

Reading: John 16:12-16

Theme: The Christ glorifying Guide.

Last time we began looking at the teaching of the Lord Jesus in v12-15 as He said they were unable to take, carry, bear any more teaching in depth at that time. Jesus then told the disciples of the Holy Spirit's work among them – He would be: **1. Completing the incomplete** - the revelation that Jesus could not tell them at that time as He had not gone to the Father. Then we saw **2. The Divine Guide provided**- the Spirit of truth, with the authority of the Father and Son, He would not speak on His own behalf, but of the Father and the Son, so the triune God is effective in the completion of the incomplete.

This morning I want to come to the **3rd area** concerning the mission of the Holy Spirit in the church, which follows on from the 2 previous areas and we will see: **3. The work of the Divine Guide.** Here the Lord Jesus speaks of the work of this One who would come and work in the Church, especially those who saw the historic salvation events, were eyewitnesses to the Lord Jesus. They were not supermen, with super intelligences; they never had any formal theological teaching, they were unable to see the things concerning Christ in Moses and all the prophets, they could not see past the types and symbols. They were men of their age and had the understanding of their age. This is why they needed this Divine Guide and, in these verses, I have noted 2 main areas concerning the “ordinary”, but supernatural work of the Holy Spirit - the Divine Guide who would:

A. Guide into all the truth. (v13)

When He, the Spirit of Truth, came in His fullness on the day of Pentecost, He would initially be a guide to the apostles, then to all other believers after that. The word used “*He will guide*” means “*to guide, lead on one's way, to be a teacher*”. The Spirit of Truth does this in His work - He does not drive, threaten, impose, but He leads, guides and teaches.

Where does He lead, guide and teach? It is into or in truth, or as the Greek says “the truth” - “all the truth”. As He came to those who are eyewitnesses of Christ, the Spirit of Truth would, by His work and influence, guide, lead into and teach them all the truth. Not all the truth of history, or science, people etc., but all the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ and the things of salvation.

The disciples were Jews, steeped in Judaism, in OT ways and the corruption of that which had occurred through the ages. Now here was the revolutionary gospel, the good news about the Lord Jesus and He, His person and work, needed to be understood; also, the significance of His work for Jews and, more incredibly, for Gentiles, needed to be understood. As did the implications for lifestyles, worship, for situations the gospel light and the changes it would bring, these needed to be understood. They were in a new area, a strange and foreign land - they would need a Guide.

They needed to record these things for generations to come, so we would know and realise we are not following cleverly invented tales and fables. They were guided, directed to write – so we have the NT, also John wrote 20v30 “...*these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*” They needed this Divine Guide.

The apostles primarily and specifically had this Guide given and He fulfilled His work perfectly in them. He brought things back to their minds, granted understanding concerning the significance of events. It wasn't always an automatic process, but they used their minds and reasonings to reach conclusions, yet the Holy Spirit was at work - guiding and directing, never violating their persons or minds. So, in Acts 11:18 as the church at Jerusalem questioned Peter concerning his going to the Gentiles at Cornelius's house, we read that they realised salvation was for the Gentiles too - a big step for all the Jewish believers. Also, when the apostles heard of Greeks being converted at Antioch, they sent Barnabas to check things out to see

if it was kosher! (Acts 11:19-23) - for no apostle had been involved there in Antioch.

A similar thing happened in Acts 15 concerning circumcision and the keeping of the ceremonial law - debate, discussion and a conclusion reached, all under the Holy Spirit as He led and guided them into all the truth - see Acts 15:8-11 and v28 *“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...”*

As He guided into all the truth, He did so in the intimate unity of the relationship He had with the Father and the Son. He would only speak of that which He heard and spoke that which He had the agreement, the “Amen” of Father, Son and Spirit (v13). The Spirit revealed such things to the apostles, who taught and applied those things guided by the Spirit. These were carried along by the Spirit and wrote them down and are preserved in His word.

