

**Introduction:**

- A. *Illus.*: Did you ever see the movie, *The Terminal*? Tom Hanks stars as this guy named Victor from a country called Krakozia who gets stuck in a New York airport terminal when his country is taken over in a revolution while he was enroute to NY. He speaks almost no English and has no idea what has happened to him. He's just excited to be in New York—the Big Apple—to see a jazz musician he loves. But it turns out he can't get out of the airport.

The immigration officer tries to explain the problem to him: *“So all flights in and out of your country have been suspended indefinitely and the new government has sealed all the borders, which means that your passport and visa are no longer valid, so currently, you are a citizen of nowhere. ... You don't qualify for asylum, refugee status, temporary protective status, humanitarian parole, or non-immigration work, travel or diplomatic visas—you don't qualify for any of these things. You are, at this time, simply.... unacceptable.”*

*“Unacceptable?”* Victor asks, struggling to understand.

*“Unacceptable,”* the officer replies. [PreachingToday.com]

- B. Christians in this world are in a similar fix. On the night before his death Jesus told his disciples, *“You do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”* **We are unacceptable. But we are not stranded.** In fact, we are actually the embodiment of Jesus Christ in this world with our life coming from his Spirit, his *breath*.
- C. The Holy Spirit makes all the difference. Last week, in John 16:8-11 we saw that the Holy Spirit takes on this sinful world by convicting people of their sin, their empty self-righteousness, and their utterly mistaken judgment about Jesus Christ. All, so that they might turn to God in

repentance and be saved from their sin. No today, turn to **John 16:12-15** and we'll see two wonderful ways the Spirit equips us to represent him in this world that finds Christ and his people to be *unacceptable!* Vv.12-13...

## I. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES JESUS' DISCIPLES INTO TRUTH (16:12-13)

- A. The world does not know what is ultimately true. There are countless examples but here's one. In 1996 Neale Donald Walsch published *Conversations with God*. Within 10 years it had sold over 7 million copies and spawned all kinds of sequels. He even published wedding vows he said were dictated by God. And Walsch may need them because he's been married five times. Walsch said it all started in answer to a cry for help when God actually seized his hand and pen and started writing. Here's one conversation:

**God:** *I cannot tell you My Truth until you stop telling Me yours.*

**Walsch:** *But my truth about God comes from You.*

**God:** *Who said so?*

**Walsch:** *Others.*

**God:** *What others?*

**Walsch:** *Leaders. Ministers. Rabbis. Priests. Books. The Bible, for heaven's sake!*

**God:** *Those are not authoritative sources.*

**Walsch:** *They aren't?*

**God:** *No.*

**Walsch:** *Then what is?*

**God:** *Listen to your feelings. Listen to your Highest Thoughts. Listen to your experience. Whenever any one of these differ from what you've been told by your teachers, or read in your books, forget the words.*

[PreachingToday.com]

I'll tell you who dictated that! Walsch is duped by the godless Prince of this world. This world's thinking is like malware worming its way onto your computer, corrupting all that's there. **They need to hear Jesus speak!**

Within hours of these moments with his disciples, Jesus would be brought to Pilate's palace. Pilate asked him point-blank, "*Are you the king of the Jews?*" Jesus replied, "*My kingdom is not of this world.... It is from another place.*" "*You are a king, then!*" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "*You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.*" "**What is truth?**" retorted Pilate. **That is the question. And Jesus says that he has entrusted the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of truth—with the answers.**

- B. That night, time was running out and the disciples were overwhelmed with all Jesus was telling them. **V.12-13:** Jesus said, "*I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.*" This is a crucial promise. Jesus is speaking primarily to the apostles in that room, for they would be entrusted with communicating what Jesus had said and done, and what it all meant. He said the same thing in **Jn 14:26**, "*But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*" These guys didn't just have remarkable memories nor were they theological geniuses. Like the Old Testament prophets before them, their words—especially the written words which became our New Testament—were *God-breathed*—'Holy-Spirit-ized'. **We must know and believe this so we trust our Bibles!** Listen to the testimonies:

