

The Holy Spirit, Teacher's Guide

Week 5: The Spirit of Truth: Revelation and Inspiration

John 14:25–26; 16:12–15; 2 Timothy 3:16–17

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

This week carries more doctrinal freight for the remainder of the study than any other, because it settles where the Spirit's voice is found today. The texts make a clean, two-step argument. Step one: in the upper room, Jesus promised the apostles, not believers generally, that the Spirit would bring all His words to their remembrance (John 14:26), teach them the things they could not yet bear (16:12), and guide them into all the truth, including things to come (16:13). The pronouns, the setting, and the content of the promises tie them to the eleven; the fulfillment is the inspired preaching and writing of the apostolic age. Step two: Paul declares the result, all Scripture God-breathed and sufficient to make the man of God complete, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17), and Jude seals it, the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Together these texts close the canon's logic: all truth promised, all truth delivered, nothing left outstanding. The teacher must establish this carefully, because Weeks 7 and 8, on the purpose and cessation of the miraculous gifts, stand directly on this foundation, and because the most common religious error your students encounter weekly, "God told me," is answered here.

Handle the polemical edge with warmth, because the doctrine of a completed revelation is glorious news before it is a refutation. Christians are not straining to hear a whisper that may or may not come; the King has spoken fully, in writing, with the Spirit of truth standing behind every word. The same lesson should leave students more confident in their Bibles, more diligent in them, and more honestly self-examined about whether they treat the word as sufficient in practice, in their decisions, their parenting, their fears, or whether they quietly crave something extra. The disciple this lesson forms trusts the finished word and uses the toolbox.

Send the class home able to do two things: trace the chain of revelation from the Father through the Son by the Spirit to the apostles and onto the page, and answer the claim of modern private revelation with both clarity and kindness, showing why a closed canon protects rather than impoverishes the people of God.

Question 1

Student Question:

In John 14:25–26, what two distinct things does Jesus promise the Helper will do for the apostles, and why was each one essential if we were to have trustworthy Gospels of what Jesus said and did?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The two promises of John 14:26 are distinct, and the distinction matters. “He will teach you all things”: new instruction, truth the apostles had not yet received. “And bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you”: perfect recall of what they had already heard. The first promise covers what Jesus had not yet said (compare 16:12); the second covers what He had said but they had imperfectly grasped or would naturally forget. Between the two, the apostles’ future teaching was covered in both directions, backward over the three years of ministry and forward into the doctrine of the church.

Show the class why each was essential for trustworthy Gospels. Consider what the Gospel records actually contain: long discourses (the Sermon on the Mount, the Olivet discourse, this very farewell conversation), private exchanges (Nicodemus at night, the Samaritan woman), and details the apostles confessedly did not understand at the time. John twice admits the disciples only understood certain events after Jesus was glorified (John 2:22; 12:16), which is itself a window into the remembrance promise at work: the Spirit did not merely jog memories, He brought the words back with their meaning unlocked. Without the second promise, the Gospels would be the haze of old men’s recollections; with it, they are the testimony of eyewitnesses underwritten by the Spirit of God.

Press the implication for inspiration: the promise covers words, not just impressions. “All that I have said to you” is verbal content. This is why the church has always confessed verbal inspiration rather than the vague notion that God inspired ideas and left men to fumble for language. It also explains the Gospels’ confidence in quoting Jesus at length decades later, and why differences of wording among the Gospels are the natural variety of faithful witnesses reporting in their own styles under the Spirit’s superintendence, never contradiction (recall Week 3’s ship carried by the wind).

A teaching note on scope: “all things” here is all things pertaining to the apostles’ commission, the faith and practice of the kingdom, not omniscience about mathematics or weather. Scripture’s own usage clarifies itself: the same fullness is called “all the truth” (16:13), “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). The promise is total within its sphere, which is exactly the sphere in which we need certainty.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Two distinct promises: new teaching and perfect remembrance
- John 2:22 and 12:16 as windows into the remembrance promise at work
- Verbal inspiration: words recalled, not merely impressions stirred
- Gospel variety as faithful witness under superintendence, not contradiction
- The scope of “all things”: the whole counsel of God, all that pertains to life and godliness
- Why the trustworthiness of the Gospels rests on these promises rather than on human memory

Discussion Prompts

- Why would the apostles' unaided memories have been an insufficient foundation for the church's faith?
- What is the difference between inspiring a man's ideas and guaranteeing his words, and why does the difference matter?
- How do John 2:22 and 12:16 show the remembrance promise doing its work?

