

Knowing the Holy Spirit

Part 3

The Spirit Who Speaks

TALKING WALKINGPOINTS

Leader's Guide

2026-8-16



A publication of  DISCIPLE, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Observation—*What do I see?*

- 1 What is the difference between revelation and inspiration, and how do they relate to each other?
- 2 How do the following passages show that the Holy Spirit is “the author behind the human authors” of Scripture? 2 Samuel 23:2; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 4:25 & 28:25
- 3 What are some ways God helps believers understand Scripture?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 4 Why are both revelation and inspiration essential?
- 5 Why is it important to understand that John 14–16 contain promises made primarily to the apostles, yet with significance for us?
- 6 Why is the Bible such an extraordinary gift from the Holy Spirit?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 7 How should believing that the Bible is God's inspired Word affect your response to it?
- 8 What role does prayer have in the study of Scripture?
- 9 In what ways does sin interfere with understanding God's Word?
- 10 Pastor Doug mentioned several practical habits for valuing and understanding the Bible. Which of these do you currently practice on a regular basis?
 - ☐ Frequent Bible reading
 - ☐ Praying before studying
 - ☐ Seeking sound teaching
 - ☐ Meditating on Bible truths
 - ☐ Thanking God for his inerrant Word

- ① Revelation is God bring to the minds of select individuals truths which they otherwise could not have known through reason or senses. Inspiration is the process through which that revelation makes its way out of their minds and into permanent written form.
- ② Look each one up, noting that they mention a human author and a divine author. The human and divine authors acted “concurrently”—at the same time, in conjunction with each other.
- ③ Through answered prayer, wisdom, human teachers, providential help, and the Spirit’s work of sanctification.
- ④ Revelation is essential because truth about God cannot be known by unaided reason (1 Corinthians 1:21 & 2:14–16). Inspiration is essential because it produces a trustworthy text which others can read and understand, leading to salvation.
- ⑤ In John 14:26, for example, we were not there to hear “all that I said to you”, so this promise had to be made to the Apostles. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would give the Apostles infallible memory of everything they had heard Jesus teach during his earthly ministry. Yet that same promise is significant to us in that it guarantees that we can absolutely trust what they wrote.
- ⑥ Because through revelation and inspiration the Holy Spirit has provided an enduring, trustworthy, and sufficient record of God’s will and the message of salvation. Without the Bible, we could not know how to be saved.
- ⑦ It should lead us to trust its authority, study it carefully, and obey it zealously.
- ⑧ We need God’s help to understand and rightly respond to his Word. We get that help by asking him for it, and believing that he will indeed help us (James 1:5-8 & 4:2c).
- ⑨ A rebellious heart resists and distorts biblical truth because it does not want to submit to God.
- ⑩ Be prepared with your own brief, concrete thoughts on this, but let group members go first.

Sermon Summary

The Holy Spirit is a fully divine person, the third member of the Trinity, coequal with the Father and the Son (Rom. 1:20). One of His chief ministries is giving the knowledge needed to know God truly, chiefly through the inspired Scriptures; a related ministry is giving power to live for God faithfully. This lesson treats the knowledge given through Scripture, in four parts: (1) the Spirit reveals what could not otherwise be known; (2) He inspires the biblical writers so that Scripture is trustworthy and authoritative; (3) He gives the church the Bible as its enduring standard; (4) implications for reading, studying, and obeying God's Word.

I. Revelation and Inspiration Revelation: God makes known what human beings could not otherwise know. Inspiration: the Spirit worked through the biblical writers so that what they wrote is true, authoritative, and free from error. Directly revealed material includes matters no human observer could know (Gen. 1; Isa. 53). Other material draws on the writers' own experience (Acts; the Gospels; the Psalms). All Scripture, whether revealed or not, is inspired, and therefore trustworthy and authoritative. Scripture attests the Spirit's role in its origin: 2 Sam. 23:2; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; Acts 4:25; Acts 28:25–27; 2 Pet. 1:20–21. Jesus promised the Spirit would secure the Apostles' teaching, giving accurate recollection of His words (John 14:16, 26) and disclosing further truth (John 16:13–14). This inspiring ministry extended to non-apostles given the gift of prophecy, whose teaching, with that of the Apostles, formed the church's foundation (Eph. 2:20; 3:5). Paul describes his own writing as Spirit-given (1 Cor. 2:10, 12–13).

II. The Importance and Product of Inspiration Inspiration does not require a dictation model; the Spirit worked through each writer's personality while guaranteeing a truthful, authoritative product. Paul calls the Old Testament writings “the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2) and describes what the Thessalonians received as “the word of God,” not “the word of men” (1 Thess. 2:13). Scripture “cannot be broken” (John 10:35) and is true (John 17:17). Insofar as the Bible held today accurately represents the original text penned by the Apostles and Prophets, it constitutes a permanent, errorless record of God's will and message of hope.

III. The Holy Spirit and Understanding of the Bible Orthodox Christianity affirms the Spirit's unique role in the origin of Scripture. Less widely held is the doctrine of illumination: that the Spirit works directly on believers' minds to give definitive, subjective help in understanding Scripture's meaning, understood as applying to all Christians. Texts commonly cited in support: John 14:26; John 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10–16; 1 John 2:20, 27.

