

Bible reading John 14:15-21

Living truth

THIS WEEK WE EXPLORE WHAT THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE.

Jesus promises his disciples that God will send the Spirit of truth, who will be with them for ever. He reminds them that those who love him are those who keep his commandments; and these are the ones to whom he will reveal himself.



BAKE



Think about someone you would like to share God's love and care with. Make and decorate enough heart-shaped biscuits that you can give some away as a sign of God's love. You might like to offer some to those doing exams in the next few weeks.
<https://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/funfetti-heart-biscuits.html>

CREATE

With family or friends, raid the recycling for clean newspapers, magazines, cardboard and other packaging to make 'truth outfits'. Use sticky tape and scissors to secure the designs in place. Have a competition to see who can make the fanciest outfit and who can best explain what it means to 'wear the truth'.

Write

Keep a living truth diary for a week. Record the times when you have shown the Spirit of truth in practice, or you have seen this in others.

Bible notes

There are different kinds of truth in this passage. Some things are true because they correspond with external realities. So, it is true that Jesus will very soon leave his disciples, as he is arrested and then executed (John 14:1-6). He will no longer be with them as he has been during their travels between Galilee and Jerusalem. They will feel his absence acutely when they are under pressure from the outside world (John 20:19). But it is not true that his enforced absence means he is about to abandon them. Any anxieties they may have about this are countered by a different kind of truth, with its own way of verification. Jesus promises to pray for 'another Advocate...the Spirit of truth' (vv:16-17).

His words suggest that he will be with them in another way. They will know the truth of his presence through a different kind of seeing (v:19), the insight born from faith that he and they are held in the give-and-take of sacrificial love. He is about to offer his life for them, and in return they are to offer their lives for each other (John 13:34-35). This will only be possible because Jesus promises to return to them beyond his execution, and make the heavenly realities of God's loving words and works visible among them (John 14:3,12). By attributing this exchange of self-giving love to the 'Spirit of truth', Jesus speaks of a 'truth in practice' that draws his followers into the Father-Son relationship and binds them to each other. Living this truth comes from trusting in unseen, heavenly realities that overcome any sense of abandonment. Yet its outworking is anything but invisible.

First impressions

- What does it mean to 'not just talk the talk, but walk the walk'?
- What truths does the Holy Spirit show us about the world around us?
- What might living in the Spirit of truth look like tomorrow, at work, school or home?



A prayer of approach

Living God, Spirit within me,
I worship you in spirit and in truth.
Be real and known to me.
Help me, for a moment, to put aside fripperies and distractions,
all the jobs and tasks still to be done,
and look instead to you for truth, meaning and purpose.
Make yourself known in the words and the silence.
Amen.

ACT



This week is Christian Aid Week. Find out what your community is doing to make a difference and show your support – or go online and find out about other ways to get involved. <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>