

## **PNEUMA:** The Spirit of Truth...Week 3

### **THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH IS THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS!**

#### **- WHAT IS TRUTH?**

- One of the deepest, most eternally significant questions in the Bible didn't come from one of the disciples, but an unbeliever. Pilate, as he was handing Jesus over to be crucified, asked Jesus, "**What is TRUTH?**" This was a rhetorical question. He wasn't really expecting a response from Jesus, who had just said to him, "I was born and came into the world to testify to the **TRUTH**. All who love the **TRUTH** recognize that what I say is true."
- Two thousand years later, it is still hard to pin down the answer to this question. To some, **TRUTH** is nothing more than a ploy the politically elite use to control the masses. For others, **TRUTH** is subjective. We all have our own idea of what **TRUTH** is and to a degree each is valid. Another group would say that **TRUTH** is whatever the collective culture believes it is (relativism), or that the whole idea of **TRUTH** existing in any form is foolishness.
- For followers of Jesus, **TRUTH** is not a lofty concept, comprehended only by philosophers and theologians, but a hard reality. According to Jesus, **TRUTH** is a person..."I am the way, **the TRUTH**, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." (John. 14:6 NLT-SE) Jesus IS that person. Jesus is **TRUTH**.
- God's Word is true, and "the Word became human and made his home among us." (John 1:14) So, **TRUTH** is the life of Jesus and God desires that the world sees his life in us. (2 Corinthians 4:10) When we compare His life to our own lives and see how very different the two are, then a light turns on for us. The **TRUTH** is that light which shines into our lives and reveals what we are really like by nature. It reveals the way that we must walk on in order to be transformed into the image of Christ. (Romans 8:29)
- **TRUTH** is what Jesus revealed to the world when he became a man, walked on the Earth, died for our sins, rose from the grave in victory and returned to sit at the right hand of the Father. So, truth is everything Jesus said and did...who he was, is and will always be. Apart from Jesus, there is no **TRUTH**. Here's how he revealed **TRUTH** to his disciples...
  - <sup>12</sup> "There is so much more I want to tell you, but **you can't bear it now**. <sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of **TRUTH** comes, he will guide you into all **TRUTH**. (John. 16:12-13 NLT-SE)



- When it comes down to it, many of us do not really want to be led by the Holy Spirit. Or, more fundamentally, many of us don't want to be led by anyone other than ourselves. The whole idea of giving up control (or the delusion of it) is terrifying, isn't it?...The truth is that the Spirit of the living God is guaranteed to ask you to go somewhere or do something you wouldn't normally want or choose to do. The Spirit will lead you to the way of the cross, as He led Jesus to the cross, and that is definitely not a safe or pretty or comfortable place to be. The Holy Spirit of God will mold you into the person you were made to be. This often incredibly painful process strips you of selfishness, pride, and fear. ~ **Francis Chan - Forgotten God: Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit**



Francis Chan

## - HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT LEAD US INTO ALL TRUTH?

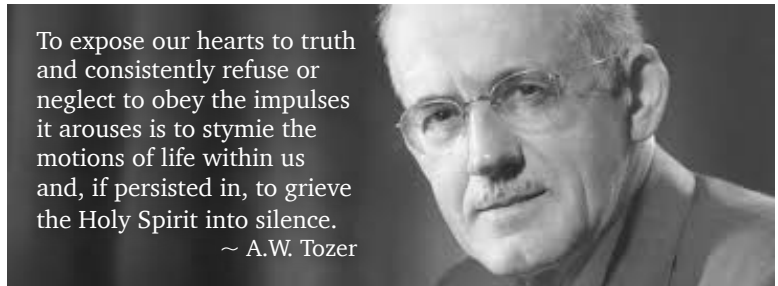
- First of all, God is NOT asking us to wait around until we are moved by the Holy Spirit toward truth. In other words, truth is NOT something to ponder, consider, then apply to our lives. Truth isn't a set of rules to follow or a religious belief system to be debated. One of the ways truth is defined in Merriam-Webster's Dictionary is, "**a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality.**" In this case, transcendent means that the spiritual reality we're talking about is above and beyond the individual. This truth is TRUE FOR EVERYONE.
- Just because Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will lead us into ALL TRUTH, it doesn't mean that currently have **no truth** and when the Holy Spirit comes, he then will give us the truth we don't have and so desperately need.
- **Here's how the process might look in real life...**
  - **The Holy Spirit speaks...**Holy Spirit never tires of communicating the heart of God and character of Jesus to us. He loves to shake things up for us and never tires of revealing Jesus to those with a thirsty souls. When he speaks, the Holy Spirit finds it difficult to stray too far from the topic of Jesus. When he speaks of love, he sees Jesus on the cross. When he speaks of accomplishing something, he he is drawn to the Father sending Jesus to save mankind. You see what I men?
  - **We start...**So, the Holy Spirit has spoken to you. Now what? We respond to what he has said. We move in the direction of what he has spoken to us. If he says, "forgive your dad," we move towards forgiveness and away from stubbornness. If he says, "love you neighbor," we begin to pray for one of our neighbors. If he says, "rest," we don't add more to our schedule, but take something away.
  - **He guides...**He has shown us the "what," now we listen for the "how." This is where he really tests our ability to hear and respond. The Holy Spirit's guidance is typically nuanced, as opposed to direct. It's like he is whispering in our ear while we are doing something else. You really have to pay attention to receive the Holy Spirit's guidance.
  - **We follow...**Not all of the guidance from the Holy Spirit comes in the form of an order or command. Sometimes it's, "Have you considered this?" Or, "How did you feel about that?" Our ability to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit has less to do what we do and more to do with why we are responding the way we are.