Question 2

Student Question:

Jesus told the apostles the Spirit would bring His words to their remembrance because He knew their memories, like ours, were weak. The same Lord has made full provision for what you forget: His word is written down and always available. How regularly do you actually return to it, and what does your pattern of Bible reading say about how much you think you need reminding?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The premise of the remembrance promise is humbling and worth saying aloud: Jesus assumed His best men would forget. These were eyewitnesses of the transfiguration and the storm-stilling, and the Lord still made divine provision for their leaky memories. Forgetfulness is not a modern affliction or a personal flaw; it is the human condition, and the whole Bible treats it as the besetting spiritual disease. Israel's history is a cycle of forgetting (Judges 8:34; Psalm 106:13, 21); the entire book of Deuteronomy is one long "take care, lest you forget" (Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:12; 8:11). Peter, who sat in the upper room, built his last letter around the same realism: "I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them," "to stir you up by way of reminder" (2 Peter 1:12–15; 3:1). The apostle who received the remembrance promise became the apostle of reminders.

Draw the parallel the question intends: what the Spirit did miraculously for the apostles, the written word now does providentially for us. We do not receive midnight downloads of forgotten truth; we receive something steadier, the truth permanently fixed in ink, available at every hour, the same on the worst day as on the best. The Bible is God's institutionalized reminder. This reframes Bible reading: it is not primarily the acquisition of new information (most Christians already know more than they obey) but the re-presentation of known truth to a forgetful heart. We read daily for the same reason we eat daily, not because yesterday's meal failed but because we are the kind of creatures who run empty.

Now let the diagnostic question work: what does your pattern of reading say about how much you think you need reminding? An honest class will admit the math. We who forget where we put our keys assume we will retain the gospel without rehearsal; we who reread texts from friends let the week close without opening the word. Sporadic reading is a quiet claim of strong memory, and Scripture flatly denies any of us have one. The blessed man's habit is "day and

night” (Psalm 1:2); the Bereans’ habit was “daily” (Acts 17:11); the manna had to be gathered every morning (Exodus 16:21), and Jesus taught us to ask for bread by the day (Matthew 6:11).

Make the application practical and unguilted. A time tied to an existing habit (with coffee, before the commute); a realistic portion (a chapter, even a paragraph, beats an abandoned plan); a method of retention, because writing one sentence of what you read, or sharing it with a spouse or friend, doubles the remembering; and the assembly, where the church gathers partly as a corporate reminder system, “stir up one another” (Hebrews 10:24–25). The goal is not checked boxes but a heart kept warm by repeated truth.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Forgetfulness as the Bible’s diagnosed spiritual disease (Deuteronomy 8:11; Judges 8:34)
- Peter, recipient of the remembrance promise, becoming the apostle of reminders (2 Peter 1:12–15)
- The written word as God’s standing provision for forgetful saints
- Reading as re-presentation of known truth, not merely acquisition of new truth
- Daily patterns: Psalm 1:2; Acts 17:11; manna gathered each morning
- Retention helps: writing, telling, and the assembly as corporate reminder (Hebrews 10:24–25)

Discussion Prompts

- Why do we trust our spiritual memories more than the evidence warrants?
- What truth has God had to re-teach you several times, and how did He do it?
- What one adjustment to your week would most increase how often God’s word passes before your heart?

Question 3

Student Question:

In John 16:12–13, Jesus says, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now,” and promises that the Spirit “will guide you into all the truth.” What does this promise tell us about where the rest of Christ’s teaching would come from after His ascension, and why does “all the truth” leave no room for new doctrine to be revealed in later centuries?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Set the two halves of the promise side by side. “I still have many things to say to you”: the revelation of Christ’s will was deliberately incomplete on the night of the betrayal. “But you cannot bear them now”: the limitation was the apostles’ capacity, not the Lord’s reluctance; before the cross and the resurrection, doctrines like the meaning of His death, the nature of the kingdom, and the welcome of the Gentiles would have crushed or confused them. “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth”: the unsaid remainder would come not

from new human insight but from the Spirit, after Pentecost, until the body of truth was whole. The Gospel of John itself is evidence: the deepest interpretations of Jesus' words came later, through the Spirit-guided apostle (John 2:22; 12:16).

