

Read Psalm 19:7-11 - Pray

Intro - Open to John 16:12-15

Have you ever read something and had to go back over it again and again to understand it? This happens to me constantly in my devotional time in the scriptures and it has happened in many books I have read. Whether from my weakness as a reader, or the complexity of the writing, I need that repetition to get comprehension. But sometimes we encounter something that no matter how much we go over it, we need outside help. We don't just need more time; we need a new skill set that we don't have. I gave up on a book on Christianity's compatibility with science because it stopped using words and started using logic proofs. They are basically math equations to represent concepts. I just couldn't do it, I still do not have what it takes to read and comprehend them.

Jesus is in the last teaching moments with his disciples. And as God, he knows what is coming and all they will need to know but knows they cannot handle everything yet. They don't just need a skill set, they need a person. Jesus has been that, although they have not fully understood many times. But now Jesus will send the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit reveals the greatness and glory of the Word.

One – Greatness of the Word

Read John 16:12-13

Jesus' teaching cannot reach a bottom. He could teach from his infinite depths of wisdom for every day into eternity. Even in what is sufficient for what we need to know, which is contained in our Bible, Jesus needs to teach them but they were not ready. They could not bear it. It is too great without the Holy Spirit indwelling them. They also can't comprehend the gospel and its implications without Jesus' death, burial, resurrection and ascension that is to come.

God has always revealed himself as it was needed. The covenants of Adam, Noah, Abraham and David are revealing more and more of God exactly as he intends it, exactly as they need it. There is no data chip which can upload all that there is to know. It is revealed to humanity in time and space as we begin to grasp more and more of who God has revealed himself to be.

Jesus is now speaking of the greatness of God's revelation that will be carried out by the Holy Spirit in the disciples. The Spirit of truth, is revealed as a He, as a person, as a part of God himself. Who perfectly speaks not as one who is independent from God and Jesus, as if he is another God. He speaks on the initiative or the authority of another. As verses 14 and 15 will reveal, of Jesus and therefore of the Father.

Let's speak a moment about two words: **Inspiration** and **Illumination**. He is disclosing, or revealing what is to come... It is inspiring the scriptures to be written. Up until this point, the Old Testament Scriptures were written by God's appointed leaders and prophets. They too were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Peter in his second letter is speaking about these disciples now listening to Jesus, and speaking about them not just as teachers but as authoritative eye-witnesses.

2 Peter 1:20-21

²⁰ But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, ²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

He makes the claim that they are not just recording their interpretation of what they saw, but that the Holy Spirit has moved them, inspired them, to record what they saw and they speak from God.

Paul speaks similarly in 1 Corinthians 2:12-13

¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, ¹³ which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

The greatness of the Word of God is inspired by the Spirit in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Revelation of the New Testament. The Gospels are of particular interest to the disciples here because they are the eye-witness testimony of which Peter affirms. Matthew, was written by one of the 11 listening here in John 16. Mark, traveled with Peter and recorded Peter's account. Luke, traveled and collected accounts from the apostles but is closely tied with Peter and Paul. These are the synoptic gospels and they contain overlapping material. Sometimes the wording is so close that scholars have debated infinitely as to which gospel came first and was the source for the others.

This is known as the “Synoptic Problem”. I would pose to you the thought that this is not a problem at all. Andreas Kostenberger, who is one of the leading Baptist scholars, calls it a “synoptic opportunity” or my favorite a “synoptic blessing”. The slight variations in emphases between the authors of the three synoptics actually adds confidence that the accounts are genuine. If they were all the same, we would expect collusion and story building. If they were all different and human origins, we would find true contradictions. Instead, by the Holy Spirits work, we can be confident that each Gospel writer is putting together an inspired account which at times is chronological but is mostly arranged for their purpose of presenting Christ.

With the addition of John’s Gospel, we have a beautiful 4 faceted diamond of testimony from Jesus’ disciples who were carried along by the Spirit to give corroborating and partially overlapping testimony to deepen our faith.

This is to not even mention the beauty of God’s revelation that follows in Acts, the letters, and Revelation. All these are written to instruct the churches on how to live the truth based on the Gospel of Jesus as revealed in the Gospels. The Holy Spirit inspired all these accounts as Peter and Paul claim, so we can now be guided in ALL TRUTH.

Inspiration of the Bible is what leads us to **Illumination**. It’s greatness leads us to glory.

