

The Fifth Sunday of Easter & Saude Confirmation – Pr. Faugstad sermon  
St. John 16:5-15: “The Spirit of Truth Guides You to Speak the Truth.”  
May 2/3, 2026 | Saude, Jerico, & Redeemer Lutheran Churches

### In Nomine Iesu

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Lord God, heavenly Father... we beseech You, enlighten our hearts, that we may confess our sins, through faith in Christ obtain everlasting righteousness, and in all our trials and temptations retain this consolation: that Christ is Lord over the devil and death and all things, and that He will graciously deliver us out of all our afflictions, and make us forever partakers of eternal salvation; through the same, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen. (*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*, p. 156)

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (Rom. 1:7, etc.)*

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*The sermon text for today is written in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. We read selected verses in Jesus' name:*

[Jesus said:] “But now I am going to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, 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. But if I go, I will send Him to you. And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see Me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. / “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is Mine; therefore I said that He will take what is Mine and declare it to you.” (ESV)

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*These are Your words, heavenly Father. Sanctify us by Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen. (Joh. 17:17)*

In Christ Jesus, who spoke the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, because He is the truth, dear fellow redeemed:

Do you remember what happened the first time you told your parents a lie... and got caught? You lied because you didn't want to get in trouble. You wanted to get away with something that you know you shouldn't have done. But it didn't work. Your parents found out. I am confident they did not respond by saying, “It's no big deal.” Or, “You almost got us that time!” Or, “We're glad to see you pursuing your truth.” You had to face the consequences, not only for the wrong thing you did, but also and especially for lying about it.

We are taught from a very young age to tell the truth. We must be taught it because it does not come naturally to us. The problem is, hardly anyone these days seems to agree on what exactly is true. We hear often enough, “What is true for you is not necessarily what is true for me.” Or, “One person's truth is just as valid as another's.” This makes all truth relative, totally dependent

on what each individual thinks is right and wrong. But no society can actually function like this. With no truth boundaries in place, we would destroy each other.

This is why some people look to the government to establish truth. But government officials are not perfect. Laws that encourage and reward harmful activity can be put in place, and good laws can be changed by bad actors. What about the visible Christian Church? Can that establish truth? Church officials are sinful too. And what one church might call true and good, another might call false and evil because they don't agree about what God wants them to teach and do. Should it be each household or community determining what is true? That just puts us back to truth being relative, decided by what seems right to each individual or small group.

The problem with all these options is that they start with humanity. They start with what we can do to create a peaceful, well-ordered society. If we were capable of this, or even moderately good at it, wouldn't we see a lot more peace and order in history and a lot less violence and trouble? Jesus makes it clear that we sinners are not going to be able to raise ourselves out of the continuous conflict and suffering of the world. We need someone to come from the outside in, someone who is not held back by the same weakness and sin that we are.

Jesus was a Person like this. He did not come from the world; He made the world. John 1 says, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made" (vv. 1,3)*. Then the evangelist writes, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

The Son of God took on human flesh by being born of the virgin Mary. Because He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, He entered the world without sin. He was *"full of grace and truth,"* and He came to save the world (Joh. 3:17). He came to offer up His holy life as the payment for all sin, to make satisfaction for it by His death on the cross. Jesus spoke the words of today's reading the night before He was crucified. He knew that He would suffer, that He would die, and that He would rise again on the third day. This is what His heavenly Father sent Him to do (Joh. 10:18).

After His work was complete, Jesus told the disciples that He must return to His Father. He would no longer be visibly present with them to teach them, answer their questions, and encourage them. This filled their hearts with sorrow. How could they go on without their Teacher and Lord? Jesus had the answer. He told them He would send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the truth, to declare to them the things that were to come, and to take what was His and declare it to them.

When the disciples heard Jesus' words before His death and resurrection, they could not make sense of any of it. After His resurrection, they began to understand Jesus' purpose and plan for the salvation of the world. And then at Pentecost, ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, it all became clear. God the Father and God the Son sent God the Holy Spirit to them just as Jesus had promised.

The Holy Spirit not only guided these chosen disciples to preach boldly in the name of Jesus, He also guided them to write histories and letters, so that others after them would hear the truth and would learn how to discern truth from error. We still have those Spirit-inspired writings today.

They are collected in the New Testament of the Bible, along with the inspired words of the prophets in the Old Testament. We believe that the entire Bible is given to us by God. It was written down by men, but it contains no human opinions, no human errors, and no actual contradictions. It is the Word of God, which means it is true.

This is the truth that has gone out into the world and still goes out. It has changed the world and still changes it. But you might say, "If the Word of God is so powerful, if it is true, why isn't the world a better place?" If you filled up on food at a recent meal, why do you keep more food in the cupboards and fridge? If a cut in your skin has healed, why do you keep bandages around? You know that just because you ate today and were in good shape today, that there will be hunger and other troubles tomorrow. We live in a fallen, sinful world, and each one of us is sinful.

One of the Holy Spirit's duties is to expose the sinfulness of the world and of our own hearts. Jesus said that at the Spirit's coming, "*He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.*" The unbelieving world does not know how lost it is, how far it has fallen from the glory of God, and how deeply it is stuck in sin. It does not understand that its best deeds and greatest accomplishments are garbage compared to God's goodness and righteousness. It does not see that if it continues to reject the salvation won by Jesus, it will be eternally condemned along with the devil.

That's the truth, and it's a hard truth. It is difficult to speak this message in the world because the world does not want to hear it. No one likes to be told that he or she has a major problem. Unbelievers do not want to hear that no matter how good they have tried to be toward their neighbors, or how much they have tried to make a positive difference in their communities, that none of it counts for their salvation with God. It isn't good enough. Unless they repent, they cannot be saved. As long as they reject Jesus' saving work, they are on the way to hell. No matter what our culture says today, not everyone who dies goes to "a better place."

This sounds harsh. People who hear this wonder why we Christians think we are so much better than others. They can name a whole bunch of Christians who seem to be worse people than they are. It isn't hard to find a sinful Christian. We do not speak to others about sin, righteousness, and judgment because we think we are so good. We speak the truth of God because we know we are just as sinful as everyone else, and we know that no one can be saved apart from the grace of God.

We speak the truth because we want others to have the forgiveness and comfort that we have. We want them to know that Jesus fulfilled the holy Law of God for them and died to pay for their sins and rose again to conquer their death. He did this for the whole world, for all people of all time. He did not leave anyone out or fail to pay for anyone's sins. Every single wrong we have done, every single unkind word or action toward others, every single lie we have spoken or lived, Jesus suffered the wrath of God for it and shed His blood to wash it all away.

This is the truth. It is not my opinion. It is not make-believe. I can tell you with one-hundred-percent certainty that your sins are forgiven because Jesus paid for them. He commanded that this Gospel message be shared with the whole world (Mat. 28:18-20, Joh. 20:22-23). The Gospel "*is the power of God for salvation*" (Rom. 1:16). It is powerful because it is not man's word; it is God's Word. The Holy Spirit works through the Word to guide you into all truth, to point you to Jesus'

work for your salvation, to take what is His—His righteousness, His perfection, His life—and declare it and give it to you.

You breathe in the Spirit and power of God whenever you listen to His Word and receive His Sacraments in faith. And you breathe out these gifts to others when you speak the same promises and blessings of God to them. You believe, and so you also speak (2Co. 4:13). When you speak the truth, you do not need to worry about how it will be received. That burden is not on you. The Holy Spirit will do all the heavy-lifting. He will open ears, He will work repentance, He will plant faith in hearts—just as He has done for you.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.*

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