

SERMON NOTES
John 14-16
“The Ministry of the Holy Spirit”

Intro:

- Evangelical Christians talk a lot about a personal relationship with Jesus – about knowing Jesus personally as a Real Person – not only believing in him as our Lord and Savior but also experiencing him as our Friend in our daily living --*but how do we come to know Jesus personally in our experience?*
- *In order to know the real Jesus as he was in history and as he is today – there is no substitute for getting to know the Bible and especially the NT – reading and studying one of the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke or John -- is a great way to get to know Jesus*
- *However, although knowing and believing the Bible is necessary for knowing Jesus personally – it is not sufficient*
- A.W. Tozer: **To know the Truth, we must "know" the Son.**
- *Truth is not a Doctrine*
- **Truth is a Person**
- Jesus said: *“I am the Way, **the Truth**, and the Life”*
- **To know the Truth, we must know the Son**
- *If Truth is a Person – then we must learn the truth in the context of a relationship with that Person*
- When Jesus was on the earth – He was that Person
- *He was the embodiment of Grace and Truth*
- But He is no longer on the earth – He has returned to the Father in heaven
- *How then shall we know the Truth? How then shall we know the Son?*
- According to Jesus – by means of the **Paraclete** – the Spirit of Truth
- *To know the Truth – we must know both the Word of God and the Spirit of Truth*
- *We come to know Jesus personally not only by means of the witness of the written Word – but also by means of the witness of the indwelling Spirit*

John 14:16-17 ¹⁶**And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—**¹⁷**the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.**

- The word Jesus used to describe the Holy Spirit is *Paraclete* – which is virtually impossible to translate fully by any single English word
- *The word means literally “one who comes to our side when called upon” and is related to the word for encouragement or exhortation*
- The word **Paraclete** in Greek signified a legal Advocate or Counselor in the sense of Defense Attorney
- *But the word could also have the meaning of Comforter and Intercessor and Helper and Encourager and Counselor in more than a legal sense*
- Jesus called the Holy Spirit (14:16) “**Another Paraclete**”
- And the word “Another” means *another of the same kind* rather than *another of a different kind*
- *So, if the Holy Spirit is another Paraclete, then who is the first Paraclete?*
- Jesus Himself

I John 2:1 ¹My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

- *“One who speaks in our defense” = Paraclete*
- As Jesus speaks to the Father in our defense – pleading our case with his shed blood as the atoning sacrifice for our sins – *so also the indwelling Spirit of truth bears witness internally to our spirit that **we are totally accepted, fully pleasing, deeply loved, and completely forgiven** – because of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus*
- **The Holy Spirit is Another Paraclete of the same kind as Jesus – of the same essence and character and purpose as Jesus**
- *A personal relationship with Jesus the Son of God and a personal relationship with the Spirit of God belong together*
- *To fully know and experience Jesus – we must experience the Holy Spirit*
- ***And the purpose of experiencing the Spirit is to know and experience Jesus***
- *Trying to pursue a relationship with Jesus apart from the Holy Spirit can lead to frustration, disappointment, spiritual impotence, barrenness and defeat*
- It is the Holy Spirit who makes our relationship with Jesus personal and intimate and vibrant and fruitful
- ***And trying to pursue spirituality or spiritual experiences apart from a love relationship with Jesus can lead to spiritual error and deception***

The Spirit of truth will always lead us to increased love, devotion and obedience to Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life

--just as a personal relationship with the Jesus the Son and God the Father go together – and we enter into a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ -- so also our relationship with the Son and the Spirit belong together – we experience the ongoing Presence of Jesus by means of the indwelling Spirit

- **John 14-16:** *Jesus' teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit:*

I. **THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS US TO CONTINUE THE WORKS AND MINISTRY OF JESUS (14:12-18)**

John 14:12 ¹²**I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.**

Notice, first of all, the word “anyone” – “anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing”

- This promise is not restricted to the 12 apostles or to the 1st century church
- *Jesus said “anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing”*
- *What had Jesus been doing?*

Matthew 4:23-24 ²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

- Preaching, teaching, healing, casting out demons – these were the primary works of Jesus' ministry
- *And Jesus said “anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing”*
- Notice, secondly: *“He will do even greater things than these”*
- Now, Jesus walked on water / calmed the storm / fed the 5000 / even raised the dead
- *I dare say none of us has ever done any of those things – let alone greater miracles*
- What did Jesus mean?

