"The Spirit Will Teach, Remind, and Guide"
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Ward Parkway Presbyterian Church
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John 14:25 NIV
25 All this I have spoken while still with you.

Jesus had the mission from God to prepare the disciples for life without him.

Of course, he healed the sick and taught the crowds about the kingdom of God, but his primary calling was to equip the disciples to be leaders of the church after he left them, and to die on the cross to save us from our sins.

- He spoke to them while he was still with them.
- He loved them while he was still with them.
- He gave them examples about how to live while he was still with them.
- He nurtured their inner life while he was still with them.
- Now because the time was right, he knew that the Father’s plans for the cross meant he was leaving them soon and all alone. He would not be with them.
- And so he introduced them to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 NIV
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.

Let me make three brief comments before we look at the two words: teach and remind.

First, this verse has all three members of the Trinity. It is Jesus who is speaking. It is Holy Spirit who will be sent, and it is the Father will send. The hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy," closes it with these words: “God in three persons, blessed Trinity.”

Second, Jesus defines the Holy Spirit as the Advocate. The Greek word for Advocate (paraclete) is used only here and then again in chapters 15 and 16. No other New Testament writer uses the word. Although most translations have used the words Advocate, Counselor, or Comforter, I think it refers to someone who comes alongside you.
Think about a time when you needed to have someone come alongside you. Maybe that person was an advocate or maybe that person was a counselor, but maybe that person didn’t say anything at all and just listened. Maybe the person was silent the whole time. Maybe that person was a friend who came to walk with you during a trial in your life.

Third, I’m struck by the words, “all things” and “everything.” That includes everything, doesn’t it? The Greek word is the same for both. It literally means “all things.” It means the Spirit of God will teach and remind them about all things.

With that in mind, let us return to the two mains words: teach and remind.

The Spirit will teach you all things.

I have three words that can help us understand what Jesus means.

Pray

This is the definition of the Christian doctrine of illumination. Before we seek understanding, we pray. Before we read the scriptures, we pray. This is why we have the Prayer of Illumination before the scriptures are read each Sunday. The worship leader says that prayer. If we want to learn from God’s Spirit, we need to bath our learning in prayer. Let’s admit it that we are hard-headed and we need prayer to open our minds and hearts to what the Spirit of God needs to teach us.

Participate

The Greek word for “teach” assumes you plan to participate. When the Greek philosophers taught, another Greek word was used that means lecture. They told people what to think and how to act. In contrast, the Spirit of God teaches us, but wants us to participate in the learning process. We are not to be passive, but active in our learning. The Spirit of God will want us to interact with the scriptures and how they are to be interpreted. Participate means to question and challenge.

Ponder

We are called to ponder what the Spirit of God teaches us. We need to think. Psalm 1 tells us to meditate on God’s Word. Consider what it means! This is why
memorizing scripture is so important. When you know a verse by heart, then you can ponder what it means anytime.

The Spirit will remind you of all things.

I’m going to another three words to explain the word “remind.”

Inspiration

Being reminded is the Christian doctrine of inspiration. The first application of this doctrine was for the apostles as they taught and wrote the stories, teachings, and life of Jesus. It was the Holy Spirit that reminded them. That’s how they had the memory and insight to write down the Sermon on the Mount, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and the Upper Room Discourse. Of course, they interviewed first hand witnesses, like Luke says at the beginning of his gospel, and of course, they listened to the oral tradition, but it was by the ministry of God’s Spirit that they knew the truth about the teachings of Jesus. They were inspired by the Spirit of God.

Involvement

The Spirit of God will not want us to keep at a distance when we learn. The Spirit of God wants us involved. The Spirit will want us to be active in our remembering. I wish it wasn’t true, but we often forget, and the older we get, the more often we forget. The Spirit of God wants to wrestle with what Jesus has said. We need to go to the well often. We need to allow ourselves to be reminded again and again. At the Mardy’s memorial service on Wednesday, I quoted the invitation by Jesus recorded in Matthew 11:28, “Come to me.” I have thought about those three words many, many times. But on Wednesday, I became involved with the meaning, and I experienced a fresh wind of the Spirit at that moment.