Underline the phrase "all the truth," because it carries the week's doctrinal weight. "All" is exhaustive within its sphere: everything Christ had left to say, the full system of "the faith." The fulfillment is traceable in the New Testament's own claims: the apostles spoke "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27); the mystery hidden for ages "has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:5); God's "divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3); and Jude can speak of "the faith... once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3), using a Greek term (hapax) for finality, the way Christ died once for all (Hebrews 9:26–28). If all the truth was delivered to that generation, then by simple arithmetic nothing doctrinal remained to be revealed to any later one.

Apply the arithmetic candidly. Every system claiming post-apostolic revelation, latter-day prophets and new scriptures, ongoing church traditions elevated to the rank of the apostles' word, or modern "words from the Lord," implicitly charges this promise with failure: either the Spirit did not guide them into all the truth, or He did and "all" left things out. Both options accuse Christ's promise. Whatever new revelation claims to add was either already in the faith once delivered (and is unnecessary) or contradicts it (and is condemned, Galatians 1:8–9, ahead in Question 9). Note also that history's test confirms what the text declares: every major addition to the apostles' doctrine has subtracted from Christ somewhere.

Keep the tone constructive: the closed character of revelation is not God going silent; it is God having finished speaking the message, the way an author's completed book is not the author's death. Hebrews 1:1–2 frames it perfectly: God spoke long ago in many portions and many ways, and "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son," final, climactic speech, which the Son completed through the apostles He promised to guide. We live not in the silence after revelation but in the fullness of it.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- "You cannot bear them now": progressive revelation paced to capacity, completed after Pentecost
- "All the truth" fulfilled: Acts 20:27; Ephesians 3:5; 2 Peter 1:3
- Jude 3, "once for all delivered": the finality term and its force
- The arithmetic against later revelation: nothing doctrinal left outstanding
- Hebrews 1:1–2: the Son as God's final word, delivered through guided apostles
- Completed revelation as fullness, not divine silence

Discussion Prompts

- Why was it mercy, not stinginess, for Jesus to withhold teaching the apostles could not yet bear?

- If the Spirit guided the apostles into all the truth, what follows logically for any claimed revelation after them?
- How would you explain the difference between God no longer revealing new doctrine and God no longer being active?

Question 4

Student Question:

Jesus knew exactly how much His disciples could bear and trusted the Spirit to supply the rest in due time. Where are you frustrated that God has not explained more of His plan to you right now? What would it mean to trust His timing the way the apostles had to trust it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The apostles lived inside a frustrating sentence: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” Imagine hearing that from the Lord Himself, there is more, and you are not ready for it. They were not told the schedule, only given a promise and asked to trust the Giver. Within months the promise proved good, but on that night they had to walk out of the upper room carrying unanswered questions toward the worst weekend of their lives. That is precisely where many of your students live: convinced God knows more about their situation than He has explained, and chafing at the silence.

Normalize the frustration biblically before correcting it. The psalms ask “how long?” over and over (Psalm 13:1-2); Job demanded an explanation and received instead a revelation of God Himself (Job 38-42); the prophets searched and inquired about the very salvation they were predicting, and were told they were serving a later generation (1 Peter 1:10-12); even the martyred saints under the altar ask how long (Revelation 6:10). Scripture is not embarrassed by the ache of partial knowledge. What it never permits is the conclusion that God’s withholding is neglect. Deuteronomy 29:29 draws the boundary: “the secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” There is a revealed portion, enough to obey today, and a secret portion, retained by a Father who knows what we can bear.

