

### Exegesis

**Vs. 12-13** – Having outlined the Holy Spirit’s mission *in the world* (vs. 8-11), the Lord begins to explain what the Spirit will accomplish *in the Church*. Jesus says, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” What other “things” did Jesus want to tell them? We cannot know for sure, though, given the rest of the NT, a great “many things” needed to be said. Yet, ever the teacher, the Lord could see that his students could not “bear [those things] now.” Given their emotional state, it is likely for Jesus to say anything else would do more harm than good.<sup>1</sup>

However, the disciples won't be left in the dark for long. Eventually, through the Spirit's empowerment, the apostles will be strong enough to “bear” greater insight and, as such, will better understand *all the implications* of the word of Christ. The Lord says, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” This is the *third time* the Holy Spirit is called the “Spirit of truth” (cf. 14:17; 15:26). As our traits distinguish who we are as individuals, the Holy Spirit is distinguished by a unique characteristic: *truth*. There is no falsity, error, or untruth in him. In the same way that Jesus is the very embodiment of truth (cf. 1:14, 17; 14:6), so is the Holy Spirit, the very “Spirit of truth.”

Given the Spirit’s inseparable link to truth, the Lord says, “he will guide [the disciples] into all truth....” The Greek term translated as “guide” is **ὁδηγέω** (*ho-dē-géō*), and it shows up only five times in the NT: Mat. 15:14; Lu. 6:39; Jn. 16:13; Ac. 8:31; Rev. 7:17. Of those instances, the best parallel is in Acts 8, where Phillip asks if the Ethiopian eunuch understood the part of Isaiah he just so happened to be reading at the time. The eunuch replied in Acts 8:31, “How can I, except some man should guide [*ho-dē-géō*] me?” Luke then tells us that “Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Ac. 8:35). Just like Philip guided the eunuch to see Jesus in Isa. 53:7-8, the Holy Spirit guides believers “into all truth,” into all that has been revealed about the Son of God. God the Spirit is the great divine tutor instructing truth-seekers to understand and recognize the Truth incarnate, Jesus Christ (cf. 14:6).<sup>2</sup>

When the Lord refers to “all truth,” he is not referring to truth unqualified, as in the sum total of all knowledge. The Holy Spirit was not a precursor to Google. On the day of Pentecost (Ac. 2), the apostles did not become mathematicians. Instead, they became authorities on the most

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<sup>1</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Klink (2016), p. 681, “The verb “guide” (ὁδηγήσει) or “lead” refers here to instructional assistance, “to assist someone in acquiring information or knowledge.”

important truth of all: *Jesus Christ*. The Holy Spirit only reminded the apostles of things the Lord had *already* told them (cf. 14:26). Thus, the Spirit merely fills out “the revelation nodally present in Jesus himself.”<sup>3</sup> In this way, the rest of the NT can be seen as a commentary on the life of Jesus and a thorough discourse on his teachings. Contrary to what some might propose, the apostles' writings are not at odds with Jesus.<sup>4</sup> Instead, their letters to various churches in places like Philippi, Thessalonica, and Rome show how the Truth of Jesus should be applied in diverse contexts and situations. There is a blessed continuity from Genesis to Revelation; everyone word “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

To be clear, this is not to say there are no truths outside of Scripture. All truths, be they scientific or otherwise, act like breadcrumbs that lead to God (cf. Ps. 91:1-2; Rom. 1:19-20). For instance, Isaac Newton discovered gravity while watching an apple drop from a tree. Though that discovery revolutionized the scientific world, as a believer, Newton knew it could only explain so much. Even something as ingenious as the knowledge of gravity had its limitations. In fact, the great scientist famously said, "Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done." All truths, when properly understood, invariably lead back to God. But at best, this knowledge is incomplete. Only when a person knows the Truth (aka Jesus Christ) as revealed in God's word do they come to know the Father fully (cf. 14:9; Heb. 1:1-4). In fact, one could know only Jesus, and that understanding alone would be enough.

This is why whatever truth the Spirit reveals is always for the purpose of revealing Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will be so preoccupied with the Lord that "he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak...." The Spirit's revelations are not his own; he will not "speak of himself." Instead, the Holy Spirit will speak “whatsoever he shall hear;” he will only say what he is told to say. This transmission of information is the same pattern that Jesus followed with God (cf. 3:34; 5:19; 7:16-18; 8:26-29, 42-43; 12:47-50; 14:10).<sup>5</sup> As Jesus only spoke what he was told to speak, the Spirit will only say things he is told to say.

