

SUNDAY June 15, 2025 "The Spirit of Truth"

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 Romans 5:1-5 John 16: 12-25

Have you ever been dumbfounded or awestruck about anything? That is you are confounded or filled with awe that you were just unsure of what to make of what you have just heard or seen or witnessed? Maybe it is something you've seen that you just cannot fully comprehend or that what occurred is difficult to make clear in your mind. Your response is not logical or verbal but usually an odd expression is on your face. With the response corresponding to 'huh?'

If you have been awestruck, the question most asked is 'what?' but then the moment is lost as an explanation is given to explain what was just seen or heard. Maybe it was the image taken of the moon's surface with the earth in the background that took your ability to comprehend away. Or seeing molecules and cells at such a minute level that you wonder with eyes wide open, how can this be?

Or maybe you become dumbfounded when you heard the words that the disciples first received from Jesus. What do you mean? You're leaving? You can't just leave us! When will you be back? What are we supposed to do when you are gone? How long will you be gone?

Jesus told his disciples on more than one occasion that he was going to leave them. He knew these disciples well enough because he knew their doubts and fears. So he reassured them that he would not leave them alone-- he would leave them with an advocate counselor. When this advocate comes- the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me and so will you. For you have been with me from the beginning. Their response this time? What? Why? What do you mean? They didn't know what to say.

But Jesus knew what he was doing and going to do. Yet he tells them with love, "I still have many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now." He knew what was to come-- his death and resurrection- not just a brief vacation. But he tells them that the Spirit of Truth will come and he will do three things. These three things are 1) guide you into all the truth 2) speak whatever he hears and declare it to you the things that are to come 3) glorify me because he will take what is mine and declare it to you (all that is mine is what the Father has).

Jesus was trying to prepare the disciples for what would soon occur stating- "in a little while you will no longer see me and again in a little while you will see me". They will weep and mourn and the world will rejoice. They however will have pain and eventually this pain will turn

to joy. What was Jesus referring to?- He knew but they just didn't get it. The Spirit was with them but not yet in them so they were merely hearing the words but not grasping their full meaning.

When the Spirit did come on that Pentecost day, it seemed that the light bulb of understanding what Jesus was talking about came on the minds of the disciples. Jesus had shared with them the plan. But they did not understand that he would go away, return, and then go away. But they were told that the Spirit of truth would come. And it would be then that the Truth of who Christ is and the meaning of his teachings would be understood. This understanding of the Truth of the Spirit, would change their lives.

The message of Proverbs 8 focuses on wisdom and where one might find it and hear the cry. Wisdom was a part of God's creation at the beginning before anything was formed. And when God established the heavens, the skies, the seas and marked the foundations of earth- wisdom was present. Wisdom was present rejoicing before him and in what God had created and wisdom took delight in God's creatures- humans. This wisdom is what the Spirit of Truth advocates or stresses to those who wish to hear, learn and know his word.

But God's wisdom is also a mystery to us. For we might only understand if we receive the Spirit of truth and believe. Paul refers to two levels of understanding in 1 Corinthians 2:7-13. These are mind vs. heart and human understanding vs spiritual understanding-- that is, born of flesh vs taught by the Spirit of God. So what is this Spirit of Truth?

As people we learn human knowledge which has been shared from one generation to another. But there is knowledge beyond human knowledge or discerning which may only be learned with the help of the Spirit. God's Spirit is the Spirit of truth. And through God's wisdom alone we can learn about what this means as the Spirit moves from head to heart.

So what is this Spirit of Truth? It is the Spirit which comes to people who believe and receive God's gifts of faith. No one who does not have the Spirit of Truth living within them can begin to understand the spiritual truths of God. Jesus taught in parables so that the disciples would take the stories and understand them a bit from a different Spiritual perspective. The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven were given to the disciples but they did not understand.

Were they looking for something more complex? More complicated or intrinsic? Jesus taught by using stories to try and illustrate his ways of living. Yet, the disciples did not

understand. After 2000 years we are still discerning the meaning of these stories of Jesus which teach us how to live and love. But we don't fully realize the extent of these teachings upon us who have received the Spirit of God in faith. In many ways we are dumbstruck, a combination of dumbfounded and awestruck. So what do we do about this?

We continue to seek the Spirit of Truth and we listen to Jesus' words and pray that what is heard- will move from head to heart and that we will be enlightened as we understand.

The Spirit of Truth will guide us in our learning- but we still are called to study the Words of the Bible. We will hear what is stated around us through the Spirit but we will have to declare whether it is wisdom or uncertainty. And we will glorify God with our whole being.

How we glorify God depends upon where we are in our own understanding and relationship with God as Trinity-- Father/ Creator, Son- Saviour, and Spirit- Advocate or Counsellor. The knowledge of the kingdom of heaven was shared by Jesus as he taught his followers. They were blessed because they could experience the work of the Spirit in what they heard and saw. But we are still searching. We are still wondering about this Spirit who comes and continues to be with us.

The Spirit of Truth is what the world needs today. But like Pontius Pilate asked at Jesus' trial, "What is truth?" we too are asking the same questions. Truth is being in accord with fact or reality. It's what's considered true and accurate, leaving aside falsehoods or inaccuracies. Truth can be found in various forms, including facts, principles, and statements.

The stories we hear about situations in the world cause us to wonder if there is truth out there or even if there is someone who actually knows what is occurring. For many people, stories about the events are received as facts but they are merely opinions, versions of stories which are embellished or made smaller in some way.

At Pentecost the Spirit of God descended upon those who were faithful to Christ and the disciples were seen as different from others. They had been given special gifts by the Spirit. As we follow Jesus' teachings and live and love others, we need to seek the wisdom of God. We need to realize that it is not about 'I' but we who worship God in faith and love. For we each need to seek the Spirit of Truth so that we may comprehend and appreciate the things beyond the physical world we see, known and understand. This means looking for the Truth as disciples of Christ with the knowledge and hope and promise, that truth will set you free. And

when we look for truth we will receive knowledge and understanding and our joy will be complete.

This is what we are each seeking to be and do. As we consider the Spirit of Truth for our own understanding of faith, let us remember that when we experience God as Father/ Son/ Spirit, we learn also about how God will lead us in this life as we prepare to be with Him forever. This is what we believe and share in faith and with hope. Amen.