Notice that Jesus’ restraint was itself love. He calibrated truth to capacity, as He did throughout His ministry, teaching “as they were able to hear it” (Mark 4:33). A good father does not explain everything to a child at once; he tells the child what the child needs for today and proves himself trustworthy for tomorrow. Some explanations would crush us now; some will only make sense after our own “after” arrives, as the cross only made sense to the apostles after the resurrection (John 13:7, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand”).

The practical shape of trusting His timing: obey the revealed while waiting on the secret. The apostles were not told everything, but they were told to wait in Jerusalem, and they did (Acts 1:4, 14). The student frustrated about an unexplained providence, a closed door, an illness, a

wandering child, has a revealed portion sufficient for this week: pray, give thanks, do good, gather with the saints, trust. Walking in the light we have is how we prove ready for the light we lack, and the God who kept the upper room promises has earned the right to be trusted with the rest.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The apostles' position: promised more, told to wait, given no schedule
- Scripture's honest "how long?" prayers: lament without unbelief
- Deuteronomy 29:29: the revealed portion and the secret portion
- Christ's restraint as calibrated love (Mark 4:33; John 13:7)
- Obeying the revealed while waiting on the secret (Acts 1:4, 14)
- God's proven trustworthiness as the ground for trusting His timing

Discussion Prompts

- What unanswered question are you currently carrying, and what revealed instruction can you obey while you carry it?
- Why is "afterward you will understand" (John 13:7) sometimes the kindest thing God can say?
- How has a past season of waiting changed what you can bear now?

Question 5

Student Question:

Notice the chain of revelation in John 16:13–15: the Spirit "will not speak on his own authority," but takes what belongs to the Father and the Son and declares it. What does this chain (Father, Son, Spirit, apostles) teach us about the origin and authority of the apostles' teaching, and how does Paul confirm it in 1 Corinthians 2:9–13 and Galatians 1:11–12?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Diagram the chain on a whiteboard if you can, because seeing it settles it. The Father possesses all truth: "all that the Father has is mine" (16:15). The Son holds it by nature and mission. The Spirit "will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak... he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (16:13–14). The apostles receive the declaration and deliver it to the world. Four links: Father, Son, Spirit, apostles, and then the page. The chain has no weak link, because every link is divine except the last, and the last is guaranteed by the third. This is why apostolic teaching is not religious literature about God but the word of God in human script.

Confirm the chain from the apostles' own self-understanding, as the question directs. Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:9–13: the things no eye had seen, "God has revealed to us through the Spirit," for the Spirit alone comprehends the depths of God; "we have received... the Spirit who is from

God, that we might understand the things freely given us,” and, crucially, “we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit.” Revelation reached all the way into vocabulary. Galatians 1:11–12: the gospel Paul preached “is not man’s gospel,” not received from man nor taught by man, “but through a revelation of Jesus Christ.” Add the Lord’s own arithmetic in John 13:20, “whoever receives the one I send receives me,” and Paul’s matter-of-fact claim in 1 Corinthians 14:37: “the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.” The apostles did not think they were offering opinions, and Jesus prayed for those who would believe through their word (John 17:20).

Note what “not on his own authority” reveals about the Spirit, tying back to Weeks 1 and 2: a divine person with His own will who freely speaks what He receives, the Godhead’s perfect harmony in the work of revelation. The Spirit’s self-effacement here, glorifying the Son rather than Himself (16:14), is also the test of every claimed work of the Spirit since: His genuine work always centers on Christ and agrees with the word He delivered.

Draw the practical conclusion for authority questions in religion. If the chain runs Father to Son to Spirit to apostles, then apostolic doctrine is Christ’s doctrine, and there is no appeal beyond it, not to councils, creeds, traditions, popular vote, or private impressions. “Whoever knows God listens to us” is John’s blunt test (1 John 4:6). The seat of authority in religion is the apostles’ teaching, which the first church devoted itself to (Acts 2:42), and which sits, complete, in the New Testament.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The four-link chain: Father, Son, Spirit, apostles, with no weak link
- 1 Corinthians 2:13: revelation in Spirit-taught words, verbal inspiration confirmed
- Galatians 1:11–12: the gospel by revelation, not human instruction
- Receiving the sent ones as receiving Christ (John 13:20; 17:20; 1 Corinthians 14:37)
- The Spirit’s Christ-centered self-effacement as the test of every claimed work of the Spirit
- The apostles’ doctrine as the seat of authority (Acts 2:42; 1 John 4:6)

Discussion Prompts

- Why does the chain of revelation place apostolic teaching beyond amendment by any later authority?
- How does Paul’s claim to speak “words taught by the Spirit” answer the idea that the Bible merely contains God’s ideas in fallible human words?
- What tests does this passage give us for evaluating anything claimed to be a work of the Spirit today?

