

The Triune God gives us the truth.

Text: John 16:12-15 for 6/16/2019 by Pastor Bolwerk

¹²“I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own, but whatever he hears he will speak. He will also declare to you what is to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I said that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.

Today is the day we celebrate the truth that our God is a triune God. Triune means three in one: God is one God and yet he is three distinct persons within that one God. And even though each person of the Godhead always works in unison with the other two, we also see each individual within the trinity carrying out their own unique task: God the Father is the Almighty Creator. God the Son is the Savior and Redeemer. God the Holy Spirit is the Comforter and Counselor. Yet as distinct as the work of each person of the Trinity is there is a common thread that ties their work together: Out of love for us all three work to give. The Father gives life. The Son gives salvation. The Spirit gives faith. As we look at Jesus' words recorded by the Gospel writer John, we see there is something that all three persons of God give to us.

Theme: The Triune God gives us the truth.

I. The truth to guide us

II. So we may bring God glory

The truth that God gives us is spiritual truth, so for us to understand that truth it's necessary for God to guide us into that truth. Without God's guidance no one would be able to understand his truth. Jesus' disciples thought they thought they could handle the truth on their own, but Jesus knew otherwise. **“I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now”** (v. 12). When it comes to knowledge, to “bear” something means to understand it and accept it as true. Jesus' disciples often did not understand what he was saying, and when they did they did not always believe it was true. In the Gospels we read again and again how Jesus spoke to his disciples about his death and resurrection, and still we are told, **“The disciples did not understand any of this”** (Luke 18:31). We see the disciples lack of understanding in their arguing over who among them is the greatest; we see it in Peter as he rebukes Jesus for saying he going to suffer and die; we see it as Peter denies his Lord three times even though Jesus had warned him he would do this.

Yet Jesus' twelve Apostles are not the only ones who struggle with correctly understanding God's truth. We may think we understand what God is saying to us, but how often does our human reason turn that truth into something else? God says, “Honor your father and mother.” Human reason says, “Sending my father a Father's Day card shows respect to my father. That fulfilled God's command.” Yet God tells us in his word that this command also means to show honor and respect to all who are in positions of authority over us, including teachers, our boss, and people in the government. Do we

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always honor these people? Do we always show respect to our government officials? Human reason says if someone hates you, hurts you, or curses you, then you do the same back to them. That just makes sense, right? We fight back to defend ourselves against our enemies. Yet, Jesus says, **“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also”** (Luke 6:27-29). We may understand Jesus’ words, but do we fully grasp what he is saying us? Are we doing these things he tells us to do? Do we fully grasp the truth that Jesus paid for the sins of all people, not only ours sins but also the sins of our enemies? And can we even begin to understand what it means that God is Triune – three persons yet only one God? How arrogant we are to think that by our own logic and human reason we can ever fully comprehend God and all he says to us.

If we are ever going to understand God’s truths we need the Triune God’s help. We need Jesus to guide our hearts and minds with his Holy Spirit, so we can have the ability to correctly understand the truth he gives us. By the power of the Spirit we are moved to repent of our arrogance when we put our human reason ahead of God’s truth. Thankfully, by the Spirit’s power, we trust that Jesus has forgiven us of that sin also.

As the Spirit guides us he leads us to more than just repentance and forgiveness. The Spirit uses the truth of God to guide our lives, both our spiritual and physical lives. Jesus says, **“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own, but whatever he hears he will speak. He will also declare to you what is to come”** (v. 13). What the Spirit heard from the Father and the Son he shared with the disciples. Those men then wrote down what the Spirit shared with them so that we can also know what is to come.

Through the truths of scripture the Holy Spirit guides us into what is to come spiritually, not only repentance and forgiveness but peace and joy. We learn from the Spirit that through faith in Christ we are at peace with God the Father. It is by God’s truth we have the joy knowing all our sins are forgiven because of Jesus’ saving work. That means that when our life comes to an end we can be certain God will not condemn us for our sins, but instead he will welcome us into the glories of heaven.

