

“Guided In Truth”

John 16:12-15

30 May 2010 ❖ Holy Trinity Sunday ❖ Year C

Rev. Galen M. Purpura Jr

Dear worshipers of the Triune God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

When I was a Boy Scout one of my least favorite activities was the orienteering merit badge class. I remember the day very clearly; I was taken out into the woods of Camp Schoellkopf by a fearless orienteering leader from the land down under. Now, the purpose of our venture into the woods was to learn valuable outdoor skills, gain confidence in the woods, and to learn how to use a compass to find my way to different points. Of course, the compass and a map were my main tools. And as I'm sure you know the compass is an amazing device which is supposed help keep one from getting lost; it's a sort of guide and something that a person should be able turn to and utilize in trying to find a way out of a compromising situation.

Looking back at in now, Orienteering is actually pretty amazing, but you know, wouldn't it be simply wonderful if there was something like a compass to guide us through life's way; a compass of sorts that could point us in the right direction, a reliable guide that could direct us when we don't know what to do or which way to turn? Well, in the Gospel lesson this morning, Jesus revealed to the disciples and us alike that there is in fact such a guide. You see, the Father has given to the world a spiritual compass and that is none other than the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit who is in unity with the Father and the Son glorifying them and yes, guiding you and me in truth through all of life's journeys.

“Sometimes We Can't Handle the Truth”

As we consider this text before us today, we meet the disciples in the Upper Room with Jesus just before he had to venture off too Gethsemane for his betrayal. Now, Jesus revealed to the eleven that there was some news that they just couldn't bear. In other words, what Jesus was saying is that they couldn't handle the truth. Of course Jesus wasn't hiding anything. In fact, the disciples already knew the news that Jesus would suffer and die and likewise they knew that through death and resurrection Jesus would in fact be glorified (John 12). Nevertheless, however, the disciples couldn't handle the truth and face the reality that was to occur in their lives and in the life of the one they followed! Perhaps, they couldn't grab hold of the truth because they were fearful, uncertain or maybe they simply wanted to be the guide and set the course. Nevertheless, rather than getting out of the way and trusting patiently they were blinded and couldn't understand the bigger picture which was sure to bring forgiveness, guidance, and true liberation. Fortunately for them however, it wasn't left at that. No, there would come a time when they would understand; a time following Jesus' work on the cross and the grave; a time **“When the Spirit of Truth comes and guides you into all truth.”**

Can't the same be said of us? Isn't it sometimes too difficult for us to handle truths as we consider life's journeys and our relationship with Jesus? Aren't we fearful sometimes of what lay ahead? Consider some of the experiences in your own life...Perhaps, it was when you learned of a chronic medical condition or a terminal illness in your life or the life of someone you love; or maybe your relationship isn't quite like it was when you first started dating or when you were married. Maybe you're struggling with debt too high or not enough income to cover the bills.

Possibly for you, you learned that the having a child isn't a reality. Perhaps, the death of someone in your life has led you to question your faith or has made you feel lost and uncertain of the future. As you consider the world around you and the terrorist attacks, crimes, and natural disasters maybe you find yourself struggling to see hope and the reality of God's presence in a world that seems to be so dominated by evil, suffering and pain. Or maybe, just maybe you have a habitual sin that you are fighting with and can't imagine life without it.

Too many experiences in life's journey can present us with truths that we conceivably just don't want to bear and cause fear in us for what lay ahead! And in the midst of them, like the disciples, in those times of uncertainty, nothing seems to make sense except what we have formulated in our minds. Rather than looking upward and remembering Jesus' promise of a Spiritual compass- the Holy Spirit. Like the disciples we can easily fail to trust and patiently rely on the truth of God's presence, salvation, preservation, and HIS WORD!

"Guided in Truth"

And yet, through all the stuff in our lives, God's promises continue! Thankfully for us, our sometimes mistrust and our fear of what might come next, does not get in the way of God's work and love. Friends, Here is the truth that will guide us: Jesus died, Jesus has risen, Jesus has ascended; he has accomplished forgiveness by his death on the Cross and opened eternal life to all who believe through his rising on the third day. Because of the happy exchange between Jesus you and me, we repentant sinners receive what rightly belongs to the Father and the Son, we are promised abundance of life, and the spirit of truth has come to guide us.

This Spirit of truth works diligently in our midst to glorify the Father and the Son and enables us to personally discover the truth about God the Creator, God the Son and Holy Spirit- one God, forever... working together in unity for our good. . Moreover, what we learn today, is that this Spirit of truth will be with us, in us and around us forever leading us to Jesus and drawing us to His Word alive for our lives, which is sure to permit us to handle the truths of what lay ahead... those many truths that burst into our existence and cause turmoil in our lives. Yes, like a compass, when we are down in the dumps blue and bruised- suffering in the valleys, uncertain, unsure and fearful, the Holy Spirit is right there drowning personal ideas and worldly wisdom, directing our hearts and minds to the only ultimate truth that will make a difference.

Guided in truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in faith when we get out of the way and follow HIS lead turning to the inspired Word- the Bible, after all that's God's gift to us for our good and health; when we follow the Spirit's lead to draw upon and remember the word, we are sure to be heading in the right direction thereby guided in truth!

Friends, in a world that suggests no ultimate truth, today we are reminded that we who have been claimed by God are grounded in one truth that overpowers all the supposed worldly truths and those tough personal truths that come thrusting into our lives! Looking upward and not inward- we can indeed take courage for Jesus has conquered. And finally, the Spirit's presence with us, in us, and around us can certainly assure us that we are heading in the right direction!

And so today, we boldly confess in ONE truth- Father Son and Holy Spirit and likewise guided by the Holy Spirit who works with God and comes from God we can proclaim with certainty that we are never left alone, but guided in truth a truth that sets us free both now and eternally.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