Question 6

Student Question:

If the words of the apostles carry the authority of Christ Himself, then a quiet Tuesday reading of Ephesians puts you in the presence of the King. Does the way you handle apostolic teaching, in attention, in obedience, in respect, match that claim? Name one apostolic instruction you have been treating as mere human advice.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The syllogism is short and its conclusion searching. If the apostles' words are Christ's words (Question 5's chain), then how I handle apostolic teaching is how I handle the King. The Thessalonians received Paul's message "not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God" (1 Thessalonians 2:13), and Paul commends them for it. The reverse also holds: "whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you" (1 Thessalonians 4:8), written, tellingly, about commands on sexual holiness, exactly the kind of apostolic instruction our age files under outdated human advice.

Name the quiet demotion the question targets. Few believers tear pages out; many sort them. Red-letter Christianity treats Jesus' quoted words as binding and the epistles as commentary, forgetting that the epistles are the promised "many things... you cannot bear them now," Christ's own completed teaching through His guided men. Others demote by category: doctrines are accepted, but instructions about the tongue (Ephesians 4:29), lawsuits and grudges (1 Corinthians 6:7), anxiety (Philippians 4:6), hospitality (1 Peter 4:9), the role assignments in the church and home (1 Timothy 2; Ephesians 5), or assembling (Hebrews 10:25) get reclassified as cultural, optional, or aspirational. The test of where we really place apostolic authority is never the commands we like.

Let the class feel the dignity side as well as the duty side: a Tuesday reading of Ephesians is an audience with the throne. The same words that will judge us at the last day (John 12:48) are available to bless us now, and the proper posture combines trembling and delight, "this is the one to whom I will look... he who trembles at my word" (Isaiah 66:2) with "I rejoice at your word like one who finds great spoil" (Psalm 119:162). Attention, obedience, and respect are simply what those postures look like in practice: unhurried reading, prompt application, and speech about Scripture that never sneers.

Drive to the question's specific demand: name one apostolic instruction you have been treating as advice. Push past safe answers toward the instruction each student has actually been negotiating with, the forgiveness withheld, the giving postponed, the tongue indulged, the assembly skipped, the purity compromised. Then reframe obedience as trust: the instructions are the King's, and the King is the one who died for us; His commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:3), and the house built on hearing-and-doing is the one left standing (Matthew 7:24-27).

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- 1 Thessalonians 2:13: receiving apostolic words as God's word, the commended posture

- 1 Thessalonians 4:8: disregarding apostolic instruction is disregarding God
- Red-letter reduction and category demotion as quiet rebellions
- John 12:48: the word that will judge is the word now read
- Trembling and delight together (Isaiah 66:2; Psalm 119:162)
- Obedience as trust in the Giver, not submission to a code (1 John 5:3)

Discussion Prompts

- Which apostolic commands does our culture most encourage us to reclassify as opinions, and have we obliged?
- What would change in your week if you read the epistles as letters from the reigning King to His people?
- What is the instruction you have been negotiating with, and what would prompt obedience look like?

Question 7

Student Question:

Paul declares that “all Scripture is breathed out by God” and is profitable to make the man of God “complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17). What do the words “all,” “breathed out by God,” “complete,” and “every” each contribute to the doctrine of Scripture, and what do they together imply about whether anything more is needed?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Work through the four words as the question assigns them, because each carries a doctrine. “All” (pasa graphe): the inspiration claim covers the whole, every book, every part, with no inspired-versus-uninspired sorting left to the reader; Jesus’ “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35) and “not an iota, not a dot” (Matthew 5:18) breathe the same totality. “Breathed out by God” (theopneustos): Paul’s word locates Scripture’s origin in God’s own mouth, exhaled, the way breath carries voice; Scripture is not man’s record of encounters with God that God later approved, but God’s own speech given through carried men (2 Peter 1:21, Week 3). The doctrine of inspiration is therefore a doctrine about the text, not merely about the writers’ experiences.

