

The Spirit of Truth

John 16:12-15

Sunday, June 12, 2022, at The First Congregational Church of
Marshalltown, Iowa

- Introduction: Reaching back to find the right connection for a loose cable in the tv system.

I find that when I have to reach back behind the television/vcr/dvd system to reattach a loose cable, being able to see complicates things. It can be easier to simply close my eyes and go by touch rather than try to crane my neck and look back or tuck my cellphone back there to take a picture. If I find what I think is the right connection and then the television works well after I've reconnected the cable, that's a good sign. Here we have a promise that the Holy Spirit will guide us even though we cannot, under any normal circumstances, see the Holy Spirit. Other Scriptures say the same. Does Scripture tell us how the Spirit guides us, and how do we discern?

- “He will guide you into all truth”

The verb here translated “to guide” means to show the way or to teach. It's based on a noun describing a conductor or a leader. If you examine the word further you find the word for “road” or “progress”, “journey”. Included with that noun is a verb that translates as “lead” or “command with official authority”. When the Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth imagine a person who is in charge of the road or journey taking on the responsibility to lead you to your destination. That's a snapshot of what the word means.

- Characteristics

We can learn a little of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit's guidance by looking at the immediate context of the verse. We know that the Holy Spirit deals in truth. He deals with what is, and He deals with honesty. Any plan or ambition that requires deception or fraud is to be rejected. Better not to succeed than to succeed in life by dishonorable means. The leading of the Holy Spirit respects authority of the government, but not

tyranny, and the Holy Spirit will never violate the clear teaching of Scripture. That is one of the reasons a good working knowledge of the Bible is so important. And the leading of the Holy Spirit always glorifies Jesus. Plans that are self-serving and self-glorifying are to be viewed skeptically.

- Application

These are the applications I see to this verse: First, make this verse part of your prayer life and include it in your prayers as well as Proverbs 3:5-6. The Bible often spends more time telling us how to pray than how to act. Do get good counsel from people you trust and do your homework. Carefully consider options and then make a decision trusting that the Holy Spirit will find a way to lead you.

- Conclusion

Some of the most precious promises in the Bible are those that speak of the Holy Spirit, who takes the things of God and applies them to human life. It is the Spirit who leads us into true worship and without Him all that we do on Sunday becomes empty ritual. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the desire to live honorable before God and then develops within us the strength to follow through. The Holy Spirit, like a wise parent, manages to guide us through the years of our lives even though He does not ordinarily engage our five senses. He is the Spirit of Truth, and while I don't always understand how He does this, He manages to guide us into all truth.