

TRINITY SUNDAY June 15, 2025 – John 16:12-15

Please pray with me: May the words of my mouth and the meditation of each heart, be acceptable in your sight Oh Lord, our maker and redeemer. Amen

There once was a man that had taken over a business from a friend of his. Most of his employees loved him and the business was doing very well. Then came the day when he decided to leave. He had some other important things he wanted to do; and that's what he said when he met with his employees around the conference table and broke the news to them. There were a lot of different reactions. **Phil** said, You can't just walk out the door. You need to show us a lot more before you leave so we'll be able to carry on. **Tom** wanted to know where he was going and what could be more important than working with them? **Pete** definitely didn't like the idea of his leaving and volunteered to go with him. But **Joey** was just angry and wanted to know why he kept the business so small, and didn't want to do anything on a larger scale that would have made a real difference in a lot of ways!

By now you may have guessed that the story is actually about Jesus and his disciples. After his last supper with the disciples, Jesus reminded them again that he was leaving them and this time, the news hit home.

Philip wants Jesus to show them the Father. – missing the fact that in seeing Jesus, they had seen the Father. **Thomas** asks where Jesus is going, and misunderstands the way to follow Him. **Peter** didn't like the idea at all and overestimates his ability to follow. And **Judas** wanted to know why Jesus would reveal himself to the small band of disciples as the Messiah, and not to the whole world where it would have made a big difference. He asks this because he doesn't perceive the difference between those who truly follow Jesus and those who do not. And some of the other disciples were probably confused.

When a leader of any kind leaves a group of people that they have worked with for a while and shared a lot with, there are going to be a variety of feelings and reactions. The story may have echoes for us as well. Just as there were a variety of feelings to Jesus leaving his disciples, there were a variety of reactions to Pastor Doug's leaving last Sunday. NOT that I am equating Pastor Doug with Jesus mind you!! I am **Not** saying that at all!! He's a great guy, but not that great!

But Last Sunday, you could have found all of the emotions of the disciples in those of us who had gathered to say goodbye. Some people were genuinely saddened by Pastor Doug's leaving. Others were confused or angry at him or parts of his farewell service, and some were just frustrated and tired and ready for the day to be over.

I can understand those feelings. I had a few of them myself. But Jesus meets his disciples and us where we are! What Jesus gave to his disciples to help them, can truly be a help to us as well.

First of all Jesus wants to talk to them further. He says he has a lot to say to them but they can't bear it now. The Greek word for "bear" means they have no power to endure, stand or carry those words. They are powerless to endure his words, they can not stand to hear his words, nor to carry them to others. Instead of giving them more information, Jesus gives them a promise. In verse 13 he says: "***When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.***"

I remember in my seminary class on Ethics. We were handed a list of words to look up in our Bibles and were given all the Hebrew and Greek books to translate them, with concordances, our Greek-English Lexicons and our Analysis of the Greek New Testament, and they set us loose. Which was real

fun for me. I loved looking up all those words and finding the truth about them. But I tell you, at that next class it was real uncomfortable at times to compare what we thought we knew, with what was really biblical truth. And if you think you are the only ones who have struggles with feminine pronouns – you would be wrong.

First, you know me. You know I try to get the most accurate translation of whatever Bible passage we are looking at. I go back to the Greek and sometimes the original sources of the text. And you have just heard me read this text about the Holy Spirit with the male pronoun “he”. And I have to tell you that unfortunately, that is not correct. The Holy Spirit is a feminine word. Like the Father and Jesus are masculine words – that’s why we use “He” when we refer to them. This passage should be read with the pronoun “she”. I know it caused some people to be uncomfortable last Sunday when the Bishop used the pronoun “she” in reference to the Holy Spirit. It was not a case of serving some left-wing agenda that she had. It is a case of biblical accuracy.

This promise that Jesus gave to his disciples and to us is that the Spirit of Truth will come to them and us. Jesus who proclaimed himself to be the Way, the Truth and the Life can say that, because the Spirit is coming from Jesus. It is also the Spirit of Truth because Jesus tells us it will guide his disciples (those of that time and us now) into all truth. The Greek Word “Guide” is a compound word and is actually translated as “show the path to travel”. To “illumine the path to travel” to the Truth.

That’s one heck of a promise!! WE will actually be able to know the Truth and as Jesus said – the Truth will make us free. The Spirit will show us exactly how to follow Jesus, to know His power living inside us in that Holy Spirit. That doesn’t mean that the truth will always be comfortable for us. As we learned with our pronoun for the Holy Spirit.

But Jesus tells us, “This Spirit can be trusted because this Spirit will glorify me, because she will take what is from me and declare it to you.” The Spirit will only pass on what comes from God the Father and from Jesus. The Spirit will take/or draw on what belongs to Jesus, his words and his presence and pass these things to His disciples then and to us now! And that is as good as it will ever get. If it comes from the Father and from Jesus, we can trust this, Spirit!!

And this is the same Spirit that keep the church close to Jesus. It is this Spirit that keeps the body of Christ at Divinity close to Jesus. It is this same Spirit that will keep us close to each other as sisters and brothers, despite our differences, despite our differing opinions, and despite our varying reactions to what’s happening here, what is going on in our country, and even in spite of what’s happening in our world. IF we put our focus on Jesus and the activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives FIRST!! The Spirit WILL show us the right road to travel! She will lead us to Truth. Hard core, real truth and will connect us with those who are focused on the same thing!! That must be our priority. That is our calling.

And the Spirit will keep the church of God as well. The Spirit holds, guides, and keeps not only Divinity, but the whole church of God on earth. In the words of an old camp song: We are one in the Spirit We are one in the Lord, and we pray that all unity may one day be restored and They will know we are Christians by our love by our love. And we have people around us who need to hear about that love. We have people who need to see that love lived out in Vacation Bible School, in food available in our food pantry, in hats, scarves, and blankets in the winter, and school supplies in the Fall. The Holy Spirit holds us together and longs to gather all people to Jesus.

I’d like to close with some real truth that came from the Spirit through a friend of mine. It shows what holds us together as individuals and it mirrors the work of the

Spirit in Divinity and in our world.

A molecular biologist ran into a pastor in an airport. They got to talking about what the pastor was preaching on on Sunday. The pastor told him and the Biologist said, have I got news for you! And He told him about Laminin. A cell adhesion molecule, which organizes proteins in the body into which kind of cell they will be. It tells them what they are to do and where they go. In other words it is the molecule in the body that holds everything together. It is like the steel rebar that holds the whole structure of a building together. This molecule in our bodies, literally holds us together – our organs, our tissues, our veins , our arteries, our skin – everything.

It's called Laminin and this is the diagram that they put in medical books to show what it looks like. Isn't that incredible!!

And here's the actual electron microscope picture of what a Laminin molecule actually looks like!! The thing that holds us together is in the shape of the cross of Jesus. It is by his death and resurrection and the power of the Holy spirit that everything is held together. Especially us – His church.

Colossians 1:16- In Jesus all things in heaven and on earth were created...all things were created through him, and **For** him. **He** is before all things and in Him ALL things hold together!!

WE are all a work in progress. Growing in truth. And we are held together as individuals by a cross shaped molecule of Laminin. WE are held together as a church here at Divinity and as God's church in the world by a Spirit who will lead us in to ALL truth. Let us follow the Spirit' s leading here at Divinity and out there in our community and the world.

Amen!!