

SERIES: The Quest: The Power to Be Free – Discovering Life in the Spirit of Christ (Slide #1)

TITLE: “Our Guide – Don’t Leave Home Without Him”

TEXT: John 14:15-17, 25-26; 16:5-13

DATE: September 16, 2007

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. How’s your quest? Are you fully engaged in the journey begun last week? I hope and pray that you have joined your traveling companions in the church as we have embarked on our Fall emphasis: THE QUEST.
1. Today marks the second Sunday of a journey – one that hopefully has been anticipated by many of you OR, if not, will become something you are excited to be a part of over the next forty days.
 2. Last week we laid the ground work; this morning we begin a series of discoveries that, if applied, will drastically change our spiritual lives for the better.
 3. Let’s review for just a few moments the tools needed for the journey:(Slide #2)
 - a. You’re going to need a map – THE WORD OF GOD.
 - b. You’re going to need a good book – THE POWER TO BE FREE.
 - c. You’re going to need a good guide – THE HOLY SPIRIT.
 - d. And your going to need a good attitude – Prayer: GOD, ON THIS JOURNEY, TAKE ME WHERE YOU WANT ME TO GO AND HELP ME EMBRACE THE FULNESS OF ALL THAT YOU HAVE FOR ME.
 - e. Finally – and this is very critical – your going to need prayer supporters – 5 people from outside our church who have pledged to cover you in prayer during these 40 days. Have you secured your prayer partners? If not, you’ve neglected the most important tool in this adventure.
 4. These are our traveling tools. Now, what are our goals? Let’s review: (Slide #3)
 - a. Our goal is to find in these 40 days a guide who can guarantee a successful Christian life.
 - b. Our goal is to find a love that can sustain us.
 - c. Our goal is to find a life that is in line with God’s intended purpose for us.
 - d. Our goal is to tap into a power that will see us through.
 - e. Our goal is to discover a character that is consistent with our calling - the character of Christ.
- B. LET’S GO. LET’S GET INTO THE QUEST IN SEARCH OF OUR FIRST KEY DISCOVERY.
- C. Illustration: (Slide #4) Have you ever thought about how many tools we have to help us get places in life? I brought with me some items that you are all familiar with: various maps, atlas, GPS, Trip Tick from AAA, compass, flashlight.
1. Isn’t it amazing how many tools we have available to us that assist us in getting to where we need to go in life?
 2. We all know this: when we go somewhere on this earth – be it across town, across the nation, or around the world – we need to know where we are going before we take off. We need directions. We need some form of guidance so we don’t get lost; so we arrive at our intended destination.
 3. THINK ABOUT THIS WITH ME: We rely on all sorts of tools to get us to places here on earth, but honestly, getting to Disney World and back – or wherever else we are going – is not nearly as important as getting to where we need to go spiritually. WOULD YOU AGREE WITH ME?
 4. QUESTION: (Slide #5) While we understand the need for directions to get to places around town and around the world, do we understand that in the spiritual world there is also a need for guidance?

5. **THINK ABOUT THIS:** While we would all acknowledge the just mention truth, there are many, if not most, Christians who walk aimlessly and directionlessly through their lives just hoping to be victorious and by some stroke of good fortune end up in heaven when everything is done.
6. Now I'm not trying to be mean, but be honest with yourself for a few moments: How many of you this morning can say with absolute certainty that some time during this week you specifically and intentionally stopped and asked God what to do or where to go or what was right vs. wrong?
7. I pray that many of you can think of a time when you did just that – **INTENTIONALLY** – but if I were making a guess, I would say that many of us can't honestly remember doing that this week.
8. Again, I'm not saying that to be mean or even accusatory – when I thought about that very challenge I would have to be honest with you and say that there are many days in my life when, if I were totally honest, I would have to admit that I failed to take seriously the call to ask God to guide me through my day – I just stumbled through it and got to the end unscathed and unaffected. . . .and, unfortunately, untouched by the wonderful hand of God.

D. **LISTEN NOW:** God never intended for it to be that way!

1. For the believer, life is a **QUEST** with clear, God anointed and God designed destinations.
 2. Every day God has an intended path for each of us to follow.
 3. Every day God has a spiritual adventure planned just for you and for me.
 4. Every day it is in God's heart and mind to lead us higher and deeper in Him, to experience more of His blessings and truth.
 5. **THINK ABOUT THIS:** this morning, as each and every one of us woke up, we woke up to a day filled with promise and possibility all prepared in advance for us by God.
 6. The only thing left to question is if all of us are going to let God fulfill His dreams in us today. . . and tomorrow. . . and the next day. . . and the next, all the way through life.
- E. All of this leads us to the first key discovery God wants us to make on this **QUEST** we are on together. Here's discovery #1. . . .

II. **QUEST DISCOVERY #1: As a Christian traveling daily along a spiritual highway, WE NEED A GUIDE.**

- A. Let's go back in time for a little bit and build the case for this first discovery.
1. Specifically, let's go back a little over 2,000 years in time to the time of the original disciples.
 2. Let's face it: they had it pretty good, didn't they? I mean, when it came to knowing what to do and where to go and what was true versus false, they hardly had to think at all – they just followed Jesus around wherever He went and did what He said and thought what He thought.
 3. Maybe you've said this before: If I had it good like the first disciples – with Jesus right there all the time – then I'd be a great disciple too.
 4. Just as a side note – even they didn't get it sometimes, and Jesus was right there.
 5. But as Jesus' time on earth began to wind down, Jesus began to speak to these disciples about His departure, and whenever He did, He repeatedly said to them that it would be O.K., because He would give to them another guide. Jesus even referred to this time as one that would be better.
 6. As Jesus came to the end of His ministry – and this even after the cross and the resurrection, Jesus made some critical statements that are worthy of noting. Listen to some final words of Christ.
 7. In **Luke 24:46-49** He says this to His disciples: (**Slide #7**) *"This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be*

preached in His name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are all witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

8. In Acts 1:4-5 Jesus makes a similar statement: *(Slide #8) “On one occasion, while [Jesus] was eating with them, he gave them this command: Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”*

(Slide #9 – same as slide #6)

9. So let’s get what’s going on here: For three years the disciples had only to follow Jesus. Jesus is now about to depart. He tells them emphatically: don’t even try to continue going on in your walk as a disciple without the right tools. Wait in the city / do not leave Jerusalem until you receive the promised gift. You are absolutely going to need a guide.
10. It’s like a neon light is flashing: **Disciples Beware: Christian Life without a guide is perilous. You must have a guide. Don’t leave home without Him.**
11. Illustration: Let me illustrate it this way: If you were to drop me off in the middle of the woods, I have to tell you I would just die there. I almost feel claustrophobic when I’m in the woods unless there is a path. I have no clue where to go.
12. Jesus knew this to be fact: If the disciples did not wait in Jerusalem until they had a guide, they would be like me in the woods – absolutely lost and with no hope of getting out.
- B. Folks, hear this critical word. Absorb into your thoughts this morning this first point of discovery on our Quest together: **THE CHRISTIAN LIFE WILL NOT WORK WITHOUT A GUIDE! TRAVELER BEWARE: CHRISTIAN LIFE WITHOUT A GUIDE IS PERILOUS!**
- C. Now I’ve gone on a little bit on this point, but I know that if we are not convinced of the need for a guide, then it’s useless to even talk about who that guide is and why we need Him.
- D. Are we together on this: WE NEED A GUIDE?
- E. So who is this guide and how does He work?
- F. The Guide that all of us need to be victorious in our Christian journey is none other than the Holy Spirit.
- G. While all of us have heard of the term, Holy Spirit, and have a notion of His importance, many of us have failed to grasp the absolute necessity of His presence and influence in our lives as well as how we can tap into His potential.
- H. We will talk about the Holy Spirit throughout this QUEST, but we begin this morning by understanding the Holy Spirit as OUR GUIDE.
- I. For the next few minutes here is our guiding question: **(Slide #10)** Who is the Holy Spirit and how does He work?
- J. **(Slide #11)** Who is this guide? – look with me at some scripture, beginning in John 14 and eventually continuing in John 16. As we read the words of Jesus, who spoke to His disciples of the coming time of the Holy Spirit, Jesus says many things about the Holy Spirit as guide. Let’s look at a few:
1. **(Slide #12)** **First, we need to understand that the Holy Spirit is our guide because He is AN ABIDING PRESENCE - John 14:15-17.** (READ VERSES)
- Let’s break down what Jesus is saying.
 - He begins with a qualifier – He wants it to be understood who He is speaking to, for what He is about to offer is not available to everyone. The promise of the Holy Spirit as guide belongs to those who “love [him]” and those who “will obey what [he] had commanded.”
 - Translation – Jesus is speaking to disciples – ones who have accepted His forgiveness, love Him, and as any good disciple should, is willing to be obedient.

