A SHORT BIBLE STUDY

Knowing the Holy Spirit

Growing Closer to God · Book 2



The Helper Jesus promised

Andrew Dominguez

Trinfinity Enterprises

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A Note on the Bible Translation Used in This Book

My preferred Bible for personal study, teaching, and research is the Steadfast Literal Bible (SLB). I chose it because it is a word-for-word translation in today's language, built on the ancient Scripture sources: the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament. I prepared the SLB myself, and the Scripture in this book is taken from it.

Where a literal phrase would mislead an English reader, the SLB gives the writer's meaning in plain words. Words added for sense are set in bold italics so you can see what is in the original and what is not.

The complete Steadfast Literal Bible is free to read, search, download, and print at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb. If you want to check a verse in its full setting or read the translation's preface and principles, that is the place to go.

Above all, my desire is not to promote one translation over another, but to faithfully teach the Word of God, encourage careful examination of the Scriptures, and help readers grow in their knowledge, understanding, and relationship with the Lord.

May every page of this book direct attention not to the translation itself, but to the truth of God's Word and the One whom it reveals.

Introduction

Of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is the One many Christians know least. Some think of Him as a force or a feeling. Some are nervous about Him because of what they have seen. Jesus spoke of Him as a Person, a Helper, and He said it was to our advantage that He would come.

I have served as a lay pastor and led Bible studies, and many believers I have met feel confused about the Holy Spirit. When I went through my hardest season and had to rebuild my life and marriage, I learned how much I depend on His daily help. I wrote this book to give everyday Christians a plain, Bible-based look at the Helper Jesus promised (John 14:16).

This book looks at who the Holy Spirit is, what He does in someone who is searching, what He does in a believer, and how we can walk with Him day by day.

1 Who the Holy Spirit is

On the night before the cross, Jesus told His disciples He was leaving. They were troubled. Then He made them a promise.

> *And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may remain with you forever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world is not able to receive, because it does not see Him nor know Him; but you know Him, because He remains with you and will be in you.*
> **John 14:16-17 (SLB)**

Notice the words Jesus uses. He, not it. The Spirit teaches, guides, speaks, and can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30, SLB). A force cannot be grieved. A Person can.

The Spirit is also God. When Ananias lied about his gift, Peter said he had lied to the Holy Spirit, and then said, "You have not lied to men but to God" (Acts 5:3-4, SLB). Jesus told us to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19, SLB). One name, three Persons.

When I translated the SLB, paying close attention to every word changed how I saw the Holy Spirit. Scripture does not describe Him as a force or a feeling. He is God Himself, with a mind and a will, who teaches and comforts. Knowing who He is changes how you pray, read Scripture and face each day.

2 What He does in someone who is searching

If you are reading this and something in you is stirring, that may be the Holy Spirit at work. Jesus said that when the Helper has come, "He will convict the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment" (John 16:8, SLB).

Conviction is not the same as condemnation. It is the Spirit showing you the truth about yourself so that you can come to the One who forgives. Paul wrote that "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him" (1

Corinthians 2:14, SLB). We need the Spirit even to understand the gospel.

Salvation itself is His work. God saved us "not by works which we did in righteousness, but according to His mercy," and He did it "through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5, SLB). Jesus called it being born from above (John 3:3, SLB). Many Bibles say "born again." The Greek word can carry both ideas.

Looking back, I can see the Holy Spirit drawing me before I could explain it. God put Pastor Jimmy Carter down our street in Victorville, gave me a job mowing his lawn, and used him to take me to church. The Holy Spirit is at work in a searching heart long before a person understands the gospel.

3 What He does in a believer

The moment a person trusts Christ, the Spirit comes to live in him.

> *in whom you also, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation—in whom also having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is **the** pledge of our inheritance, for **the** redemption of the acquired possession, to **the** praise of His glory.*
>
> **Ephesians 1:13-14 (SLB)**

A seal marks ownership and protects what is inside. A pledge is a down payment that guarantees the rest is coming. The Spirit is God's promise that He will finish what He started.

The Spirit also gives us assurance. "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16, SLB). When we do not know what we should pray, "the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with inexpressible groanings" (Romans 8:26, SLB). He will guide us "into all the truth" (John 16:13, SLB).

After May 29, 2020, God broke through my denial and began changing my habits from the inside out. Real change did not come from trying harder. It came from submitting to God's Word and the Spirit's steady correction. When the Holy Spirit lives in a believer, He produces change willpower never could (Galatians 5:22-23).

4 Power and gifts

Jesus told His followers to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit before they went out.

> *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to* ***the*** *uttermost part of the earth.*
>
> **Acts 1:8 (SLB)**

The power of the Spirit is power to be a witness. In the book of Acts, ordinary fishermen spoke with a boldness that amazed the religious leaders. The Spirit also gives gifts to every believer. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7, SLB).

Christians disagree about some of the gifts, especially tongues and prophecy, and about whether the baptism of the Spirit comes at salvation or later. I cover that more in my mini book Understanding Baptism. What we can all agree on is that the gifts are for serving others, not for showing off.

I have led small groups, volunteered at church camp and helped lead five years of youth mission trips to Baja, Mexico. God's power showed up most often in quiet faithfulness, clear teaching and serving people when we were tired. The Spirit gives every believer practical gifts to build up the church (1 Corinthians 12:7).

5 Walking with the Spirit

The best evidence of the Spirit is not a spectacular moment. It is a changed life.

> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such* ***things*** *there is no law.*
>
> **Galatians 5:22-23 (SLB)**

Fruit grows slowly. You do not manufacture it. You stay connected and it comes. Walking with the Spirit means listening when He nudges you, confessing quickly when you grieve Him, and obeying even when you feel inadequate.

I once heard about a woman who felt burdened for years to share the gospel with her elderly neighbors and kept putting it off because of fear. When she finally went, she felt she had made a mess of it. Both

neighbors trusted Christ. Weeks later their son, a preacher who had prayed for his father for years, knocked on her door to thank her. God takes the weak things and does mighty things when we obey the Spirit's urging.

6 What your salvation depends on

The Holy Spirit's whole work is to point you to Jesus. Jesus said of the Spirit, "He will glorify Me, because He will take from what is Mine and will declare it to you" (John 16:14, SLB). So the Spirit's message to you is the same as the gospel.

> *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this **is** not from yourselves; the gift **is** of God, not from works, so that no one may boast.*
> **Ephesians 2:8-9 (SLB)**

Your salvation depends on Jesus Christ, who died for your sins and rose again. It does not depend on having a certain experience or a certain gift. Paul wrote, "if you confess with your mouth Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him out of the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9, SLB).

If the Spirit is stirring your heart right now, do not put it off. Tell God you know you have sinned. Ask Jesus to forgive you and be your Lord. The Spirit who is drawing you will come to live in you and stay with you forever.

Leading Bible studies, I often hear believers ask whether they can lose their salvation when they stumble. I know that fear. I drifted from God more

than once. Scripture says the Holy Spirit seals every believer the moment they trust Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14). Your salvation depends on God's seal, not your grip.

Knowing the Holy Spirit

✦ ✦ ✦

Who is the Holy Spirit, and what does He do? This book looks at the Helper Jesus promised, how He draws someone who is searching, what He does in a believer, His power and gifts, and how to walk with Him. Then it points you to Jesus, as the Spirit always does.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be witnesses to Me.

Acts 1:8 (SLB)

Book 2 of 9 in the collection Growing Closer to God

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