

**Romans 12:3-8;**

**1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11, 27-31**

**Galatians 5:19-26**

**Feb. 2, 2020**

### **Spiritual Gifts and Fruit**

By now, I hope many of you have a better idea of who the Holy Spirit is and why our heavenly Father has given Him to be with us. God has willed for you to live a life of righteousness obeying our Savior's commands, to follow a plan and purpose he has designed for you, and He expects to see you in heaven. For most Christians these are daunting challenges ... it is so easy to just slide into living the way everyone around us does. That is why God has given us Holy Spirit power.

The Holy Spirit teaches you his Word and empowers you to obey and follow it. **The Holy Spirit provides a way for human beings to live godly lives.** Without the Holy Spirit we would live in constant frustration, knowing the right to do, but never having the power to do it. Do not hesitate to ask God for Holy Spirit power to live in a manner pleasing to Him.

### **Gifts of the Spirit**

One way the HS empowers believers is through spiritual gifts **"... for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ," Eph. 4:12.** These are abilities and desires to do things that one would not normally think they can do or desire to do. Just as Jesus promised, the HS comes to believers enabling them to do greater things than Jesus. **In the NT the word used for "gifts of the Spirit" is charismata [χαρισματα], from which we get the English words "charisma" and "charismatic." It simply means "grace gift."** It is not something that comes from within us, rather it is given to us by God when we trust Christ as Savior. The Bible teaches that everyone redeemed by Christ is given at least one gift of the Holy Spirit. It doesn't mean you have to speak in tongues or be a street preacher or even a pulpit preacher or do weird things. It simply means that you have been given a way to help the Church.

**The New Testament lists "gifts of the Spirit" in: Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:10-11.**

- **Romans 12:6-8 - the gifts listed:**
  1. Prophecy
  2. Servanthood
  3. Teaching
  4. Exhortation (Encouragement)
  5. Giving
  6. Leadership
  7. Compassion
  
- **1 Corinthians 12:4-11- additional gifts listed:**
  8. Wisdom
  9. Knowledge
  10. Faith
  11. Healing
  12. Miracles
  13. Discernment
  14. Speaking in Tongues
  15. Interpretation of Tongues
  
- **1 Corinthians 12:27-31 - additional gifts listed:**
  16. Apostleship
  17. Helping/Assistance
  18. Administration
  
- **Ephesians 4:11-12 - additional gifts listed:**

## 19. Evangelism 20. Shepherding

- **1 Peter 4:10-11 – gifts mentioned are duplicates of: Servanthood or Helping/Assistance and Leadership or Teaching**

### **Talents and Gifts**

People are often born with special abilities or talents – these too come from God. These talents can be transformed by the HS and used as spiritual gifts. Sometimes it is hard to draw a sharp distinction between an inborn talent and a spiritual gift. Generally speaking, we mean the things listed in the Bible when we refer to spiritual gifts and they are supernatural abilities given by the HS to serve the whole church.

### **Spiritual Gifts are Important**

**A biblically faithful congregation will study and exercise the spiritual gifts.** They are given to enable a vital congregation to more effectively share the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are gifts to show the grace of God. Recognizing and utilizing the spiritual gifts that God gives the church shows us that God loves order, that every individual is important, helps us set priorities, helps us receive ministry from others, and helps build the Kingdom of God. Just because one does not have a specific gift does not release one from still exercising his best efforts. For example: some have the gift of giving (they give beyond tithing, and then give more), but all of us are expected to tithe. Some have the gift of helping or assistance, but all of us can pitch in when needed. BTW sarcasm and criticism are not spiritual gifts. Four truths from the Bible to remember:

- 1. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.**
- 2. No believer has all the gifts.**
- 3. The Holy Spirit gives the gifts - we don't choose who gets which gift.**
- 4. Your spiritual gift enables you to serve the body of Christ effectively.**

A really healthy church is one in which every believer is using his or her spiritual gifts for the good of the whole congregation.

### **Spiritual Gifts Inventory**

Over the years Christian leaders have developed various inventories to help believers discover the spiritual gifts God has given them. These inventories, along with prayer, reflection, and feedback from Christians who know us, is the way to find how God is calling you to serve Him and build up the church. There are many found online.