John began his first epistle, “*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us.*” [1:1-3]

Peter said something similar in 2 Pet. 1, “...we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were **eyewitnesses of his majesty.**” (He’s speaking about Jesus’ transfiguration.) “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but **prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**” [1:16, 20-21]

And Paul wrote in **1 Cor 2**, ““What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived’—the things God has prepared for those who love him—**these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.** ... This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but **in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.** ... We have the **mind of Christ.**” [2:9-10, 13,16]

That’s what Jesus promised, “*The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth.*”

- C. Not only did the Holy Spirit help the writers to remember what Jesus said and did, he would also reveal what was to come. **V.13b**, “*He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to*

come.” So God the Spirit take all his cues from God the Son. He is Christ’s spokesman. **The Spirit would tell the apostles what would happen as a result of Christ’s death, resurrection and ascension to glory.** The Spirit would explain the **church** and how it is to function in the world. He would explain **his own role** in our hearts and churches. He would teach us about being **justified** by faith alone, about how we grow in **holiness** and **hope**, how the **Old Testament** scriptures reveal Christ, and how Jesus Christ prepares us for **life everlasting** in God’s kingdom of light. This same writer, John, late in life, exiled on a remote island, would write, “*On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: ‘Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches...’*” That scroll, the book of Revelation showed us, “*his servants what must soon take place.*”

- D. It is vitally important to realize that the Spirit inspired and collected all the books of the Bible, Old and New Testaments, in such a way that they inform and support one another. Some years ago I preached the story of Jesus’ last week from Matthew. It is long and detailed, and it was a rich spiritual time. But I realized how many vital things about our salvation *were*’t explained there. I needed Genesis, Isaiah, Romans and Hebrews to understand what Jesus did for us. I had a similar reaction when I watched the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. The betrayal, brutality and the teardrop of God didn’t explain what Jesus accomplished on the cross for sinners.

We can’t put all the pieces together—we can’t understand all that Christ did—without *all* the Bible. We need the Old Testament. We need each of the four gospels and Acts, Paul’s letters and the other epistles. We need the

Revelation. They've all been inspired, crafted and synchronized by the Holy Spirit, each voice distinct and personal, yet all brought together like a sacred choir, to teach us all we need to know about God, our world, and the life Jesus gives us.

- E. The Holy Spirit worked to assure the fully adequate transmission of God's truth in Christ through the apostles and prophets. But there is more that we need, and that he does. **The Holy Spirit also guides us into all truth through the Scripture they wrote.** Many people read the Bible who do not receive the message. It isn't because it is too esoteric or the words are too big. It is because they have not humbled themselves in repentance before God. Jesus makes clear in these very chapters we've studied that we must have faith in order to grasp God's truth.

We do *not* need faith in order to believe the incredible. We need faith to believe that we must humble ourselves before the true and living God. We need faith to admit to ourselves and God that we are full of proud self-righteousness and need his mercy. We need faith to call to God.

When we do, the same Bible that seemed stale or distant, comes to life. That is because now the Holy Spirit is *guiding us into truth*. He **illuminates** Scripture. But more, Jesus himself *is* the Way, the Truth and the Life and the Holy Spirit is '**the Way-show-er**'. He's our divine Companion on and *in* the Way of life. And he speaks most clearly and certainly through the Bible. My old book teacher, **Alexander Maclaren**, wrote, "*Use the Book [that God's Spirit] uses, else you will not grow, and he will have no means of contact with you.*" **Kevin Van Hoozer** points out that God's truth doesn't just lead us to new conclusions.