AS WE OPERATE ON THE TRUTH WE DO HAVE,  
HE GIVES US TRUTH WE DON'T HAVE,  
TO ACCOMPLISH THE THINGS WE CAN'T DO  
AND MAKE US HUNGRY FOR MORE TRUTH!

- **A car is easier to steer when it's moving...**Not just moving, but going towards the destination. If you're moving away from the destination, no matter how fast you've moving, you will end up having to turn around and readjust your course toward the intended goal (truth).

## - RAPID FIRE REVELATION:

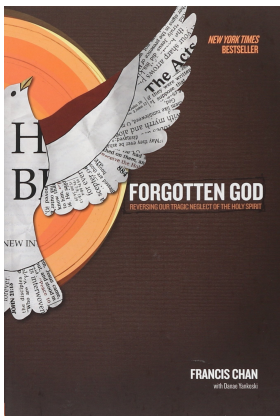
- **God leads those he loves...**All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. (Rom. 8:14 NLT-SE)
- **Nothing is lost to the Holy Spirit...**But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. (John. 14:26 NLT-SE)
- **The Holy Spirit leads by invitation only...**<sup>5</sup> Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. (Rom. 8:5–6 NLT-SE)
- **No, the Spirit really does want you to give him permission to lead...**<sup>16</sup> So I say, **let the Holy Spirit guide your lives.** Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. <sup>17</sup> The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And **the Spirit gives us desires** that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. <sup>18</sup> But when you are **directed by the Spirit**, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. (Gal. 5:16–18 NLT-SE)
- **The Spirit leads us in season and out...**<sup>20</sup> Though the Lord gave you adversity for food and suffering for drink, he will still be with you to teach you. You will see your teacher with your own eyes. <sup>21</sup> Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go," whether to the right or to the left. (Is. 30:20–21 NLT-SE)
- **Living by the Spirit IS being led by the Spirit...**  
Since we are living by the Spirit, let us **follow the Spirit's leading** in every part of our lives. (Gal. 5:25 NLT-SE)
- **The Holy Spirit fuels the prophetic...**<sup>20</sup> Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, <sup>21</sup> or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God. (2 Pet. 1:20–21 NLT-SE)
- **Even Jesus was led by the Spirit...**Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. (Matt. 4:1 NLT-SE)
- **All spirits are not necessarily the Holy Spirit...**<sup>1</sup> Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world. <sup>2</sup> This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God. <sup>3</sup> But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here. <sup>4</sup> But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world. <sup>5</sup> Those people belong to this world, so they speak from the world's viewpoint, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup> But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God,



they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of truth or the spirit of deception. (1 John. 4:1–6 NLT-SE)

- **TRANSFORMATION** ~ The Whole Point of Living in the Truth

- <sup>2</sup> Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit. <sup>3</sup> Some of the traveling teachers recently returned and made me very happy by telling me about your faithfulness and that you are **living according to the truth**. <sup>4</sup> I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are **following the truth**. (3 John. 1:2–4 NLT-SE)
- **Being led by the Spirit is being transformed by the Spirit.** He leads us *into* and *through* transformation. The goal is not that we become better people, but more Christlike in the way we live our lives...living according to the truth.
- **Real personal transformation...**is less about how you look to others and more about the person you see when *you* look in the mirror. With a little focus and practice, we can all perform better; say the right thing and do the right thing. We're after transformation, not sin management. The question is, are you willing to really listen for the leading of the Holy Spirit? Will you move in the direction he is leading you in *before* you get *all* the details? Can you allow him to direct your steps on the fly, without knowing the details and before you are emotionally, financially and even spiritually prepared? And finally, will you follow his lead, no matter what?



**FOLLOWERS OR LEADERS?**

There have been many times when I've tried to lead the Holy Spirit. I've wanted to direct Him and tell Him what to do and when to do it. The irony is that the Holy Spirit was given to direct us. **Desiring the Holy Spirit means we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us. By definition, it's ridiculous to desire the Holy Spirit for our own purposes.**

The Spirit is not a passive power that we can wield as we choose. The Spirit is God, a Being who requires that we submit ourselves to be led by Him. Do you really want to be led? Even people who are natural leaders don't get to lead the Spirit. Everyone is called to be led by Him.

I honestly believe that most of us—while we might say we want to be led by the Spirit—are actually scared of this reality. I know I am. What would it mean? What if He asks you to give up something you're not ready to give up? What if He leads you where you don't want to go? What if he tells you to change jobs? To move? Are you willing to surrender to Him, no matter where He wants to take you? Am I?

**The fact is that God is calling. The Spirit is beckoning. The real question is will you follow?** Will you listen? I know I prefer a multiple-choice option for what God is asking me to do. That way, if I don't like A or B, there are always options C and D. Sometimes, of course, this is exactly how the Spirit leads us. There can be two equally good choices that God lets us choose between.

Many times, though, this is not how He works. In these cases, He calls us to do something, a particular thing, and we have the choice to obey or not. The truly startling thought is that by not submitting and totally trusting the Holy Spirit, I am not submitting to or trusting God. This is no small matter.

***We all have to answer the question: Do I want to lead or be led by the Spirit?***

**Francis Chan ~ Forgotten God: Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit**