

John 14:14-21 ¹⁵ " If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶ "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -- ¹⁷ "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ " A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. ²⁰ "At that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹ "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

How can any confirmation student ever be ready the for what is ahead

Five months ago when I came here to Markesan I had a serious problem. How could I possibly prepare these confirmands in five months to be ready to be confirmed. How could I possibly prepare them for a life of apologetics, for a life of knowing the right thing to do, for a life of service in God's kingdom? Well of course the answer I couldn't and even if had three years or four years I couldn't.

Even Jesus couldn't do it. Jesus taught his disciples for three years and at the end of that He says, "Ok guys you haven't learned anything. I'm going to send you another teacher who will stay with you your whole life and then maybe you will start to really learn who God really is."

He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever

The purpose of confirmation class is the same as any elementary level class. To give you a few basic facts in order to start you on your way. But there is so so so much more to learn about Christ and His word.

It used to bother me how big the universe is. Do you know how big it is? It's so big (2 trillion galaxies, 100,000 million stars in our galaxy) – Here is why it troubled me. Why would God make such a unbelievably gigantic galaxy as the home for man. Talk about over doing it. Imagine if you were going to build a house for your family, but instead of building a house that's just 1500 square feet you made it 197 million mi² . That's just way to much you are just completely overdoing it. So it bothered me until I realized, who says he did it for us? Maybe he was just having fun.

We have a tendency to think about God as this strict utilitarian, but it clearly isn't so. He is instead a God who fills the universe with unbelievable variety, with light of every color, with music, and with so much more.

And if the Universe is so unbelievable vast and beautiful and complicated than surely the God who created it all is even more vast and beautiful and complicated.

Theology is often thought of as being such a boring subject . And this is the partly the fault of us your pastors for making it boring, and partly the fault of you the congregation, but whoever's fault it is, it just isn't true.

For the study of God's word is the continually growing in our understanding of God who is even more colorful and vast than the Universe he created. To quote C S Lewis father in and deeper, or to quote one

of my favorite TV shows, “May you life be filled with spice.” Traveling the world, talking to new people, trying new foods, sure, but even more important the spice of learning and growing in the vastness of knowledge about our God

Is this not what Jesus means when he says “if you abide in my word” that is if you live in my word, or in our text, “If you love me treasure my commandments”

How ridiculously sinful are we, that God has given to us one this unbelievably vast universe to explore and two revealed himself in His word, and yet we would rather sit on our couches watching Netflix rather than explore the wonders He has revealed about Himself.

It is not those who finish confirmation class but those who continue in the Word are going to be equipped and ready for a life of faith.

The unseen things of God we learn by the help of the unseen spirit

God himself is invisible as Jesus says “The world will see me no more” and so much of the things that we learn about Him in His word are invisible as well. All the things the confirmads just confessed in the apostles’ creed are unseen. That is why we say, “I believe . . . “ because they are not things that can be observed. These things are articles of faith or objects of faith. They are the things we receive by faith.

And of course the world cannot know them or receive them as Jesus says for the world will not receive anything that it cannot observe for itself

But if these unseen things are the objects of our faith the basis of our faith are the seen things.

1. Nature itself testifying that there is a God.

Ricahrd Dawkins wrote on the first page of his book “these things give the appearance of being design, but there is no evidence of design.” Really it looks like it is designed but there is no evidence of design? That’s like saying it looks like a pig but there is no evidence that it’s a pig. One of my wife’s favorite tv shows the guy puts buckets under holes in a government roof where water is leaking and dripping down, and as he puts the buckets under the dripping water, there are no holes in the roof we’ve done studies and they all show there are no holes in the roof.

2. Jesus rose from the dead

This is what Jesus himself points to “but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. “

As peter says “we did not devise cunningly devised fables, but were eyewitnesses

It is self evident that the world can not know and can not study these wonderful mysteries of God, because they are not seen but are revealed only through His word. And so it is only those who delight in studying that word that are able to see these things of God, and to see Jesus, since also Jesus is revealed through His word.

But you can know and grow in these unseen things of God. Not only because you have the Word but also because you have the Spirit as your guide. What a wonderful opportunity.

May the Peace of God that Surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus