

The Familiar Stranger: Transformed by the Spirit

February 22, 2026

¹⁵ I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. ¹⁶ They do not belong to this world any more than I do. ¹⁷ Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. ¹⁸ Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. ¹⁹ And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth.

— *John 17:15-19*

Discussion/Journal Questions

If you could change one thing about your life, what would it be and why?

Have two or three people read John 17:15-19 out loud slowly. After some time of reflection, ask each other what words, phrases, or ideas stand out to everyone. What questions come to mind as you meditate on this scripture?

The kind of transformation the Spirit brings into our lives is sanctification: being made holy by God's truth. What does it mean to be made holy? More importantly, do you feel as though you are holy? Why or why not?

In the sermon, John describes three transformations by the Holy Spirit. What were they?

What is the difference between the first transformation (positional sanctification) and the second transformation (progressive sanctification)?

Have you noticed progress in your life towards being more like Jesus compared to when you began to follow Him? Why is it important to remember how far we have come?

Read 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. What point is Paul making with this metaphor?

In the sermon, John said, "The Holy Spirit brings transformation to us, but He doesn't force transformation on us." Why doesn't God force transformation on us?

For some people, what would change when they follow Christ is more intimidating than the unknown transformation the Holy Spirit will bring. Is there anything in your life that you struggle to let go of or refuse to change for Jesus?

How can your group pray for you this week?