“Complete” (artios, with the cognate verb “equipped,” exartismenos): the man of God is rendered fitted, proficient, lacking nothing for his calling. “Every good work”: the equipment has no gaps; there is no good work for which Scripture leaves the Christian unprovisioned. Together the four words yield the twin doctrines this study keeps meeting: plenary verbal inspiration (all of it, God-breathed) and sufficiency (complete, for every good work). Notice how verse 15 anchors even salvation itself in the writings: the sacred writings “are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” Wisdom for salvation and equipment for every good work: what category of need remains?

Draw the implication the question states: nothing more is needed. If Scripture equips for every good work, then no later revelation, creed, catechism, church tradition, or private experience is required to complete the Christian's furnishings, and anything claiming to be required beyond the word stands self-condemned by this text. This is the sufficiency argument in its simplest form, and students should be able to make it in two sentences. Pair it with 2 Peter 1:3 ("all things that pertain to life and godliness") and Psalm 19:7 ("the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul") for reinforcement.

Add the context for honest handling: Paul wrote this about the sacred writings Timothy knew from childhood, the Old Testament, in a letter that itself claims and exercises apostolic authority; the inspiration affirmed of the old writings extends to the new, as Peter confirms when he files Paul's letters with "the other Scriptures" (2 Peter 3:16) and as Paul shows when he quotes Luke 10:7 alongside Deuteronomy as "Scripture" (1 Timothy 5:18). By the apostles' own usage, the God-breathed library was growing to completion in their hands, exactly as the upper room promised. The profit list, teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, is then Scripture's complete maintenance cycle for a soul: what to believe, where we have left it, how to return, and how to stay.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Plenary inspiration: "all Scripture," no reader-sorted canon within the canon
- Theopneustos: God-breathed text, not merely God-touched authors
- Sufficiency: complete, equipped for every good work, nothing required beyond the word
- Verse 15: the writings able to make wise for salvation through faith in Christ
- The New Testament inside the claim: 2 Peter 3:16; 1 Timothy 5:18
- The four profits as the soul's maintenance cycle: teaching, reproof, correction, training

Discussion Prompts

- Which of the four words, all, God-breathed, complete, every, does the modern religious world most resist, and why?
- How would you use this passage with someone who says the Bible is inspired but not sufficient?
- Which of the four profits, teaching, reproof, correction, or training, has Scripture worked on you most recently?

Question 8

Student Question:

Scripture equips "for every good work," but only if we open it. A toolbox in the garage fixes nothing. Which area of your life, your marriage, your parenting, your speech, your fears, have you been trying to repair without the tools God provided? What passage will you take into that area this week?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The toolbox image deserves a full airing, because it converts the doctrine of sufficiency into a question of usage. A garage can hold every tool a repair requires while the faucet goes on dripping; possession is not application. So with the word: “equipped for every good work” describes what Scripture provides, not what it automatically accomplishes in the unopened book of a busy Christian. James supplies the matching picture, the man who glances at the mirror and walks away unchanged, versus the one who “looks into the perfect law... and perseveres,” who “will be blessed in his doing” (James 1:22-25). Blessing attaches to use.

Walk through the question’s sample areas with actual passages, modeling how the toolbox opens. Marriage: Ephesians 5:22-33 and 1 Peter 3:1-7, where husbands are assigned Christlike, self-sending love and understanding honor, and wives respect, texts that diagnose most marital cold wars better than any counselor. Parenting: Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (truth taught along the way), Ephesians 6:4 (fathers not provoking, but nurturing in the Lord’s discipline and instruction). Speech: Ephesians 4:29 (only what builds up and gives grace), James 3, Proverbs 15:1. Fears: Philippians 4:6-7 (prayer with thanksgiving, and the guarding peace), Matthew 6:25-34, Psalm 56:3, 1 Peter 5:7. Money, grief, lust, anger, all have their drawers. The teacher’s quiet point: most chronic problems in Christian lives are not unaddressed by Scripture; they are addressed by Scripture the sufferer has not opened onto that problem.

