

Our Faithful Teacher

1 Corinthians 2:14

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**Have you ever felt that the Bible is hard to understand?
Do spiritual matters sometimes seem so complicated that you wonder why you
bother to read Scripture?**

Our heavenly Father is very aware of human limitations. He has lovingly provided us with **the perfect teacher: the Holy Spirit.**

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth. He might be drawing an unbeliever toward salvation by convicting him of sin, or He could be revealing to a Christian the deeper truths of a familiar Scripture passage. He brings back to our memory biblical truths, and He guides our thinking, teaching us how to walk in the Spirit. In fact, without His help, none of us would be able to comprehend anything from the Lord. The reason is that the "**natural man**

does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" ([1 Corinthians 2:14](#)).



Before anyone comes to faith, our Helper is already at work, creating a spiritual curiosity in the unbeliever and teaching about sin and righteousness. ([John 16:7-8](#)) **This is the Holy Spirit's evangelistic ministry, whereby He makes us aware of our need for a Savior.** At the very moment someone places faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes and indwells the person—He actually takes up residence within each believer. Imagine: God Himself becomes our resident professor and tutor!

The Holy Spirit is genuinely concerned about our understanding of how we are to live out our faith in God. **A second aspect of His instructional work, His discipleship ministry,** has the specific purpose of transforming us into the image of Christ. He accomplishes this "**renovation**" first by unveiling and revealing who God is and what Christ is like. Then He chisels, sculpts, and sands us—He brings to mind behavior and thought patterns that should not be in our lives and shows us how to deal with them. In this way, the Holy Spirit "**brings us up**" in Christ by convicting us of sin, righteousness, and the things we should be doing and thinking. This learning process, which conforms us to the likeness of God's Son, is known as "**sanctification.**"

A third facet of the Holy Spirit's instruction is His missionary ministry. God saved us not just for ourselves; He wants to benefit others by working, living, and speaking through us so that they, too, may come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. That is not to say that every believer will someday go to some distant mission field; we

are all in a mission field here and now—in our home, our community, our workplace, or our school. **The Spirit of God wants to function through us to draw our family, friends, and associates to Christ.**

Why is it important that the Holy Spirit indwell believers? The Lord knew we would need a personal coach with us at all times, not just to instruct, but also to protect against error. With the Holy Spirit on the inside of us, we are not at the mercy of those who teach deception. ([1 John 2:26-27](#)) It is, of course, wise to listen to men of God who are preaching truth, and therefore it is critical to be able to distinguish between error and godly instruction. For this purpose, God has provided us with an "**alarm system.**" When we hear a voice that contradicts a Bible verse or principle, an alarm will go off internally if our system has been properly "**programmed.**" The Holy Spirit has built truth into our minds and hearts so that any inconsistency will trip the warning signal.

But what about people who neither read the Bible very often nor listen to teachers who truly understand the Word of God? When they hear a lie, nothing happens. No warning signal sounds because their "alarm system" has not been programmed with the principles of God's Word. Remember that Satan will always make error sound good; by appealing to the flesh, he attempts to keep us from the truth. Often his deceptions will be very close to Scripture, disguised just enough to mislead the undiscerning. In order to cooperate with our caring, indwelling Teacher, we must regularly and earnestly take in the Word of God.

Prerequisites to Learning

The Holy Spirit teaches us about the things of God, and in order for us to learn from Him, there are three basic requirements. **First**, we have to believe the Bible is the living Word of God and free of errors. This means that we must accept the entire book as true rather than pick and choose which parts we are comfortable with. [Second Timothy 3:16](#) confirms that "**all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.**" The Holy Spirit will not share profound spiritual truths with someone who doesn't even believe Scripture is God's Word.

Secondly, we must be saved in order to be instructed by the Holy Spirit. He will not teach the ways of God to someone who has not accepted the Son of God. If the only way to the Father is through the Lord Jesus Christ ([John 14:6](#)), we certainly cannot expect to understand any deep spiritual realities if we bypass the Son.

The third requirement is that we rely upon the Holy Spirit to teach us—we must not depend upon our own understanding and wisdom. A storehouse of facts, or even a seminary degree, is no match for the indwelling Spirit of God. You may ask, "**How do I depend on Him?**" Simply say, "**Father, I need the Holy Spirit to teach me the truth. I don't understand this passage, but I want to grasp what You are saying to me. I am trusting You to instruct me in Your ways.**" Once you begin to rely on the Holy Spirit, things you didn't comprehend will start to make sense to you.

Teaching Methods of the Holy Spirit

As a member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is certainly a qualified instructor in the ways of God. He uses four teaching methods to transform us into the likeness of Christ. **The first one is revelation**, which is truth given by God that could not be attained in any other way. The Greek word for "reveal" means "to uncover"; God removes the veil on truth so that we may understand and be guided by it. [1 Corinthians 2:9-10](#) explains that there are things never before witnessed by human eyes or ears, but "to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." The world's most brilliant philosophers could think and reason indefinitely, but on their own, they could never arrive at the truth that the Spirit reveals.

The second teaching method is illumination, which means that the Holy Spirit lights up our mind so that we understand a previously given revelation. [The first chapter of Ephesians](#) refers to this supernatural work of God's Spirit: "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling" ([verse 18](#)). We can study, read, translate, and look up references, but all of that is to no avail unless the Holy Spirit enlightens our heart; when that illumination takes place, we suddenly comprehend what God is saying.

A third way He teaches is by reminding us of God's truth: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" ([John 14:26](#)). That is how the Gospels were written. There were no tape recorders in those days; the Holy Spirit brought back to memory what Jesus had said.

The fourth way the Spirit teaches is by guiding us in the application of truth. [John 16:13](#) says, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth." When asked if he understood the Bible passage he was reading, the Ethiopian eunuch in [Acts 8](#) answered, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" ([verse 30](#)) He realized He needed help to understand and make appropriate use of scriptural truth in his life. The Holy Spirit will do the same for us, showing how to apply God's principles as we negotiate difficulties, trials, and temptations.

The Indwelling Teacher

The Holy Spirit is our personal instructor, who wants to illumine our mind, bring things to our remembrance, and guide us in applying truth. **But our progress in learning God's ways is ultimately based on one thing: Are we willing to obey what He tells us to do?** We cannot separate the Holy Spirit's instruction from our obedience. Rebellion will cloud illumination and stifle spiritual growth. Our goal should be the same as the Holy Spirit's—that we be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. Take advantage of your "resident Teacher." Tell Him you are totally dependent on Him, and commit to obey the Word of God. Then rely upon Him to enable you to live out whatever He instructs you to do. You will take a quantum leap in both spiritual understanding and your walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.