for wisdom from them. Yes, we are praying. We are seeking wisdom from the Lord. We're going into the Word of God. But I ran across a quote this week from a secular philosopher, "There are things that I just want to be true and I'm going to find them wherever I can find them." Our hearts are so deceptive and so easy to lead us astray. We need

friends who are going to be faithful to point us to the Word of God and to help us see where we are blinded.

Paul advises us to let the Word of God dwell in us richly. He tells us to obey the Word, and in doing so, we can give God glory. We've been given a gift. We're not left on our own. We don't have to try and figure out how to make it through this particular situation or that particular problem on our own, we have the Holy Spirit.

Let us be faithful in seeking His guidance as well as in leading others into the truth that he's given us. As one commentator wrote, "The hallmark of the Spirit's activity is focus on Jesus." Excitement about Jesus is the step we are taking, the decision we are making, and the way that we are following, bringing glory to Jesus Christ.

*Let's pray in his name. Father. I'm reminded of Jesus telling the disciples He would not leave them alone. But thank you that we are never alone. Lord, help us to cling to the gift you've given us, the indescribable gift of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, the unshakable gift of your Word, which is true, and the very precious gift of your Holy Spirit with us and in us. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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*Edited by ckg*