Be honest about why we attempt repairs without the tools. Sometimes ignorance: we genuinely do not know where the passage is, which is what teachers and elders are for (Ephesians 4:11-12). Sometimes drift: the Bible has become Sunday equipment. Often avoidance: we suspect what the tool will say, and we prefer the drip to the repair, the grudge to Matthew 18, the spending to contentment, the anxiety we know to the surrender we fear. Naming that honestly is half the cure.

End with the assignment as stated: one area, one passage, this week. Have students write the verse where they will see it, mirror, dashboard, phone lock screen, read it daily into the situation, and do what it says once before Sunday. Pair students where appropriate, because a brother who asks “did you open the toolbox?” doubles the odds (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). Scripture is sufficient; this question asks whether we are finally willing to let it prove it.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Sufficiency provides; usage applies: the toolbox principle (James 1:22-25)
- Sample drawers: marriage, parenting, speech, fear, each with concrete passages
- Chronic problems as usually un-opened Scripture rather than un-addressed need
- The reasons for unused tools: ignorance, drift, avoidance
- Teachers and shepherds as guides to the toolbox (Ephesians 4:11-12)
- Accountability doubling application (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

Discussion Prompts

- Why do we so often try everything except Scripture first on our hardest problems?
- Which area of your life has gone longest without a Bible passage deliberately applied to it?
- What passage will you take into that area this week, and how will you keep it in front of you?

Question 9

Student Question:

The upper room promises were spoken to the apostles, yet many today claim the Spirit still gives new revelations, messages, and “words from the Lord.” Using John 14–16 in context, 2 Timothy 3:16–17, Jude 3 (“the faith once for all delivered”), and Galatians 1:8–9, how would you show, with kindness and respect, that the Spirit’s work of revelation was completed in the apostles’ generation, and why is this truth protective rather than disappointing?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the lesson’s summit and one of the most pastorally important questions in the entire study, because “God told me” religion surrounds your students, in charismatic churches, on religious media, and in casual conversation (“the Lord laid it on my heart to...”). Build the case in four steps, each anchored where the question anchors it. Step one, context: the promises of John 14–16 were spoken in the upper room to the eleven (the “you” who had been with Him “from the beginning,” John 15:27; the “you” whose remembrance of what “I have said to you” would be refreshed, 14:26). They cannot be claimed by people who never heard Jesus in the flesh without tearing them from their setting. The promise of inspiration was apostolic, and its fruit is the New Testament.

Step two, completion: the Spirit was to guide them into all the truth (16:13), and the apostles claimed exactly that result, the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), the mystery now revealed (Ephesians 3:3–5), everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), the faith “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Step three, sufficiency: the God-breathed writings equip for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17), leaving no task for further revelation to perform. Step four, the guard rail: Galatians 1:8–9 pronounces anathema on any messenger, “even... an angel from heaven,” who preaches a gospel contrary to the one already preached and received. Revelation 22:18–19 closes the last book with the same fence. The pattern of God’s warnings assumes a fixed, finished standard.

Then answer the claims with both logic and charity. Logically: a genuine new revelation must either repeat the faith once delivered (and is unnecessary), or add to and alter it (and falls under Galatians 1). Practically: impressions and “words from the Lord” carry no credentials; the Spirit’s actual revelations came with confirming miracles (Hebrews 2:3–4, next week’s territory), while modern messages routinely contradict each other and Scripture, leaving every claimant his own canon. Pastorally, show why the closed canon protects: it shields the weak from manipulators who weaponize “God told me” (consider how often spiritual abuse begins with unaccountable

revelation), it delivers the honest from endless anxiety about missing God's hidden whispers, and it places every Christian, scholar and new convert alike, on the same level ground before the same complete word (Acts 17:11 works only if the standard is fixed). A canon still open would mean a faith still unsettled.