- d. To the disciple, then, Jesus speaks of a time – and that time is the time we are living in now – when a gift will be offered: A COUNSELOR.
- (1) What do we mean by counselor? Well, in some places it means a counselor in the sense of one who helps us with needs of healing or help - a psychological counselor, if you will.
 - (2) But specifically what we read here is that his counselor will have a specific role: He will be the Spirit of Truth.
 - (3) If you will, the counselor concept being presented here is similar to a “legal council” - someone who carefully guides a person, especially in a judicial or a political setting, to speak only what is absolutely true and often safe.
 - (4) Jesus, of course, is not speaking legally here, but spiritually. He is saying, a day is coming – and has now come – when I will give to you a presence who will council you at all times concerning what is true.
- e. But read on, for the news gets better. This counselor, we are told, will “live with us” – in other words, He will go with us wherever we go and at all times tell us what is true and what is not.
- f. But the words get even better. This counselor, we are told, will “live with us” in a specific form: HE WILL LIVE IN US – He will “be IN you” we are told at the end of verse 17.
- g. Listen to a great truth that is filled with power and potential, a truth that perhaps some of you have never heard OR some of you have heard but somehow forgotten: IN OUR SPIRITUAL QUEST IN LIFE, EVERY ONE OF US CAN BE OVERWHELMINGLY AND MIRACULOUSLY VICTORIOUS BECAUSE OF THIS TRUTH: WHEN WE ACCEPTED JESUS AS LORD, HE PLACED WITHIN US AN ABIDING PRESENCE WHO IS OUR GUIDE - THAT PRESENCE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- (1) If you are a disciple, by definition you carry within you God.
 - (2) You are, by definition, a spirit inhabited being – you have in you the Holy Spirit.
 - (3) Now hold on to that thought and let’s look at some more exciting news. . . .
2. **(Slide #13) Second, we need to understand that the Holy Spirit is our guide because He is OUR TEACHER - John 14:25-26.** (READ VERSES)
- a. Let’s understand what is being said here, and we can begin by understanding what is meant by the word “teacher.”
- (1) We all know the term, but sometimes we want to change the definition when we apply it to spiritual matters.
 - (2) What does a teacher do? To put it simply, a teacher is one who proclaims to those who will listen statements about what is already known.
 - (3) This may sound like a no-brainer, but a teacher is not an inventor – they are reminders or informers of what already is. They teach established truth.
 - (4) From that they may encourage students to explore the meaning of those truths in terms of their application, but they are not inventing new thought.
- b. So listen to the words of Jesus: when the Holy Spirit comes, He will come as teacher. By teacher, this is what is meant: He will “remind you of everything [Jesus] has said” - He will declare what is already true.
- c. That was especially good news to the original disciples – they would be reminded of all the wonderful things Jesus said. It should be equally exciting to us – we would be reminded of all the truths of Christ as the Holy Spirit teaches us what is true.

