

The Spirit of Christmas

BOOK CLUB GUIDE



DEAR BOOK CLUB COORDINATOR,

Those who know me will often hear me say, “I love book clubs!” What a great way to spend time together—discussing books and their impact.

I’m grateful your book club has chosen to include *The Spirit of Christmas* in your schedule. I wish I could be there as you chat about this book, personally walk with you through the questions you might have, listen in as you point out how a section, a passage, a prayer, or a single day’s devotion spoke to your heart and why.

If your book club is interested in having me “visit” virtually via Zoom, [let’s talk about it](#). If it works with our schedules, I enjoy showing up to join the discussion and answer questions. I do have a special message for your book club—[watch here](#)!

Many of us find ourselves dragging our way into December 26th, exhausted from the rush and press and noise of Christmas. We’ve done all the things and attended all the events and purchased all the last-minute gifts. But deep in our hearts, we know that exhaustion was never God’s intention for our celebration of the birth of His Son. He doesn’t want us to miss the wonder, the hidden delights, and the evidence of the presence of His Spirit in this love story to end all love stories—“the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world” (see 1 John 4:14).

No matter what day you’re discussing *The Spirit of Christmas*, it’s not too late to make sure this Christmas is different. May His presence go before you and behind you as you celebrate that the Holy Spirit hovers over every part of the Christmas story.

Blessings always,

Cynthia

A PEEK BEHIND THE SCENES:

I’m speaking to a number of Christmas teas and holiday dinners using *The Spirit of Christmas* as inspiration for a talk titled “This Christmas Will Be Different.”

AN IDEA FOR BOOK CLUB REFRESHMENTS:



A friend of mine owns an artisan tea shop in Sisters, Oregon. You know it's good if this Wisconsin girl orders all her tea from Oregon! My friend and her husband have created a unique tea blend with butterfly pea flowers that makes the brew turn a beautiful midnight blue that mirrors the cover of *The Spirit of Christmas*! Here's a link for [Suttle Tea](#) to search for that night-sky blue tea if you'd like to share it with your book club friends. (It's also packed full of antioxidants, which prevent or slow cell damage. How interesting that the Holy Spirit shows up in the Advent story as a protector as well!!)

Many of us hold cherished memories of Christmases past and a particular cookie that was a family favorite . . . or still is. Consider inviting your book club guests to bring copies of the recipe for their sweet memories' cookies (enough for each of the other guests). As the host, you can serve your own favorite to accompany the tea or invite others to add theirs to the cookie plate too. It might spark more conversation about traditions worth keeping.

As a nurse, my mother worked nights and tried to sleep during the day amid the needs of her five growing children. So we didn't see her in the kitchen just having fun very often. But Mom made delightful date-filled cookies for the holidays. As an adult, I don't necessarily need the extra sugar (or gluten), so my revised tradition is filling Medjool dates with a swipe of cream cheese and pressing a pecan half on top of the cream cheese. Finger food! The taste is so reminiscent of Mom's date cookies. Have you tried pecan-filled dates? Or have you updated a treasured tradition?



BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the 25 days of discovering the Holy Spirit's presence in the Christmas story held the greatest impact or was the most surprising experience for you and why?
2. How does it build your faith to consider how far back we need to trace to find evidence of the Spirit of God at work long before the celebration we now know as Christmas existed?
3. In what ways did the practical living out of the "Spirit" of Christmas ideas included in some of the days' devotions match what you or your family normally incorporate in your holiday traditions?
4. What new tradition are you now moved to include?
5. Discuss how the Fruit of the Spirit (same Spirit, same God) as expressed in Galatians 5:22–23 parallel the ways we see evidence of His presence during Advent.
6. What might need to change in your own approach to make sure His presence is clear to others in your circle of influence?
7. This book includes many imaginative "scenes." In which scene could you see yourself? Mary visiting Elizabeth? The composer creating Messiah? Linus reciting Luke 2? Joseph protecting Mary and the Child? The moments after Jesus was born? Another?
8. When the Holy Spirit made His presence known, some were surprised, shocked, startled, alarmed, rocked, silenced. . . . Which might have been your reaction?
9. Of all the roles the Bible tells us the Holy Spirit fills (Comforter, Helper, Teacher, Guide, etc.) which is most meaningful to you in this season of your life? (See the additional downloadable content for the larger list.)
10. If it has, how has this journey through Advent from a perspective of watching for the Holy Spirit's presence and influence changed your approach to Him or to Christmas?