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## SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Zeitgeist. Sounds like something from a sci-fi flick or a veterinarian? It's German for "spirit of the age." Philosophers and theologians use it to describe the general mood or spirit of the times - the way people tend to think and understand life. Zeitgeist stands in stark contrast to the Bible phrase "Spirit of truth."

Scripture reveals the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Triune Godhead. There is only ONE true God, who exists eternally in three co-equal persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Bible says God is our Savior, and salvation is arranged by the Father, accomplished by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit. Let's explore three aspects about the Spirit of truth in John 14-16, Jesus' final teaching to His followers.

**1 - THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH** - In John 16:13 Jesus says, "***when the Spirit of truth comes He will guide you into all the truth.***" Scripture says God is truth, His Word is truth, and Jesus is truth. The Holy Spirit "breath of God" speaks forth God's will in creation, in Scripture, and redemption. He is the "Spirit of truth" because God is perfect truth in every aspect of His character. The Bible is God's eternal truth, recorded for all to understand what is true for all peoples in all places and all times.

In opposition to truth, people are assaulted by the zeitgeist lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The world says, you're not loved; *Jesus says, I have loved you with an everlasting love.* The flesh says, you can't break the chains of sin; *Jesus says, I set you free.* The devil condemns you of sin; *Jesus says, I have paid it all.* The devil says, you can't go on; *Jesus says, you can do all things by My strength in you.*

**2 - THE HOLY SPIRIT IS YOUR HELPER** - Jesus says in John 16:7, "***I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you.***" In John 14:17 Jesus said the world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, but He would dwell in His disciples. The Holy Spirit indwelt Jesus. He was "with" the disciples, but soon He would be "with-IN" them. John 14:26 says the Holy Spirit would enable them to recall Jesus' teaching. John 15:26 says they will testify about Jesus by the Spirit. John 16:13 says the Holy Spirit will guide the disciples into all the truth, and glorify Jesus.

Jesus intended His disciples to carry on His work, after He finished His earthly ministry. The Greek word "paraclete" translated "helper" refers to a legal advocate. The disciples would now have, not the external physical presence of Jesus to guide them, but the internal personal presence of Jesus as counselor and helper. He becomes their strength, their equipper, to persevere in trial and the work of ministry.

All this was to fulfill Old Testament promises about the Holy Spirit. Jesus ascended to heaven, leaving about 120 disciples in Jerusalem - who grew in one day to over 3,000 believers, by the Holy Spirit. He empowered the preaching and miracles of the disciples, and their role in completing the New Testament, as God's finished written record of His truth. And His work extends to YOU if you are a believer today.

**3 - THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFIES JESUS** - He says in John 16:14, "***the Spirit of truth will glorify Me.***" First, the Holy Spirit opens hearts and minds to receive the good news about Jesus with personal faith. You are "born again" by the Holy Spirit. Then the Holy Spirit transforms your thinking, so that you believe God's truth from the Bible, instead of the "zeitgeist" lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Your life is conformed to Christ, fulfilling God's intentions, as His children grow up to become more like our Savior.

Here's a simple way to remember the role of the Holy Spirit in your life: "*The Spirit of God works the Word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God.*" The Holy Spirit gives you spiritual life, and He is your spiritual power. He "sanctifies" you, making you holy, becoming more like Jesus, as you trust and obey - to grow in His truth and grace, by His spiritual life and power within. The Holy Spirit communicates God's grace TO you so you believe, and then THROUGH you as testify about Him, by His power.

God intends that Christians focus on Christ. Cults and heretics over-emphasize the Spirit. Jesus says the Holy Spirit will emphasize Him and His Word. The Holy Spirit does all His work in the background, shining God's light on Christ, fulfilling His role to glorify Christ through the lives of believers. As you become more like Christ, His truth and grace becomes known, and more and more people come to believe in Jesus.

So what's the "zeitgeist" of your life? If you are a believer in Jesus, God has given you the "Spirit of truth" so that YOU will be HIS agent of truth, and grace and light and salvation - to everyone around you!