<http://www.buildingchurch.net/g2s-i.htm>

<https://www.freechurchforms.com/support-files/spiritualgiftsinventorysurvey.pdf>

<https://gifts.churchgrowth.org>

### **Fresh Fruit in All Seasons**

Another way the HS empowers believers is by developing in them the fruit of the Spirit. Have you ever eaten tree-ripened fruit? It's the best! Fresh from the tree, that fruit is the end product of months of development, from bud, to flower, to fruit. So too the HS develops and grows spiritual fruit in our lives, as we allow Him. These are characteristics that are difficult to develop in our human nature and so take supernatural power to grow to fullness and permanency in our lives. These qualities exhibit the work the HS is doing in our lives, as our old nature is

transformed into the new nature like Christ. **And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit, 2 Corinthians 3:18.**

The fruit of the Spirit is listed in **Galatians 5:22-23**. They are love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. **These nine qualities show your spiritual maturity ... meaning you grow into them.** As you live with this kind of fruit pouring forth from your life, you will find that *your family is improved*, your church family is improved and given new life, your marriage is improved, your workplace is improved, and your eyes will be opened to where and how God is working in you and others. Spiritually mature Christians will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in their living and relationships.

### **For Holiness and Sanctification**

Do not confuse fruit of the Spirit with gifts of the Spirit. Spiritual gifts are given immediately so individuals may serve our Lord's purposes through the church. (Many Christians are unaware of their giftedness because they have not read Scripture nor have they prayed and reflected on how God is leading them to serve His church.)

In contrast, **Fruit of the Spirit is the result of the transformation the HS works in believers to mature them spiritually.** It often takes a lifetime to cultivate the quality of character that is described by Paul in the Bible. It takes a long time because all the sin in one's life must be rooted out and replaced with holiness. Don't be surprised that some have spiritual gifts which they share with the Church but they still exhibit immature and sinful behavior. We've seen gifted and talented Christian leaders fall into moral failure.

Most of us don't exhibit this fruit in our lives all the time for several reasons:

a. **The world (1 John 2:15-17).** Just look at TV, the news, movies, drive down the road and see billboards – they all carry advertisements and invitations that appeal to our selfishness, greed, lust, and gluttony. The world is not going to help us live by the Spirit.

b. **The devil (1 Peter 5:8).** If Jesus faced the devil, what makes you think we won't also? His influence goes out daily, especially bringing temptations to those who have turned to God. There is a battle for your soul. These two obstacles are somewhat beyond our control, but that does not relieve us of responsibility.

c. **Our sin nature (Galatians 5:19),** with which we must all deal. We all have a human nature that will betray us, if allowed to. So many popular songs say "follow your heart." Yet God knows, if we follow our heart, unredeemed by Christ, we'll do what pleases ourselves at the moment. Scripture reminds us: **"... the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other" Gal. 5:17.** (Jeremiah 17:9, *"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"*).

Many of us fail in our daily struggles for God because we try to balance the Spirit and the flesh and make them function as co-workers. We know how that is: we've got God in our minds, and then the devil comes through our tongues (or other parts of the anatomy). It doesn't work.

How then is this fruit of the Spirit cultivated in our lives so that we become living witnesses of God's goodness and grace?

### **Holy Spirit Power**

**Hesitate not to ask God for Holy Spirit power to live in a manner pleasing to Him.** We can't just leave things as they are. The question is whether we will allow the Spirit to produce in us the Fruit of the Spirit or if we'll be left by the wayside, another piece of our culture's rotting fruit – past its season. ***“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness,” 2 Peter 1:3-4.*** Not instantly, but step by step, *choosing each day* to be with Him. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, they *are* the fruit of a Spirit-led life, fresh in all seasons.

Invite the One who is sent for us, the One who is the source of all hope, the strength for Christian living, invite Him to live in you. The HS is the giver of all gifts necessary for a vital church and the Fruit of the Spirit that keeps all of us spiritually refreshed.

***Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10.***

***His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life... 2 Peter 1:3.***

### **HS Prayer**

**Holy Spirit walk with me ... let me walk with You. Holy Spirit I ask You to reveal to me how You have gifted me to serve Your church. Holy Spirit I invite You to work holiness in me. I am prone to selfishness and sin and sadness. Come Holy Spirit and strengthen me to take time to be holy and find places to serve. Let purity of thought and generosity of spirit be the standards by which I live. This I ask in Jesus' most powerful name. Amen.**

### **Sermon Take-Away**

- 1) The Holy Spirit provides a way for human beings to perform godly tasks.**
- 2) Hesitate not to ask God for Holy Spirit power to live in a manner pleasing to Him.**
- 3) The fruit of the Spirit in your life shows your spiritual maturity. (Galatians 5:22-23).**