Illumination Reconsidered Prayerful dependence on God in reading Scripture, humble reliance on wise teachers, and expectation that God uses His Word to correct, comfort, and sanctify are affirmed. In question is whether Scripture teaches a distinct, guaranteed inward work of correct interpretation given equally to every believer. Three reasons for caution:

1. Persistent, serious disagreement among sincere Christians over the same passages and doctrines (e.g., gender roles, the millennium and end times, divine sovereignty and human responsibility) is difficult to reconcile with a guaranteed interpretive work.
2. Pastoral difficulty: even defenders of illumination (e.g., Edwin Palmer, *The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit*) acknowledge continuing “dimness” and the ongoing need to pray for understanding, raising the question of how a believer could distinguish a Spirit-corrected interpretation from another stage of ordinary, fallible growth.
3. Exegetical: John 14:26, John 16:13, and 1 Cor. 2:10–16 pertain to the Spirit's work of revelation and inspiration through apostles and prophets, not a general promise to all believers. 1 John 2:20, 27, read with 1 John 2:24, describes believers retaining apostolic truth already received — comparable to Col. 3:16 — rather than a private interpretive work guaranteeing correct understanding of every passage, which would render human teachers unnecessary and imply an interpretive unity the church has not experienced. God aids understanding through prayer for wisdom (James 1:5), providentially sent human teachers (Acts 8:30–31; Eph. 4:11), ordinary providence (attention, memory, connection of ideas), and sanctification, which softens resistance to what Scripture plainly teaches.

Conclusion The Bible is not merely a book about the Holy Spirit's work; it is itself one of His greatest gifts to the church. Through revelation and inspiration, Scripture faithfully conveys the very words of God, without error and fully trustworthy.

Application

1. Read Scripture with gratitude, as a gift the Holy Spirit has preserved for knowledge, faith, and godliness.
2. Submit to Scripture with confidence, receiving it as God's trustworthy authority rather than human opinion.
3. Study Scripture with humility, remaining teachable through prayer, teachers, wisdom, and sanctification.
4. Obey Scripture with seriousness, bringing the will under the authority of the God who speaks through it.
5. Thank the Holy Spirit for Scripture, for giving it to the church and using it to draw believers to Christ.

Jesus is Better



...so Perseverently! Confidently!



Have you ever wondered...

- ...if you can be confident you're going to heaven? (Hebrews 10:35)
- ...if you can fall away from God and lose salvation? (Hebrews 6:4-6)
- ...if your faith measures up to what God requires? (Hebrews 11)

Join other TCC men and women for an in-depth
exploration of the fascinating ~ *and often troubling* ~

Book of Hebrews.

Beginning in September

Wednesday evenings or Thursday mornings

(6³⁰-8pm)

(9³⁰-11am)



Click Here!

Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time: How Does the Holy Spirit Speak to "Bob"?

- ❶ **Truth** existed in the mind of God—but sin separates us from him, so..."Bob" is in the dark! 😞
- ❷ **Revelation** brought God's truth to the minds of chosen human authors. 1 Corinthians 2:7, 10
But Bob is still in the dark—only the person to whom God revealed himself knows anything.
- ❸ **Inspiration** produced the original manuscripts. There aren't "degrees" of inspiration—something either is, or isn't inspired. Inspiration guarantees inerrancy (2 Timothy 3:16). Bob, however, is still in the dark...
- ❹ Ultimately, God inspired 66 books. However—fake books also arose! (2 Thessalonians 2:2-3)
How do we sort them out? **Canonicity** recognized which books are authoritative words from God.
In order to be accepted, a book must be...

a. authoritative	(Claim to be of God)
b. prophetic	(Written by a servant of God)
c. authentic	(Tell the truth about God, man...)
d. dynamic	(Possess life-transforming power)
e. received	(Accepted by original audience)
- ❺ Imagine that you were a Christian in the 1st century and a letter arrived from Peter/Paul. You'd want your own copy—a lot of people did! Over 5,000 **copies** were made before the originals wore out through over-use. So today we find ourselves in the situation of having thousands of copies, but no originals...
- ❻ Fast-forward 20 centuries. **Textual Criticism** is the science of reconstructing the now-lost original from existing copies. Manuscripts are compared to each other, resulting in a high quality Hebrew/Greek text. Bob, however, doesn't know Hebrew or Greek! Therefore the next step is...
- ❼ **Translation.** Which translation is best? Best for whom? Best for what use? Good news, Bob! God and others brought you the Bible, and now God's ready to help you understand it and be blessed by it!
- ❽ **Interpretation.** Even if we have God's Word, unless we study God's Word, we won't understand it. The magnifying glass represents this. When we pray for wisdom and correctly handle God's Word, the light comes on! The Bible **can** be understood on a "story level" without God's help, but to know God requires careful study. Discernment grows and increases with maturity (so we keep on seeing more in familiar passages), but discernment requires obedience. Discernment regresses with disobedience, because we're talking about a **relationship** with God.
- ❾ Bob is understanding God's Word, and the more he **applies** it, the more he grows mature and strong as a believer. This is what the Bible calls "progressive sanctification"—becoming transformed into the image of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:3 and Romans 8:28-30). See Bob's muscles and that smile on his face? How are **your** muscles? How joyful are **you**?
- ❿ The final step is **communication**. We are called to be "ambassadors for Christ". Unless and until we "close the loop" by communicating to others, we're short-circuiting God's communication to mankind.

e: How Does the Holy Spirit Speak to "Bob"... and to You?