- d. Again, hold on to that thought as the case is built even more. . . .
3. **(Slide #14) Third, we need to understand that the Holy Spirit is our guide because He is OUR SOURCE OF CONVICTION - John 16:7-11.** (Read Verses)
- a. He is our source of conviction – an interesting word because we are used to using it only in a negative sense – someone is convicted of a crime or convicted as in feeling sad about doing something wrong.
 - b. But the word itself is much more than a negative word. For example, we sometimes here the expression, “He spoke with conviction.” By that we mean he spoke with an determined awareness of what is true or what should be.
 - c. As Jesus continues to talk with His disciples about the Holy Spirit as guide, he says in these verses in John 16 that the Holy Spirit will come to convict. But notice what the Holy Spirit will convict disciples of:
 - (1) He will convict them of guilt in regard to sin – if we will listen, the Holy Spirit will at all times reveal to the believer what is sinful and should be avoided (He will be the inner voice saying, don’t go there, don’t look at that web site, don’t rent that DVD, don’t listen to that song, don’t go to that place, don’t participate in that activity)
 - (2) He will convict them of or righteousness – equally important, Jesus makes it clear that the same Holy Spirit will reveal to the believer those things that are filled with righteousness (He will draw us to things that are holy and wholesome and good and edifying)
 - (3) He will convict them of judgment - specifically the judgment of the “prince of darkness.” In other words, He will reveal the enemy for what he is and make it clear that Satan is defeated and must no longer be heeded. He will reveal the enemy for who he is.
 - d. To put Jesus words another way, this is what Jesus is saying to his disciples: If you will follow the Holy Spirit, He will guide in three critical ways:
 - (1) He will make sin look clearly like sin, and make it repulsive
 - (2) He will make righteousness look clearly like righteousness, and make it appealing.
 - (3) He will reveal Satan and his schemes for what they are and remind us that not only is he already defeated, but we are to daily operate in a way that demonstrates he has no authority over us. He will be revealed as doomed and destroyed, all power removed – playing this out a little more, as we walk in the Spirit individually and as a church, the enemy and his schemes will be revealed and they will be exposed as defeat and defeated and disarmed. Hallelujah!
 - e. Holding on to that truth, we add the final one. . .
4. **(Slide #15) Fourth, we need to understand that the Holy Spirit is our guide because He is OUR SOURCE OF ALL TRUTH - John 16:12-13.** (Read verses)
- a. It’s almost like Jesus just wants to put a cap on all He has already said: In case you’re wondering, Jesus might say, the Holy Spirit plain and simple is the source of ALL truth.
 - b. The truth is expanded to one more level here as we look carefully – going beyond that of teacher (declaring what is already known), we read these words: “He will tell you what is yet to come.”

K. Let’s put it all together: As Disciples of Christ, we are daily on a quest that ultimately leads us to our final reward, Heaven. While on the way, we are more than conquerors because we have a Guide. His name is the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit goes with us everywhere we go, living and reigning in us. As our traveling companion, He reveals to us constantly reminds us of what is true as our teacher. As our

traveling companion, He clearly points out at all times what is sin, what is righteous, and what is of the defeated enemy and enables us to embrace righteousness. In short, He will always lead us to what is true.

L. THAT, MY FRIENDS, IS VICTORIOUS LIVING.

III. APPLICATION – Activating the Guide.

- A. Now there's one last nagging question that must be asked: If in fact every believer, once asking Jesus to forgive them of their sins and entering into the life of a disciple automatically receives at that time the Holy Spirit, then why aren't we seeing evidence of all these things I just said would happen?
1. That's a critical question!
 2. The answer to that question is ultimately where we need to end this morning.
- B. Let me answer it this way: You can have all the things you want in your life that you might label as "guides," but unless you activate them, they are totally useless.
1. I can own a map, but if I don't open it, it's useless.
 2. I can own a GPS system and have it in my car, but if I don't turn it on, it just won't work.
 3. This flashlight, the thing is useless unless I flip the switch and turn it on.
- C. The same is true with the Holy Spirit. We are given the glorious gift of the Holy Spirit when we become disciples, but unless He is activated, all of the things just mentioned fail to become a reality.
- D. So what do I have to do to activate the Holy Spirit as Guide in my life? Critical question with a very clear answer:
1. First, it is required of us that we surrender without reservation our lives to the authority of the Holy Spirit, giving to Him permission to be our every-moment-of-every-day Guide.
 - a. This is our step of initial activation.
 - b. It is an acknowledgment that the Holy Spirit does abide in us, but also an acknowledgment that He can only work when we chose to surrender totally to His guidance.
 - c. Folks, the church – and by that I mean it's people – are failing to walk in the fullness of the Spirit because of there refusal to surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Today, God is calling all of us to activate the Holy Spirit as guide, and that means surrender.
 2. Second, once the Holy Spirit is activated; daily we are required to confirm that activation. We do this through "praying without ceasing."
 - a. When Paul declared those words 1 Thess. 5:17, he did not mean to do nothing but prayer; he meant do nothing without praying first.
 - b. Prayer is the channel God chooses to speak through to guide us.
 - c. The Spirit of God will always speak, the question is, will we always ask.
 - d. God has so much to say to us, but we have failed as a church to give Him voice. The voice of the Holy Spirit speaks to us in prayer!
- E. Church, God has great dreams for us as individuals and as a church body. If we are to tap into those dreams, it is imperative that we discover our Guide: The Holy Spirit.
- F. The critical decision for today is that of "activation."
- G. **(Slide #16)** Are you in need of a guide today? Would you dare to step out and receive Him into your life?