Two – Glory of the Word

Read John 16:14-15

Illumination is the Holy Spirit affirming in our hearts today the truthfulness of his Word. This is what happens to you Christian as the Holy Spirit works in you. The Spirit now reveals to you the truth in God’s word as you read it. He provides that consistent testimony to its truthfulness. That does not mean that you are now smarter and can understand better. You will still get to a text of scripture and think, well I need help to understand that. But when you are truly born again, when you come to difficult passages what you do not do, is question its truthfulness. The testimony of the Holy Spirit, as we just read, reveals Jesus. It reveals Jesus’ death burial and resurrection to gives us confidence that our lack of understanding is an error in us, not in the text. To read the Bible without the Holy Spirit is to assume that we are accurate so the text must bend to us.

When a high school boyfriend sends the breakup text it says, “It’s not you, it’s me.” But we all know what that means. “No, it’s you.” When the non-believer looks at the scriptures and therefore looks at Christ they should just be honest and say, “It’s you, I don’t believe you are true.” Jesus promises you that He, through the Spirit, will guide you into all the truth. Do you believe it’s true? Because when you do, you find it is also a glorious truth.

The testimony of the scriptures is one overarching story of God’s revelation about himself. It ultimately connects to his ultimate revelation in God the Son made flesh. Jesus. This is the Holy Spirit’s work in inspiring the word in ink, to glorify the Word in flesh. The Holy Spirit takes the truth of who Jesus is and his teaching and reveals it so we will see His glory.

In verse 15, Jesus is reaffirming his unity with the Father. The unity of the Father, Spirit and Son is on display here in this text. They have been together in eternity past and planned how they would all act in creation and redemption and consummation. John’s gospel in particular wants us to see, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the true testimony about Jesus.

The opening words of the Gospel of John are a beautiful theology of Jesus’ deity and his being sent as the full revelation of God. This is summed up in verse 18 of chapter 1 where it says:

¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

The only begotten God, who is described in John 3:16 as the begotten Son, is the one who is so close to the Father, it is as if he comes straight out of his body. He is one with the Father.

John 14:11

Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

The Glory of Jesus is that he is the consistent testimony of God. He is the most glorious gift that could be given, to give of oneself as a sacrifice for us. He is the most glorious foundation upon which the apostles build with their teaching. He is the most glorious God, who upon his ascension he takes the place of honor at the right hand of the Father to be exalted above every name because he humbled himself even to death.

Conclusion

We need a recalibration of greatness and glory, don't we? We either are too easily satisfied or we find ourselves unable to be satisfied by God. We can ignore the beauty of the sunset because it happens every day or we find satisfaction from the picture of a sunset on our phone.

Which is your need this morning? **Are you too easily satisfied with the things of this world?** You are being entertained with music, movies, books or social media but are being starved of the Word. You may have never received the Holy Spirit, you may have never tasted and seen that the Lord is good. You may not know the greatness and glory of the Word.

Or are you unable to be satisfied by God? You come to church, you are steeped in Bible memes or Facebook pages but it does not quench your thirst? You may be trying to use all the tools of the world to be a better Christian but you have neglected the only sure guide into truth. The Holy Spirit may be quenched or shut out of its work in you.

My challenge to you is to humble yourself before God. Admit your need for the Holy Spirit's help. This is what I am training myself to do in my study of the word each week. Admit my dependence upon God for his Spirit to show me the truth. I am begging God to increase in me a desire for his Word, and for the Holy Spirit's work to increase in me so I would know the truth and it would just pour out of me each Lord's Day. Will you join me?

Ladies and Gentlemen, the bedrock of existence has revealed himself in ink and in flesh. The ink was recorded because the flesh commanded it. Jesus working in the will of the Father sends the Spirit to Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, Malachi, Matthew, Peter, John and Paul. See their greatness and glory of the Word! What should prevent us from knowing it with the Spirit's help?

You may have carried in here a big question mark about the Holy Spirit and how he works. I hope through the last few weeks, as Jesus revealed the Holy Spirit's work, you are seeing his vital ministry to you today. That you need Him. You need Christ's death, burial and resurrection to atone for your sin and testify to his divinity. But you need, in Jesus' great love for you, to receive the testimony of the Spirit. The testimony of Jesus in ink and flesh.

The Holy Spirit reveals the greatness and glory of the Word. The Word in ink and flesh.