The Spirit also guides us into what is to come physically. The Spirit tells us that, as believers, there will be persecutions we will face. Those persecutions can come from just about anywhere: the unbelieving high school teacher or college professors who we have to study under, bosses and fellow employees who make fun of Christianity, and the many people of this world who are not so kind to Christians.

Yet as the Spirit guides us through these physical difficulties of life, he is also working to guide us into glory. The Holy Spirit tells us that, as God’s believing children, one day we will see the beauties of heaven. One day we will be able to enjoy that glorious place Jesus has gone to prepare for us. And on the Last Day we will physically rise from the dead. On that day our bodies will never be able to die again, and we will be able to enjoy

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the eternal wonders of heaven with both our bodies and our souls. This is the truth; the truth that the Holy Spirit uses to guides us.

And as our Triune God guides us into glory with his truth, he also gives us his truth so that we may bring God glory.

God takes from what is his and gives it to us so that he may be glorified and praised. And what belongs to God? God the Father has made everything as the Apostle Paul tells us in the book of Acts, **“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth”** (Acts 17:24a). And everything that the Father has he shares with his Son. Jesus said **“Everything the Father has is mine”** (v.15a). The Son of God wants us to have what his Father has. Jesus wants us to have eternal life in heaven. So Christ sends his Spirit to share his words with us, and Jesus’ words are the Father’s words. The Holy Spirit took those words and gave them to Christ’s disciples, and they wrote them down. Through that written word the Holy Spirit takes from what belongs to the Father and the Son and uses it to create and strengthen faith. The Spirit makes known to us the way of salvation, and in doing that he builds up God’s church. Through the truth of the gospel the Spirit continues to add to the multitude of people who will one day stand around the throne of God praising his holy name.

And the Spirit does even more. He gives us God’s truth so we can live right now to glorify God. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, **“He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you”** (v. 14). When we hear or read the Scriptures it is the Spirit who declares those truths to us and helps us understand them. Sustaining our faith through God’s powerful word the Spirit gives us the power to live a life that glorifies God. We glorify God by thanking and praising him. We glorify God by how we live, taking the truths of Scripture and applying them to our lives. We glorify God by repenting of our sins and asking the Father to graciously forgive us for Jesus’ sake. We glorify our Triune God by putting him first in our lives through worship and prayer and devotions. We glorify God by loving our neighbors as ourselves, including our enemies.

Yet we give glory to God by more than what we do. We especially thank and praise God by what we say. As the Spirit fills us with the words of the Father and the Son, he works through us to speak those truth to people who don’t know the truth. With God’s words in our hearts and our mouths we speak the truth about sin, calling people to repentance. We speak the truth about the Savior, the Son of God who shed his holy blood to save the world from the condemnation of sin. Every time we take the truth God has given us and share it with another person the Holy Spirit is able to use those words to do his work. Through the working of the Holy Spirit in us, God is glorified.

As we look at the world we live in we may be a little hesitant to speak God’s truths. We may be hesitant to live those truths because Satan and the world love to challenge God’s truth and our faith. Sometime we can feel rather alone when faced with that pressure from the world. But you’re not alone. The Almighty, Triune God goes with you

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every step of the way. He has given you everything you need for life and salvation: He has given you his truth. Keep those words of truth always in your heart and mind. When you do God will use those words (his words) to guide you through every challenge that life in this sinful world can throw at you. Use those words of truth you have learned to praise and glorify your Lord and Savior as he guides you on the path to heaven.

Yes, our God is a Triune God: Three persons yet one God. That is one very difficult truth to understand. But through God's word of truth he gives us the understanding. Through that word the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth: The truth that Jesus Christ lived and died and rose again to save us from our sins. The Spirit guides us into the truth that all who believe and trust in Jesus have forgiveness and eternal life. Amen.