God's truth enters us. He wrote, "*We realize [real-ize; make real in us] Scripture's truth the way a musician realizes a score, or an actor a script.*" [Pictures at a Theological Exhibition, p.238]

- F. So if we are to represent God in this world that finds us unacceptable we need to be shaped—real-ized—by God's Truth, and we find that Truth in Christ and Scripture, illumined and accompanied by the Holy Spirit. *Illus.:* One afternoon several years ago I went over to Einsteins for a late lunch. I was the only customer in the place when this younger man walked in. I tell you, the minute I saw him smiling, I thought, "*That guy loves Jesus.*" Sure enough, after he got his sandwich he sat down and pulled out a Bible. I went over and struck up a conversation. I didn't introduce myself at first. I just asked what he was reading. He immediately began to tell me his story. He was from the area, had gone off to college, and came back to work. After a year or so he realized that climbing the corporate ladder was not the point of life. "*So there on my bed in my room I just asked Jesus to come into my life.*" Which not only explained that smile but also why he pulled out his Bible. Faith stirs in us a hunger to know and serve God. And for that, we need the Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Let me briefly show you a second way the Holy Spirit equips us to live for Christ in this dark world: **vv.14-15...**

## **II. THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH GLORIFIES JESUS CHRIST (16:14-15)**

- A. Here's a key truth about the Holy Spirit: He always glorifies Jesus Christ, and he has no other business except to glorify Christ. If you hear someone claiming the power or teaching of the Holy Spirit in some way that doesn't shine a bright light on Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture that person is wrong. If they say that the Holy Spirit does

other things, they are wrong. The Spirit always puts Jesus Christ on display in all his glory, and **his primary spotlight is Scripture.**

Be careful of churches, common today, who emphasize their “worship” (usually meaning their great music) but who give short shrift to Scripture read and preached. The Holy Spirit is not given full voice there.

- B. There are different ways to translate **vv.14-15** but the idea is this: Jesus Christ, God’s Son, reveals to the Holy Spirit all that he wants his disciples to know. Then the Holy Spirit reveals that to us. We imagine sometimes how wonderful it would have been to really be there when Jesus taught; to have actually heard the Sermon on the Mount, or these very words we’re studying. **But to be taught by the Holy Spirit is no different than hearing the words of Jesus directly.** In fact, it is better, because our hearts are made especially receptive to the Word because the Holy Spirit lives within us. The words of Jesus in red letters in your Bible aren’t more important than the other words. They are *all* what Jesus has instructed the Holy Spirit to teach us. The Holy Spirit teaches us more about Jesus than Jesus himself did when he was on earth. That’s why Paul wrote in **1 Cor. 2:12, 16**, *“What we have received is the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us... We have the mind of Christ!”*
- C. And what we need to know will always and inevitably show the glories of Jesus. Well, what does he mean? **V.15**, *“All that belongs to the Father is mine.”* Jesus doesn’t only mean that he co-owns all that God the Father owns, but also that when the Holy Spirit shows us Jesus Christ he is also showing us God the Father. In **Col. 1:15, 19-20** Paul explained, *“The Son is the image of the invisible*

*God.... For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”*

That’s what Jesus includes when he says “*All that belongs to the Father is mine.*”

And that is what we have received because Jesus promised, “*The Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.*”

- D. I came across this quote by the Scottish Pastor **Thomas Chalmers**: “*The best way to overcome the world is not with morality or self-discipline. **Christians overcome the world by seeing the beauty and excellence of Christ.** They overcome the world by seeing something more attractive than the world: Christ.*”

## **Conclusion**

In this dark and toxic world Jesus and those who believe in him are unacceptable. But we are not stranded. We are branches on the vine of Christ, growing and bearing fruit even in this hostile environment because the Holy Spirit is with us and within us, showing us all Christ wants us to know and empowering and guiding us on this journey of life. To be sure we know the truth Jesus charged the Holy Spirit with the duty of giving us the Scriptures so that we might fully understand the gift of God. And then the Holy Spirit becomes our Bible teacher and our Christ-life companion.

A few verses later, as Jesus concluded this last teaching before his crucifixion, he said in **v.33**, “*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*”