When we need guidance, leading in any area of our lives, we are to seek our God’s help and the same Spirit will guide us in and into the truth. In our day, there is no adding to revelation as found in God’s word the Bible, for it has been completed in the writings of those the Spirit initially guided into all the truth, including the NT eyewitnesses of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit will always teach, lead and guide us in line with the word of God, the Bible. There are clear commands; there are guiding, overruling principles e.g. Proverbs 3:5-6, Colossians 3:1ff; Ephesians 5; there are examples to learn from e.g. ones like Moses, David, Abraham and Peter. There are principles to apply from these examples and from things in Scripture - Moses: God can use even a faltering tongue; or from sacrifices such as burnt offerings - total dedication to God; someone like Barnabas – whose name means “the son of encouragement”. Remember there are also warnings for us to learn from!

The Holy Spirit will never contradict Himself in His guiding of the Lord’s people into all truth. I have heard people say, also read of

people claiming the Holy Spirit led them to do things and use it to justify their immorality, lying, stealing, hatred, bitterness, deception and division. Yet God the Holy Spirit would not guide a person into something that He has spoken against, prohibited for all others! Sadly, people justify it by blaming others and the circumstances meant that it was allowed for them!

If we feel we are being compelled to do something wrong - as people have spoken of feeling pushed, driven to do something against God's word, then it is not of God. The Holy Spirit guides, leads teaches, but will never drive us like a slave driver into sin. Our enemy, the cruel devil will do that!

Part of His work in the apostles would be to show, tell, announce of things yet to come (v13b). How could the Church face a hostile world? How could it live in a pagan society? How could Christians endure hard times? The apostles were also warned of things yet to come when Jesus was speaking to His disciples in the upper room.

The same Holy Spirit helps us to understand and apply God's word to our days, events and things that loom upon the horizon. In 1960's the world faced the prospect of a nuclear holocaust, yet believers could say that will not be the end of the world, for the Lord would do it. It did not mean they were unconcerned, but their confidence was in God's promises and purposes as revealed in the word of God. We can apply God's word as we face a Covid pandemic; problems that we fear or we will be facing this coming week...

We know that the future of us all are in the hands of our God and I am so thankful to leave it there and look to Him for grace day by day as the Holy Spirit guides into all truth, to comfort and strengthen us as we have need.

That is just a little something of the guiding work of the Holy Spirit. Yet coupled with His guiding into all truth, there is another part of His mission which is most important to note as He would:

B. Glorify Christ. (v14)

The Lord Jesus would glorify the Father in His death; we learn that the Father would also glorify the Son (17:1). While the world would be busy rejecting Christ, the devil would be seeking to mock and dishonour Him, but when the Spirit came in His fullness, He would glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His enthusiastic delight to glorify the Son!

On His ascension, the Father glorified the Son in heaven - He was given a name above every other name - He is hyper exalted in heaven by the Father, but the Spirit's work is to glorify the Son on earth - to cause people to think more highly of His Person, work, offices, power, grace, majesty and His so great salvation. He is perfectly equipped to do this because He takes of what is Christ's, make it known to the apostles - as if Jesus Himself was continuing to speak and teach of Himself. How do we know what someone wants, or what they are like? It is by having those things shared with us and recognising this is going on. The Holy Spirit does this in a greater way concerning Christ - He takes of those things that are Christ's and makes them known.

We can see this time after time in the book of Acts with things said and done - not to draw attention to the apostles, or to the Holy Spirit, but to glorify Christ e.g. 3:11ff - the healing of the man at beautiful gate - Peter preached and he pointed the crowd up to Jesus (3:12-13).

When the Spirit of God is at work, Jesus is glorified and is the centre of attention. The Holy Spirit will not parade, glorify or draw attention to Himself instead of Christ. I feel that much of what is claimed and done in our days in the name of the Holy Spirit does not stand up to the test of glorifying Christ by taking of what is His and

making it known. Other emphases have been introduced which do not glorify Christ.

The Holy Spirit working will not deviate from this great principle of glorifying Christ. His greatest way to glorify Christ is not by giving ecstatic experiences or other strange things claimed by many, but by bringing people to salvation and also sanctification in lives, causing them to live in such a way that people will think more highly of Jesus. The glorifying of Jesus is always linked to His accomplishing salvation. The praise of heaven centres on it in Revelation 4-5. The Son is hyper exalted by the Father as a result of all He suffered to save us (Philippians 2) and the Holy Spirit will glorify Christ chiefly as the only Saviour - which is the context here as Jesus is speaking of going away to the Father by all the horrors of the cross and the Spirit's coming in His fullness as a result of that - to apply Jesus' accomplished work.

