

Our In-House Bible Teacher

God sent a Resident Trainer to live within us to teach you! It's not enough to simply know the Word of God. We must *know, do* and *experience* the spiritual Realities God promises us. Ideally, this happens through the open give-&-take of a question/answer-based approach in an active learning community, like how Jesus learned (Luke 2:46-47). However, even with an intense desire to understand the treasure of Christ's provision in God's Word in an open, responsive learning community, Scripture is a closed Book without the ministry of our In-House Bible Teacher, the Spirit of God.

Look up the verses below. Make this active by first jotting down your brief notes describing how the Spirit of God supports you as you add your effort to study God's Word.

1. The Holy Spirit reminds us of God's truth (John 14:26).

The Helper, the Holy Spirit, has promised to teach you all things and call to your remembrance everything you need to know. It's His work within us that enables us to know, respond to and experience truth. He's here to help and to bring the realization of the awesome promises of God to satisfy our need for Reality. Take on a listening posture.

2. God's Spirit guides our lives on our lifelong journey (John 16:13).

We are on an adventure of discovery with God. If I went on a backwoods adventure, I would want to have a trusted guide with me who had already been over the terrain many times. The Holy Spirit, who lives in us, has promised to guide us into all His truth. Since the Holy Spirit is God, He will direct us. He also works through our disciplined effort because God designed us to partner together. Both us And Him.

3. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ to us through Scripture (John 16:14-15).

If you had been wrestling with the meaning of "The Client" by John Grisham, and he was sitting next to you on an airplane, wouldn't Grisham be the best person to ask? The Author of Scripture also acts as the Interpreter of Scripture. Jesus says, "The Spirit will demonstrate Me to you." The Spirit takes Jesus Christ and lifts Him up, revealing our Lord to us as a moment-by-moment Reality. And

Jesus in turn radiantly points to His Father. He is our crucified, risen, reigning Savior who is powerful, personal and on our side. The Spirit makes this practical along our journey of life, no matter what occupation we are in.

4. The Spirit of God searches the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:10).

It's only the Spirit of God who searches out the deep things of God and reveals them to our longing hearts. The indwelling Spirit of God is our Resident Teacher. The Holy Spirit bears witness by and with the Word in our heart to give us full persuasion that God's Word is Reality. The Bible is our final authority and thus unfailingly leads us.

As you have tried to study the Bible in the past, have you ever had thoughts like: "I'm not smart enough to understand the Bible" or "I have never been able to read well enough" or "I'm too young in Christ to understand the Bible for myself" or "Where can I find the time!" or "I can't concentrate well" or "Regular Bible reading and study is for others...like for pastors." All these thoughts come from the enemy!

"But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:10). The Spirit has access to the greatest reservoir of truth in the universe... the Father's heart. We may therefore know things far beyond what we are able to ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). This God-stuff has never before entered our minds, but waits for us to push into His presence so the Spirit can reveal it.

Every born-again Christian has all that is necessary to understand the Bible, our Father's love letter to us, even those who have not been successful in school environments in the past. Understanding spiritual things is so much more than an acquaintance with facts, although some learning skills are similar. The Bible is a book of revelation and revelation must be revealed or we get nothing out of it through the natural mind. The Holy Spirit shows us truth through the eyes of God. Now, we must partner by adding our hard work to His revelation.

5. God's Spirit attunes our hearts to God-Reality (Ephesians 1:18).

In the four Gospels, the disciples were asking questions and in the book of Acts after the descent of the Spirit, they were answering questions. The Spirit of God clears our minds and tunes our hearts so that we can understand Reality and His call on our lives. That flash of

insight so we know...really know...God as actually present comes from the Spirit. He illuminates the text to us and for us like an inner floodlight.

Illumination is the penetration of God's truth into our hearts so we see differently. The Bible calls this "change of mind" "repentance," or Spirit-initiated change in our foundational values, how we see life. Before we saw...now we see beyond. Then He enables believers to discover and love and respond to what He has already revealed through His Word, the Bible. Those "ahas" and "wows" come from the Spirit and no methods can ever replace His ministry.

6. God's Spirit teaches every Christian, directly and through others (1 John 2:26-27).

It's the promised privilege of every Christian to be taught by the Spirit of God. None are disqualified...even if you were not a good student in school. This is a spiritual book and the Spirit teaches every Christian... including you. But like any good teacher, the Holy Spirit will not do the work for us. He gives us His "*holy nudge*" towards understanding truth and what to do with it.

Approach Scripture with a prayerful, expectant, almost happy-go-lucky anticipation that the Holy Spirit will do what He delights to do...reveal Jesus in His resplendent brilliance so that Jesus will bring fame and glory to His Father. The Holy Spirit penetrates. He sharpens the javelin of the Word of God passed on by the man of God. The Holy Spirit makes the difference. Of course, the aged Apostle John is not discounting the need for a teaching ministry. He wrote this epistle as a teaching ministry.

7. The Spirit of God releases in us a passion for Scripture (1 Thessalonians 1:6b).

Certainly, our lives are not protected from trials and tough times, but in trials. Still, these new believers in Thessalonica welcomed and embraced God's Word with joy generated by the Holy Spirit. Studying Scripture with the Spirit as Resident Teacher can become one of the most joyful experiences of life. The Spirit changes our emotional tone as we approach learning as lifelong life-learners. Notice how Paul hooks together the Word dwelling richly in us and joyfully singing (Colossians 3:16).

8. The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to better know God (Ephesians 1:17-23).

Bible study is about a growing relationship. God's heart is to raise up prophetic people who can accurately see His ways and relate them to 21st century life. As Tozer writes:

Even when our spiritual antennae are tuned to understand God's Word and the riches of Christ, Scripture is a closed Book without the ministry of the Spirit of God. God is after prophets who see, not just students of the Word who know. It's God's Word and we need God's Spirit to understand it. This Book, the Bible, is God's love-letter to us. God designed us to be lifelong life-learners in the Word, equipping us with all that is necessary to understand. Since only the Holy Spirit is able to reveal truth, pray that the "Spirit of wisdom and revelation" enables us to know Jesus more intimately, and to...

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law
(Psalm 119:18).

Like a jigsaw puzzle, the Spirit puts the pieces together in the way they fit. Now jot down your response to the wonderful help of the Spirit. Which one ministry stands out to you at the moment? Why? Summarize in two sentences. Then, how can you use this to grow in your ability to listen to God speaking to you?

9. God's Spirit teaches us who we are (Romans 8:15-17).

Outside personally knowing God, nothing is more important for growth than knowing ourselves the way the Community-God knows us. Who are you? Do you see yourself accurately? Are you inwardly quiet enough, tranquil, resting, fully satisfied in Him? Pour water into a basin and look at your reflection. When the waters are disturbed, the image is distorted. Now wait. Be still, quiet. When the waters are perfectly still, look again at your more accurate reflection.

10. The Spirit transforms us into Christ-likeness (2 Cor. 3:17-18).

How can we experience and reflect the very likeness of our Lord Jesus? We are transformed from one ever-increasing level of His reflected glory to another. It's the Spirit who partners with us to gaze steadfastly into the Word of God without hypocrisy and to see Jesus...to really see...so we can be transformed into His likeness. Yes, He made us lovely in His eyes! "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" to be transformed into the image of Christ.

Take a few minutes for active learning. Briefly summarize in your journal two or three key ideas for you.