Imagination

I am so thankful for the ordination vows for pastors, elders, and deacons. One question goes like this: Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love? Imagination is a gift from God’s Spirit. It’s not listed as a gift in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, or Romans 12. The word “imagination” does not appear in the New Testament. But I tell you, without imagination, preachers would be lost. I would be lost. Imagination helps us wonder and dream and create and
have ideas and have visions and perceive things that are not sensual or concrete. I am so thankful for the gift of imagination as we are reminded of what Jesus taught.

**John 16:12 NIV**

12 I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

Jesus knew the disciples could only take so much, learn so much, and apply so much. The mission for his life and teaching had come to an end. They could bear anything more. The death and cross of Christ put them over the edge. Despite their promises to die with Jesus, all of them failed to stand alongside the Lord.

However, they needed guidance. Alone, they will continue to fail, but the Father in heaven had a plan, and Jesus told them about another ministry of the Spirit of God.

**John 16:13 NIV**

13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

The Spirit of God will guide the disciples and guide us as well. It is how the disciples knew what to do.

I have three final words for you.

**Well**

Earlier I suggested you go to the well. The well is the truth. The Spirit of God will guide you by means of the truth.

   Not with opinion.
   Not with hearsay.
   Not with popular ideas.
   Not with the latest view.

The Spirit of God will go to the well with you so that you can discover truth about life and love and relationships and ethics and behavior. God’s Spirit will go deep in the well. In the well, there is endless amount of truth and new insights and fresh water and love and sufficient grace. It’s all there. That well will guide you.

**Whole**
Instead of the word “all,” some translators use the word “whole.” The word echoes what we just learned from John 14 when Jesus said the Spirit of God will teach you all things and will remind you of everything. The Spirit guides about the whole truth. You will receive the whole gospel and you will be guided about all of life.

Wealth

The Spirit of God guides us about a great wealth of truth.
   Not just a little.
      Not just little things.
         Not just the things that bother us.

The Spirit will guide about today and tomorrow, and even have lots of say about yesterday that often harms and haunts us the most.

Wealth means having abundance.

The Spirit of God wants you to be confident about treasure what really matters, about treasure that expresses where your true heart is.

I first met Dumay Gorham when we arrived at St. Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, NC, January of 2016. I became their interim senior pastor. As a retired attorney in Wilmington, Dumay had a soft voice with a thick southern accent. He was loved by everyone, and was considered the most liked attorney by the other attorneys.

I asked him for advice often even though he was not on the session or the personnel committee. He was elected to be on the PNC for the selection of the new senior pastor. He did not chair the search committee, but served as the Bible teacher and always had the opening prayer. Nobody was late for his Bible study and prayer, and often he was asked for copies of his prayers.

I viewed Dumay as a man guided by the Spirit of God. He knew the scriptures, taught many Bible studies at the church, and had a deep humble attitude about himself.

I wish we had Dumay on Tuesday at Heartland Presbytery when we met at South Broadland Presbyterian Church. After worship, we had a sticky situation with one of the churches. At the last Presbytery meeting, we voted to elect an AC
(Administrative Commission) to investigate the church and its leaders. Afterwards there were many protests, and a group formed to ask the Presbytery to rescind the vote, and re-constitute the AC with a different thrust and purpose.

It was tense. As we moved toward a vote, someone requested a secret ballot. Right at that moment, if Dumay Gorham had been present, he would have stood and said to the moderator in his heavy southern accent, "Madam Moderator, I do believe we need five minutes to recess for prayer and conversation." Then he would have gathered the leaders of opposite sides for prayer and honest talk. And I am convinced Dumay would have found a compromise for both sides in five minutes.

Instead, the vote was taken, and it was about 75/25, and many people were offended and hurt on both sides.

We need men and women like Dumay Gorham who are spiritually mature, and ask for a recess for prayer and conversation.

The Spirit of God teaches and reminds and guides us, even during tough moments of conflict and struggle.

Thanks be to God! We are not alone.

Let us pray.