- *Apparently by “greater” things – Jesus did not necessarily mean more spectacular miracles*
- What, then, could these “greater things” refer to?
- Well, consider this: at the end of 3 years of Jesus’ preaching and teaching and performing miraculous signs – there were about 120 believers gathered together at the beginning of the Day of Pentecost
--by the end of that Day – as a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit -- there were 3000 who accepted Peter’s Gospel message and were baptized and added to the church
--could that be part of what Jesus meant by “greater things”?
- Notice at the end of 14:12 Jesus says: *“He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”*
- What is the connection between Jesus going to the Father and his followers doing greater things than what Jesus had been doing?
- In John 7 Jesus that He had to be glorified – *that is, ascended into heaven and exalted to the right hand of God* – before the Holy Spirit could be given to his followers
- *In John 14, He is making this same connection between going to the Father and sending the Holy Spirit to empower His followers for ministry – which included first and foremost power for preaching the Gospel*
- ***The works of Jesus are done in the strength and power of the Holy Spirit – whom Jesus would send from the right hand of the Father***
- In fact, notice how Peter summarizes and explains Jesus’ own ministry:

Acts 10:38 *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.*

- Now Peter certainly believed that Jesus was the divine Son of God
- *But how does Peter explain the power behind Jesus’ ministry?*
- **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power**
- *The works of Jesus are done in the power of the Holy Spirit*
- ***That was true of Jesus in the 1st century – and it is true of those who believe in him today***
- *The same Holy Spirit who empowered the works of Jesus 2000 years ago also empowers believers to do the works and ministry of Jesus today*
- And how do we access that power?

John 14:13-15 ¹³ **And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.** ¹⁴ **You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.** ¹⁵ **“If you love me, you will obey what I command.**

- *Through believing prayer in Jesus’ name – and through loving obedience to Christ’s commands*
- And for what purpose is this power for ministry granted?
- *Vs. 13 – So that the Son may bring glory to the Father*

II. THE SPIRIT MEDIATES THE ONGOING PRESENCE OF JESUS (14:16-18; 16:5-7)

- The Holy Spirit not only supplies spiritual power and spiritual gifts for doing ministry and continuing the works of Jesus – *but the Spirit also conveys the actual ongoing Presence of the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ*
- **In fact, the reason believers today are able to continue the deeds and words of Jesus’ ministry is precisely because His life and compassion and love and power flow through us by the indwelling Holy Spirit**
- It is significant that right in the middle of Jesus’ most extensive teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit is his teaching in John 15 about the connection between bearing fruit and abiding in Christ as the True Vine
- *The meaning of his teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the meaning of his teaching on the branches abiding in the vine are essentially the same*
- ***Experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit cannot be separated from abiding in a love relationship with Jesus***
- *It is as the life of Jesus flows through us by means of the indwelling Spirit that we are empowered to do ministry that will bear fruit*
- ***It is the Holy Spirit who mediates the Presence of the risen and ascended Christ to us as members of Christ’s body so that we are able to extend that presence and love and power to the world around us***
- *The works of Jesus are still the works of Jesus – and they are still done in the power of the Holy Spirit -- it’s just that instead of being done by Jesus’ physical hands – they are now being done by the members of his body, the church*
- **The Holy Spirit mediates the ongoing Presence of Jesus**
- *Mediates = to act as an intermediary agent in bringing, effecting or communicating – the Presence of the living Christ*

- **By giving us the Holy Spirit – Jesus is giving us His Own Living Presence to abide within us**

John 14: 16-18 ¹⁶**And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—**¹⁷**the Spirit of truth. You know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.** ¹⁸**I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**