Though the disciples cannot know, at this point, what the Spirit's sayings will be, they can understand that they will be *futuristic*. Jesus says, “[the Holy Spirit] will shew you things to

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<sup>3</sup> Carson (1991), p. 539

<sup>4</sup> Morris (1995), p. 621, "In passing we should notice that the attempt of some scholars to "go back to the original Jesus" and bypass the teaching of the apostles is shown by Jesus himself to be misguided. The same source lies behind both. The Spirit's teaching is not from himself, but he teaches "only what he hears.""

<sup>5</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 473.

come." Who gave John the Beloved the Book of Revelation? The Holy Spirit (Rev. 1:10). Who told Paul of the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18)? The Holy Spirit. Who told Peter about judgment day (2 Pet. 3:10)? The Holy Spirit. As the lead apostle said himself, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21). The Bible is the Word of God written by the hand of men who were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**Vs. 14-15** – Once again, we're reminded that whatever prophetic word the Spirit may give, it will all be in service to Jesus. As the Lord explains, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." As Jesus glorified the Father (cf. 7:18; 12:28; 13:31-32; 14:13; 17:1, 4), the Spirit will "glorify" the Son. And Jesus will be glorified when the Spirit shows the disciples the revelation he has "received of [Jesus]." So, on the one hand, the Spirit is the *herald* of the Lord. However, on the other, since the Son of God owns "all things that the Father [has]," then, like the Son, the Spirit is the *messenger* of the Father. This is why Jesus says, "that [the Spirit] shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto [the disciples]." Just as God the Son gave to the disciples those things that were given to him by God the Father, so the Spirit will give to the apostles those things that will be given to him by the Son. Admittedly, following this train of thought is challenging. But the Lord is going to great lengths to ensure that his followers understand that the Spirit's revelation is not, strictly speaking, from the Spirit; like his own teaching, it is from God. The Holy Spirit works to reveal Jesus; it is *Christocentric*. And, together, Jesus and the Spirit work to reveal God; it is *theocentric*. The self-disclosure of the Godhead is a collaborative effort where all parties are working to disclose the I Am (cf. 8:58).<sup>6</sup>

Since we're on the topic of Spirit-inspired revelation, a word of caution seems appropriate. Though the Spirit serves to illuminate the hearts of all believers so that we might better understand Jesus, the promise of revelatory disclosure is rooted in a specific context and given to a particular group of people: *the apostles*. They alone were to serve as eyewitnesses to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. No other individuals were given that responsibility, and, as such, once the apostles were gone, there would be no more new revelation. In other words, the canon of Scripture is closed. Thus, beware any who claim to have some prophetic vision (i.e., Book of Mormon, the Quran, the Vedas, etc.) or who claim to know the exact date of Jesus' return (cf. Mat. 24:36; Ac. 1:7). False prophets are everywhere, diligently trying to lead people

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<sup>6</sup> Klink (2016), p. 682, "It is important to note that the unity between the three person of the Trinitarian God finds a parallel unity in the shared message. This message is so constant in the Gospel that it can be presumed that the one revelation of God in Christ is the content of that which the Spirit is to convey to the disciples."

astray (cf. Matt. 24:11, 24; Mar. 13:22; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Jn. 4:1). Only through the Bible does the Holy Spirit speak. Anyone claiming extrabiblical revelation is, at best, woefully misinformed, or worse, a heretic (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Gal. 1:6-9).

## VIDEO DESCRIPTION

### **Deep Dive: The Gospel of John | Week 65 | John 16:12-15**

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

As we have been for the past two Wednesdays, tonight, we're, once again, unpacking the implications of the Holy Spirit's arrival after Jesus' departure. Last week, we learned that the Spirit's job in the world was to convict "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." He is laser-focused on humbling unbelievers so they might be saved before it's too late.

This week, we'll learn that the Spirit's job in the Church is to act as a "guide," leading believers "into all truth." To be sure, this is not the sum total of all knowledge. The Holy Spirit is not the precursor to Google. Instead, the Third Person of the Godhead will act as a divine tutor, instructing believers in the way of Jesus Christ, the Truth incarnate (cf. Jn. 14:6).

**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

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