Throughout the ages, the Holy Spirit has been glorifying Christ in ways that many people fail to see the wonder of. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ as He brings a person to realise and own their guilt and sin; as He brings them low, sometimes devastates and humbles people, showing them their lost state before God. The Holy Spirit digs in deep, opens up and exposes the malignant growth of sin in a person; He shows that all they have, all they are is useless and they are brought to feel helpless and dirty before God. Then God is seen as awesome and holy and that glorifies Christ, for the Holy Spirit moves them on to see their need of such a Saviour and that **Jesus Exactly Suits Us Sinners** and meets all their need to bring us to God. Other times He shows them the love of God in Jesus to send heaven's best for them to be their Saviour.

The Lord Jesus is exalted when He is shown to be the only Saviour, the all-sufficient Saviour for all who would go to Him. What glory is brought to Jesus at that time - when a person realises that Jesus is their only hope and only answer. The Spirit opens their eyes to see

this lovely One is their only hope, the only One to remove their sin, to satisfy God's holy justice on their behalf and the only One to safely shelter them from the day of God's anger.

By causing a person to surrender to Jesus the throne of their heart and life, that person also sees their need is only met in Christ alone and He works to give them eternal life - regeneration, born-again, to cry out to the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. Vernon Higham preaching at the Aberystwyth conference in 1998 pictured the soul, with its faculties around it, using his hand - the palm is the soul, a person's heart and then each digit is the faculties of the soul - mind, affections, conscience, will and memory. Sure, these faculties can be affected, stirred, moved, but these do not affect the soul, the heart in any true way. What needs to happen is a work of God's grace by His Spirit in the soul and then the faculties are affected. God bypasses the will, mind, feelings, conscience and memory and by His Spirit, He works in the soul, heart and then the disposition of the soul is changed and it begins to register on the mind, the affections etc. there is then, no superficial work, but a Christ glorifying work of salvation, the person comes to trust Jesus as their only Saviour and hope.

Yet the Holy Spirit carries on glorifying Christ in that person by producing a progressive life of faith, a growing and conscious trust in Christ in the everyday matters of life and faith; then Christ becomes more and more central as they, we understand more and more. There's also a glorifying of Christ as we, they become more Christ like - showing Christ and His ways in thought, word and action. There is a growing holiness - which we call sanctification.

The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ as those who were openly once rebels and sinners, but now render to Christ active service and to live or even die for Him. There is a heightening, an equipping of abilities, talents and gifts. All these things are for Christ's glory. It is a prostitution, a gross misuse of grace given gifts - charismata - to use them to glorify ourselves. They are to glorify Christ; to help, build

up, equip His people and so further the work of God in His people. The Spirit who glorifies Christ, will equip and give gifts to His people to enable us to glorify Christ.

The Spirit will always glorify Christ, most especially in His office as Saviour and Redeemer. The hymn “O what matchless condescension” written by William Gadsby has 2 verses that says *“Would we view His highest glory, here it shines in Jesus’ face; sing and tell the pleasing story, O you sinners saved by grace; and with pleasure, bid the guilty Him embrace. In His highest work, redemption, see His glory in a blaze; beyond mortal comprehension higher than an angel’s praise; grace and justice here unite to endless days.”*

Now part of the Holy Spirit’s glorifying Jesus is for us to remember His glory at this moment, to praise Jesus for His majestic glory and power; for us to delight in the joy of our salvation, to dwell on the many blessings that ours in Christ, that we are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Scripture tells us great things of our position and blessings as believers and they are always linked to our Saviour - in the vicinity, in the context of the Saviour and all He did and does for us e.g. Ephesians 1:3-7.

I pray we would know in our lives as individuals, as families and as a church, the Christ glorifying work of the Spirit as He continues to guide us into all truth, as we see souls saved, established, going on and serving Christ their and our Saviour – all of us doing so for His glory alone.