



*“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him” (Jn 14:15-16)*

Years ago on a road trip through western Ireland, a friend and I were winding along the small rural highway on a clear, cool night. There was not a light to be seen for miles, and the darkness swallowed the landscape. When our conversation lulled, we decided to pull over to get out and enjoy the stars. I don't think I have ever seen a sky so encrusted with gems. It isn't often in the western world that you can enjoy the constellations with so little light pollution. The marvel of the heavens decked with scintillating diamonds makes you wonder what we have lost with the advent of electricity.

The funny thing is the stars are always there. We just can't see them.

Jesus says in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” If Jesus is the truth, then God is truth—the stable state of affairs that is being itself just as it is. The simplicity and power of truth—powerful perhaps because it is simple—goes unseen in today's world not because it has ceased to exist. We just can't see it.

The brilliance of the stars and God's voice get lost in the haze. I have often wondered why it seems as if God is so passive in his dealings with me. Since communication is a two-way street, in any healthy relationship, it has to go both ways. Most of us have had the experience of a trying relationship where it seemed like the initiative always came from one side. Sometimes God seems to be that passive partner who is at best reactive, but never proactive in my life. But if God is truth, he is always in relation to me and I to him.

The truth is always there, just like the stars, a brilliant, beautiful reality that actively challenges us to live in accord. The truth touches our most intimate selves and the most distant frontiers of the universe. It is what is; and that is not so distant as it seems. We are always inescapably in relation to truth and it is by the truth that we will be judged.

Jesus, the truth, is ever present even if we are so full of pollution that we cannot see him through the haze. Despite the clouds and artificial lights we generate, he calls unceasingly to conscience. He never wearies in his effort to bring me out of the haze to see myself as I really am and him as he really is.

**That is why honesty is an essential virtue for prayer.** It is a type of silence, enabling you to encounter the truth. **God is Truth.** He is never passive in his dealings with me. His apparent distance and silence is only a tactic to separate me from my lies and to shake me free of my complacency.

**So if you want to hear his voice, ask yourself, “Are there areas of my life where I am dishonest with myself? Is there anything in me that I do not want to confront?”** If there is, that is likely where God is speaking, and I just haven’t seen it. So,

*“Turn away from evil and do good;*

*seek peace and pursue it” (Ps 34:14).*