- *Jesus lived with his disciples for 3 years*
- *But the Paraclete – the Holy Spirit – lives within us forever*
- *Jesus is Emmanuel = God WITH us*
- *But the Holy Spirit is God WITHIN us*
- *This is why Jesus could say in John 16 that it was to our advantage that he leave us and return to the Father in heaven*
- *For it is actually better for us to have His spiritual presence within us than to have his physical presence beside us*

John 16:7 ⁷**But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.**

- *Do you question that statement?*
- *Do you think you would be better off if you could see and hear the physical presence of Jesus in a physical body than to have his spiritual presence living in you by his Spirit?*
- *Consider the 12 disciples – were they more dynamic and fruitful followers of Jesus while Jesus was still on earth – or after he returned to the Father and sent the Spirit?*
- **By far they were all more dynamic Christians after Pentecost than before**
- *They were far more fruitful and powerful Christians with the Spirit living within them than with Jesus walking beside them*
- *Our calling as Christians is not to observe and admire the life of Jesus and then try hard to imitate him*
- *Rather our calling as Christians is to allow the Presence of the living Christ to transform us into his likeness – and we do that as we yield to the control and direction of the indwelling Holy Spirit*
- *How about you? Are you experiencing the inner spiritual reality of the Presence of Christ abiding within you?*

- *This experience begins when you invite Jesus Christ into your life as your personal Savior and Lord*
--will you open the door of your heart to Jesus today?

III. **THE SPIRIT TEACHES US AND GUIDES US INTO THE TRUTH OF JESUS (14:25-26; 15:26; 16:12-15)**

- *Jesus calls the Paraclete the Spirit of Truth for a reason: the Paraclete reveals and bears witness to the truth of Jesus*
- Remember – truth here is not referring to our own doctrinal understandings or theological systems or our own interpretations of the Bible
- *Truth is a Person – and his name is Jesus*
- *To bear witness to the Truth means first and foremost to bear witness to Jesus as the Son of God who came to earth in human flesh, who died on the Cross for our sins, who was raised from the dead and has been exalted as Lord and Christ at the right hand of God*
- *Just as Jesus revealed the Father – so also the Spirit reveals the Son*
- *Just as Jesus spoke the words of the Father – so also the Spirit speaks and makes known the words and truth of Jesus*

(1) First of all, the Spirit of truth enabled the Apostles to recall and understand the words and teachings of Jesus in order to record them in the Gospels

John 14:25-26 ²⁵“All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But the Counselor, 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.

This promise refers specifically to the apostles who heard the teachings of Jesus – but didn't always understand at first what they were hearing
--and these words of Jesus were at first spread orally and would not be written down in the Gospels for another 30-60 years
--we can have confidence that we have the true words of Jesus in the Gospels because of this promise of Jesus that the Holy Spirit would enable the disciples to remember and understand the words of Jesus

(2) Secondly, the Spirit of truth testifies to the truth of Jesus

John 15:26 ²⁶“**When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.**

*The primary concern of the Spirit of truth is to testify about Jesus
--and thus, the primary concern of Spirit-filled Christians and churches will be to testify about Jesus*

(3) *Thirdly, the Spirit of truth will give new insight and disclose new truths beyond the historic words of Jesus*

John 16:12-15 ¹²“**I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.** ¹³**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.** ¹⁴**He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.** ¹⁵**All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.**

The first application of this pertains to the writing of the NT:

--not only would the Spirit of truth enable the apostles to recall and understand the words Jesus spoke while on earth – but the Spirit would also guide them into further truth beyond what Jesus spoke on earth

*--there is much truth in the NT that goes beyond the words Jesus spoke on earth
--for example, much of the NT was written by Paul and Luke – and as far as we know, they did not hear Jesus teach while he was on earth*

--their writings are true and are the Word of God – but that truth did not come from recalling the words Jesus spoke on earth

--rather, the Spirit of truth made known to them truths beyond the historic words of Jesus

--yet the ultimate source of that truth is still the living Christ

--“The Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.”