Coach the conversation itself. Most who say "God told me" are sincere, and many mean only that a providence or a passage moved them; begin with questions rather than verdicts: "Would you help me understand, does what you received carry the same authority as Scripture? Would you test it by Scripture with me?" (1 John 4:1; Acts 17:11). Affirm what is true, God does providentially work, answer prayer, and govern our circumstances, while holding the line: He has not promised, and does not give, new doctrinal revelation, and every impression must bow to the word. Keep 1 Peter 3:15's manner stitched to its message: gentleness, respect, and an open Bible. The aim is never to win the exchange but to win the friend to the sufficiency of what God has already said.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Context: the upper room promises made to the apostles, fulfilled in the New Testament
- Completion: all truth delivered, the faith once for all delivered (Jude 3)
- Sufficiency: equipped for every good work, no task left for new revelation
- Galatians 1:8–9 and Revelation 22:18–19 as the standing guard rails
- The dilemma for new revelation: unnecessary repetition or condemned addition
- The protective blessings of a closed canon: against manipulation, anxiety, and elite religion
- Conversational charity: testing claims together with gentleness (1 John 4:1; 1 Peter 3:15)

Discussion Prompts

- Why is it significant that every promise of guided revelation in John 14–16 was spoken to the apostles in particular?
- How does a closed canon protect a congregation from manipulation that an open one would invite?
- How would you respond to a friend who says, "But doesn't limiting God to a book put Him in a box?"

Question 10

Student Question:

Look back across this week's passages, the candlelit promises of the upper room and Paul's charge to Timothy. The "all truth" Jesus promised now sits within your reach, complete and God-breathed. Name one specific way Jesus is forming you through this truth, and one concrete change in how you will approach His finished word this week.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Gather the week into one picture for the class: a candlelit room where Jesus, hours from death, calmly promised that nothing would be lost, that everything still unsaid would be said, and that the Spirit of truth would underwrite all of it; and a Roman prison where Paul, hours from his own death (2 Timothy 4:6), handed Timothy the result, the God-breathed writings, sufficient to make the man of God complete. Between those two rooms, the promise became a book. The capstone question asks each student what changes now that he knows what he is holding.

Expect and encourage formation along three lines. Confidence: students who half-feared the Bible was a patchwork of human memories can now trace the chain, Father, Son, Spirit, apostles, page, and read without flinching; let someone say aloud that their trust in Scripture grew this week, and why. Contentment: students who envied those who claim fresh words from God can rest in a better possession, the complete word, and retire the anxious search for signs and whispers; the question “what is God’s will for my life?” finds most of its answer already printed (1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:16–18; Micah 6:8). Diligence: sufficiency obligates use, and the week’s honest confessions about reading habits and unopened toolboxes should now produce one named change.

Hold out for concreteness, as every capstone requires. “I will respect the Bible more” dissolves by Thursday; “I am replacing my morning scroll through the news with fifteen minutes in John, because I now believe whose words those are” endures. Other worthy specifics: beginning to test every religious claim by Scripture rather than by the speaker’s confidence (Acts 17:11); retiring “I feel like God is telling me” in favor of “the Scriptures say”; memorizing 2 Timothy 3:16–17 and Jude 3 as the frame for future conversations; opening one toolbox drawer onto one chronic problem.

Close with the forward link: the all-truth the Spirit delivered did not arrive quietly. It came with wind, fire, and tongues at Pentecost, and with signs that confirmed the word wherever the apostles carried it. Next week the study turns to that great inauguration, what Holy Spirit baptism was, whom it was for, and what it accomplished, and the class will need exactly the foundation laid tonight: the Spirit’s mission was to deliver and authenticate the word that now sits, finished and sufficient, in their hands.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The week in one frame: from the upper room promise to the God-breathed page
- Formation in three lines: confidence in the word, contentment with completed revelation, diligence in use
- God’s will already published: sanctification, gratitude, justice, humility (1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:16–18; Micah 6:8)
- Concrete, dated commitments as the test of formation
- Bridge to Week 6: the delivered word inaugurated and authenticated at Pentecost

Discussion Prompts

- What is one sentence about your Bible you can say with more conviction tonight than you could last week?
- Which habit of yours quietly contradicted the sufficiency of Scripture, and what will replace it?
- Whom do you know who is chasing fresh revelations, and what could you share from this week with gentleness?