A SHORT BIBLE STUDY

Telling Others What Christ Has Done

Living It Out · Book 9



Sharing your faith and your story with care

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

Most Christians want to tell others about Jesus, and most of us feel unqualified to do it. We worry we will say the wrong thing, get a question we cannot answer, or push someone away. I understand that fear. I also know that God uses ordinary people who are willing to open their mouths.

The first person who took time to tell me about Christ was Pastor Jimmy Carter, a neighbor whose lawn I mowed when I was a boy in Victorville. He took me to church and led me to Christ. Years later, helping lead youth mission trips to Baja and teaching Bible studies taught me that sharing Christ does not need a polished speech. When Christ has changed your life, telling others becomes simple and honest.

This book is about sharing the good news with honesty and care. It covers using God's Word, getting to the heart of the issue, telling your own story, and staying gracious with people who see things differently.

1 Ready to give an answer

> *but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and **be** ready always for a defense to everyone who asks you an account concerning the hope in you, with gentleness and fear.*
>
> **1 Peter 3:15 (SLB)**

First Peter 3:15 (SLB) starts in the heart. Before I can speak for Christ, I need to sanctify the Lord God in

my heart. Then I can be ready when someone asks why I have hope.

Notice the last part of the verse. My answer should come "with gentleness and fear," meaning kindness toward the person and reverence toward God. The goal is not to win an argument. The goal is to help someone see Jesus clearly. A harsh answer can be correct and still drive a person away from the very Savior I want them to meet.

At work, people watch how you handle pressure long before they care what you believe. People have asked me about my faith and why I stopped drinking. Being ready for those questions, and other hard ones, gives you credibility to speak into people's lives (1 Peter 3:15). Being ready to speak starts with living in a way that makes people ask.

2 Letting the Word do the work

Jesus told Nicodemus, "unless someone is born from above, he is not able to see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, SLB). Peter later wrote that believers have been "begotten again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the word of God, living and abiding forever" (1 Peter 1:23, SLB). The seed that produces new life is the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit makes it grow.

That takes pressure off me. I do not have to argue anyone into heaven. Romans 10:17 (SLB) says, "faith is from report, and report through the word of God." John wrote his Gospel so that people would believe

that Jesus is the Christ and have life in His name (John 20:31, SLB).

So I want to know the Word well enough to use it. When I can, I like to have the other person read a verse with me, so they see it with their own eyes. When time is short, it helps to have key verses memorized. I do not need to defend the Bible as much as I need to let it speak.

Translating the Steadfast Literal Bible came from one conviction: plain Scripture does more than my own cleverness. When people read and hear God's Word for themselves, God does the work. Our job is to share the Word clearly and let Him do the heavy lifting.

3 Getting to the real issue

People often say we are all going to the same place on different roads. Jesus did not offer Nicodemus that kind of false comfort. He was kind, but He was plain. Later He said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6, SLB).

Jesus also did not get sidetracked. He did not spend the conversation correcting every wrong idea Nicodemus had. He moved it toward the one thing that mattered most, which was the new birth. I want to learn that skill. Side debates about church differences or hard doctrines can wait. The way of salvation cannot.

I also want to avoid shortcuts. Rushing someone into a prayer before they understand what they are doing does them no favors. The issues are too important. I want each person to know what sin is, what Christ did, and what it means to trust Him.

4 Telling your own story

Your testimony is simply the story of how you came to Christ. It usually has three parts: your life before you knew Him, how you came to trust Him, and what has changed since. If you came to Christ as a child, the changes may be the biggest part of your story.

A few things make a testimony clearer. Pray before you speak. Leave out church words that outsiders may not understand. Be specific instead of vague, and do not exaggerate. Make sure the listener knows that a Christian is someone forgiven because Jesus died in his place.

A few things to avoid: do not run down other churches or Christians, do not talk down to the people listening, and do not give the impression that you are now better than they are. As a Christian, the only person I am better than is the person I used to be.

I keep a story in my notes about a woman who was afraid to share the gospel with her elderly neighbors for ten years. When she finally did, she felt she had made a mess of it. Weeks later, the neighbor's son, a pastor, knocked on her door to thank her. His father and grandmother had both trusted Christ. Paul wrote, "God chose the weak things of the world, so that He

might put the strong things to shame" (1 Corinthians 1:27, SLB).

For a long time I kept the hardest parts of my life quiet. I wanted people to see the successful project manager, not the man who had made choices that hurt his marriage and the people closest to him, and who was hiding his drinking. After May 29, 2020, I saw that hiding my failures also hid God's grace. Nobody can argue with what God has actually done in your life.

5 Gracious with every person

Some of the people I talk with belong to groups that teach a different Jesus or a different gospel. First John 4:1 (SLB) tells me to "test the spirits to see whether they are of God." The test is the Word of God. Whatever a group teaches has to be measured against Scripture.

Arguments rarely help. Second Timothy 2:24 (SLB) says, "a slave of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle toward all." I would rather keep the conversation on the person's own relationship with Jesus. A simple question works well: do you know for sure that your sins are forgiven and that you are right with God today?

Confessing Christ also means doing it openly. Jesus said, "everyone who will confess in Me before men, I also will confess in him before My Father who is in the heavens" (Matthew 10:32, SLB). When someone trusts Christ, I want to encourage them to tell another believer right away. Sharing what God has

done is good for them, and it encourages everyone who hears it.

My family attended the Catholic church when I was young, and it was a neighbor, Pastor Jimmy Carter, who later took me to his church. Over about 40 years of working with people from every walk of life, I have learned that looking down on someone's background closes every door. Whether I am working on a guitar for a customer or talking with a neighbor in Dayton, respect comes first (Colossians 4:6). Grace in how we listen earns us the right to speak.

Telling Others What Christ Has Done

✦ ✦ ✦

Most of us want to tell others about Jesus and feel unqualified to do it. This book looks at being ready to give an answer, letting God's Word do the work, getting to the real issue, telling your own story, and staying gracious with every person.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always for a defense to everyone who asks you an account concerning the hope in you, with gentleness and fear.

1 Peter 3:15 (SLB)

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