The Holy Spirit does not reveal new truth today that is on a par with the revealed truth of the NT

--the authority of the NT Scriptures is unique and supreme

--The Holy Spirit does not speak or give revelation through anyone today that is of equal authority to the Word of God recorded in the NT

--but the Holy Spirit does still speak today by various means

As Acts 2 and other NT Scriptures make clear, the whole church age from Pentecost to the Second Coming is referred to as *the last days* – which are the days of the Messiah's reign at the right hand of God – and the age of the outpoured Spirit and of prophetic speech by all of God's people as prophesied by Joel

--prophetic speech can refer to all Spirit-filled proclamation of the Gospel
 --and although the preaching and teaching and prophesying and testifying of Christian believers today is not infallible or of the same authority as the NT – there is still a sense in which the Spirit guides us into truth and empowers us to speak the words of God

I Peter 4:10-11 ¹⁰Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹If anyone speaks, he should do it **as one speaking the very words of God**. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

*This is not just for the apostles and writers of the NT
 --this is for anyone who speaks in Jesus' name*

I am fully aware that the words I speak are not of the same truth authority or infallibility as the words of Moses or Isaiah or Peter or Paul.
 --but I believe that God has given me some speaking gifts of the Holy Spirit, and I take at face value what Peter wrote – that those with speaking gifts should speak as those speaking the very words of God

And so before every message I prepare and speak, I spend time in prayer asking the Spirit of truth to guide me into truth
 --I ask God to fill and control and anoint me with the Holy Spirit and to cleanse, sanctify, activate and anoint the gifts of the Holy Spirit He has given me
 --and I ask God to speak to me by the Holy Spirit and speak through me by the Holy Spirit – to show me what to say and how to say it – so that the words I prepare and speak would be the very words of God for the upbuilding of Cornerstone Baptist Church and for the accomplishing of God's purposes
 --and then I trust the Holy Spirit to do his work through me

And this promise is not just for pastors preaching sermons – but for all who speak in Jesus' name

--and indeed, this should be the prayer of all who listen as well – that the Spirit of truth would guide you into truth as you listen to the Word of God being preached and taught

IV. THE SPIRIT CONVICTS AND CONVINCES UNBELIEVERS ABOUT THE TRUTH OF JESUS (16:8-11)

John 16:8-11 ⁸**When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:** ⁹**in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;** ¹⁰**in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;** ¹¹**and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.**

- The truth is, many of the world's values and beliefs are fundamentally wrong
- *The Spirit of Truth judges the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the world*
- **The purpose of this convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit is not to lead unbelievers into condemnation – but rather to deliver them from condemnation**
- *For the first step in becoming saved is to be convicted of one's guilt before God*
- People who think they are perfectly fine as they are will not be interested in the Good News of a Savior who was crucified to save them from sin and hell
- *People who think that there are many different paths to God, and it really doesn't matter what they believe or how they live – will not be interested in the exclusive truth claims of the unique supremacy of Jesus Christ as Lord*
- Apart from the guilt-convicting and truth-convincing work of the Holy Spirit, unbelievers will perish in their complacency and delusions and misconceptions
- *The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of the most serious sin of all – namely the sin of unbelief – the sin of ignoring or rejecting the claims of Christ*
- And the Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers in regard to righteousness – showing them that they are in the wrong before God because of their disobedience and rebellion // showing them that a right relationship with God is possible only through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ // *showing them that the resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God in heaven vindicate Christ's righteousness and testify to his unique supremacy as the Way, the Truth and the Lord of Life*
- And the Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers in regard to judgment – *showing them that Satan, the prince of this world, has already been defeated and judged // showing them the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of this world system that is judged along with Satan // and showing them their own certain judgment if they do not renounce the spiritual darkness of this world and come to the Light of Jesus Christ*

- *The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of their guilt before God – and of the justice of their judgment due to their sin and unbelief – and convinces them that their only hope of righteousness is through faith in Jesus Christ*
- *Apart from this convicting work of the Spirit of Truth – people would perish in the sin and guilt and unbelief – all the while deceived into thinking everything was fine*
- *We owe our salvation not only to the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross – but also to the convicting and convincing work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and minds and consciences to enable us to see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ*
- *It is the Holy Spirit who opens the eyes of our hearts to see Jesus in all of his unique glory and to give us understanding of his grace and his death on the Cross and to show us our need to repent of our sins and humbly accept by faith the gift of Christ’s salvation and righteousness*
- *When we are prone to wander far away from God and waste our lives on the pleasures and treasures of this world – it is the Holy Spirit who works in us to turn our eyes upon Jesus and to show us the true riches and all-surpassing joy of knowing Jesus Christ personally*

V. THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS US TO TESTIFY ABOUT JESUS (15:27-16:4)

John 15:26-27 ²⁶“**When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.**” ²⁷**And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.**

- *Of course, the testimony of the apostles carries a unique authority because they were eyewitnesses of Jesus from the beginning of his ministry through his resurrection and ascension*
- *But we know from Acts 1:8 and many other Scriptures that all of us are called to testify about Jesus – all of us are called to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel and to share our personal testimony of our personal experience with Jesus Christ*
- **It is the Holy Spirit who empowers us to testify about Jesus**

Acts 1:8 ⁸**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

- *It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the courage to open our mouths and tell others about Jesus // it is the Holy Spirit who gives us the right words for the occasion // it is the Holy Spirit who backs up our words with His own witness to the truth of Jesus*
- The single most important and decisive factor in becoming an effective witness of Jesus Christ is not your personality type or your religious background or how long you've been a Christian or how well you know the Bible
- **The single most important and decisive factor in becoming an effective witness of Jesus Christ is being filled and controlled and directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, because the passion of the Holy Spirit is to testify about Jesus** – *you become an effective witness by allowing the Holy Spirit to testify about Jesus through you*
- We do our children and youth a major disservice when we teach them well how to be saved by accepting Christ as their Savior, and we teach them well to memorize Bible verses and obey the teachings of Christ, and then we tell them to reach out and witness to their unsaved friends – *but we do not give them clear and repeated teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit*
- **Jesus did not send his disciples into the world to be his witnesses without the empowerment of the Holy Spirit** – *and neither should we send our children and youth into the world without an adequate knowledge of how to be filled, controlled, directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit*
- When our children and youth struggle to live as Christ's witnesses in the world – the solution is NOT to isolate them from the world – *the solution is to teach and equip them to be filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit who is God's power source for compassion and boldness to enable us to serve others and tell them about Jesus*
- Throughout jr. high and high school and the first month of college, outwardly I was a good Christian kid – but inwardly I was a guilt-ridden, frustrated, defeated Christian who understood the oughts of living and witnessing for Christ but did not have the spiritual power to live and witness as I ought
- *But over the period of a month in the fall of 1970, my life was transformed and I became a bold witness and passionate follower of Jesus Christ living an abundant and fruitful Christian life*
- **What made the difference? Campus Crusade for Christ's teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit enabled me to experience personally the reality of Acts 1:8 – and I received the fullness and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to enable me to become an effective witness of Jesus Christ**

- I stand behind this pulpit today because of the ministry of the Holy Spirit transforming my Christian life
- *Yet even today, after 30 years of pastoral ministry – I can be just as timid and cowardly as the next guy and pass up opportunities to tell others about Jesus if I do not draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit*
- **Proclaiming the Gospel and public speaking do not come naturally to me – I am able to proclaim Christ only as I am filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit**
- How about you?
- *Are you experiencing the reality of the ongoing Presence of Jesus in your everyday life?*
- **Are you growing in your understanding of the Truth that is in Jesus?**
- *Do you know what it is to be equipped and empowered by the Spirit to continue Jesus' works and ministry and to live as His witness?*
- *Are you living a Spirit-led, Spirit-filled and Spirit-empowered life? Are you drawing upon the power of the Holy Spirit to serve others and tell them about Jesus?*

Prayer: Dear Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have been directing my own life and that, as a result, I have sinned against You. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Jesus Christ to take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit. Fill me with spiritual passion, with compassion for the lost and hurting, and with boldness to tell others about Jesus. Empower my life and service and witness for Jesus Christ. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

“Spirit of the Living God” and “Let It Rain”