

Discovery Series



SECTION FOUR



Discovering the Holy Spirit

Hope Christian Fellowship

"Making disciples who live & love like Jesus"

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FEATURES OF THIS WORKBOOK

Obviously, this is quite a task laid ahead of you. But for now, you are on the receiving end of discipleship. We have prepared this workbook for you to help you along the way. There are several features built into this workbook you should be aware of.

- 1) It is designed for self-study. Although someone will be help you through it, you will be doing most of the work yourself. The material is arranged so you will cover one topic each week. You may either complete all five pages of this weekly material at one time or you may easily break it up and do a page of work on five separate days.
- 2) Most of the Bible verses are cited for you to look up rather than being quoted in the text for you. This is intentional in order to help you learn how to find your way around the Bible for yourself. At first you may need to look up each book of the Bible in the table of contents of your Bible. But as time goes on, you will find yourself becoming more and more familiar with the Scriptures and easily turn to any book of the Bible.
- 3) The workbook is based on the New International Version 2011 (NIV) of the Bible. There are several good translations of the Bible available, but we chose to use the NIV because of it's contemporary wording. If you do not already have an NIV Bible you should get one to make your studies go smoother.
- 4) In some of the sections, you will be given a Scripture to memorize each week. Please be faithful to commit these verses to your heart. The Word of God has power to change your life and make you want to do the things God has called you to do. Write down your memory verses on a card and carry it around with you. Memorize it as you do your daily activities like brushing your teeth and washing your dishes.
- 5) When you have completed the material for a topic, someone in your small group (who has already gone through it) should review it with you. They will be available to answer any questions you have. Their main purpose will be to help you see the importance of what you learned for being a more effective disciple of Jesus Christ. You can also complete the test in the back, turn it in to the office & receive a certificate of completion.
- 6) This is the fourth of seven workbooks in our "Discovery Series." Don't be alarmed at the length of time it may take to complete them. You can go through them one step at a time and at your own pace so you will not be overwhelmed. And remember, you have a lot of ideas, desires, and habits left over from your old life that must be overcome if you are to live and love like Jesus.

Introduction

The Bible says “In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.” (Joel 2:28) This, without question is the time in which we live. Throughout the world, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is being experienced.

Wherever there is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit or a time of great spiritual visitation, there are many dangers to be aware of. Satan always desires to counterfeit whatever God is doing. The Scripture says that Satan will also come to us as a “servant of righteousness.” (II Corinthians 11:15). We would be the first to admit that many have abused this tremendous outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Hosea 4:6

... my people are destroyed from _____ of _____...

We do not want to be destroyed because of a lack of knowledge. We want to learn all we can. There are many fine Christian people who are sincere, who have witnessed men and women who claimed to be moved by the Holy Spirit. Because some of these exhibitions were fleshly inspired or even Satanically inspired, they have immediately over-reacted and chosen to discount the move of the Holy Spirit entirely, either by theological procedures of dispensationalism, or in relegating the things of the Spirit to a backroom Wednesday night prayer service. The apostle Paul wrote . . .

I Corinthians 12:1

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be
_____.

Apparently, when writing the letter to the Corinthian church, Paul was aware of the fact that there were sincere Christians who were ignorant of the ways of the Holy Spirit. In this day, we see the same. So the Holy Spirit led Paul to deliver a marvelous masterpiece on the subject of spiritual gifts with the basis and foundation of love. This is found in I Corinthians 12 and also chapters 13 & 14.

It is our desire to present you with a biblical framework on the subject of the Holy Spirit and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. We trust that this will be a source of spiritual strength and edification to you as a believer. May you add much prayer and seeking of God to your study of this material. May the Lord use it to strengthen your Christian walk and take away any ignorance that you might have had concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in this day.

Who is the Holy Spirit?



The Person of the Holy Spirit

An old cliché says “You’re only as good as those closest to you.” There is a lot of truth to that. Who is the person closest to you? What is it about that person that you like? How does that person help you to be more effective and productive in life? How much time do you spend with them? How much do you know about them? Would you say that you need to spend time with a person to really get to know them?

In the same way, if you desire to have a closer relationship with the Holy Spirit, you need to learn all you can about Him. I believe many times the Holy Spirit wants to show us something about God and we miss it because we don’t know the ways of the Holy Spirit, or how he communicates with us. So we are going to study the person of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a person.

He is the third person of the triune God, who is revealed in the Bible. He is not merely a force, influence, or power, although he exerts all of these. He also has a personality, though not a body of flesh. To have a personality, he must have some personality characteristics. Let’s look at some of those:

He has knowledge.

And so, when He reveals things to us, it is from what He, Himself, knows. It’s not a mere “illumination.”

I Corinthians 2:11
“For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? IN the same way no one knows the _____ of God except the _____ of God.”

He has a will.

The secret of having the Holy Spirit manifest Himself to us and through us is to cooperate with His will. Communication must be constant for us to be aware of what His will is in any given situation.

I Corinthians 12:11
“All these are the work of one and the same spirit. And He gives them to each one, just as _____
_____.”

He has a mind.

The Greek word mind has *meaning of thought and purpose*.

Romans 8:27
And He who searches our hearts knows the _____ of the _____, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.

He loves.

The Spirit was motivated by love when he came to fulfill the ministry of leading men to Christ. Without the Spirit, the cross stands inactive or immobilized. He makes it real in personal experience.

Romans 15:30
“I urge you brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the _____ of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.”

Romans 5:5
“. . . God has poured out his _____ into our hearts _____ the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”

Attributes of Personhood

He is intelligent and good.

Nehemiah 9:20
“You gave your _____ Spirit to _____ them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst.”

He can be upset.

The Holy Spirit is a person who is intensely sensitive. He sees our very thoughts, and he is grieved beyond expression at our sin. This should be a very strong incentive to walk a Christian life.

Ephesians 4:30
“And do not _____ the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Only a PERSON can perform certain actions.
Let’s look at some of the *actions* that the Bible attributes to the Holy Spirit.

He searches.

I Corinthians 2:10
The Spirit _____ all things, even the deep things of God.”

He prays.

Yes – He, himself intercedes for us. Think of the tremendous security we can have. Jesus is our advocate in Heaven, and the Spirit intercedes for us on earth.

Romans 8:26
“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. WE do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself _____ for us with groans that words cannot express.”

He teaches.

John 14:26
“But the _____, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will _____ you all things and will _____ you of everything I have said to you.”

He speaks.

John 16:13
“ . . . He will not _____ on His own, He will speak only what He hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”

He testifies.

John 15:26
When the counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who goes out from the father, He will _____ about me.”

He guides.

John 16:13
“But when He, the spirit of truth comes, He will _____ you into all _____ . . .”



“Person”-ality

The idea of personality takes on new meaning when we are speaking of divine beings. We must adjust to the idea of “super-personalities” – persons who transcend all natural limitations. The Holy Spirit, like the Father and the Son, has the following qualities:

He’s omniscient.

That means he’s “all knowing.” That means there is nothing that He does not know.

I Corinthians 2:10-11
... but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches _____, even the _____ things of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

He’s omnipresent.

That means he is capable of being everywhere at the same time.

Psalm 139:7-10
Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

He’s omnipotent.

That means he’s “all-powerful.” He has all power. There is nothing more powerful than He is!

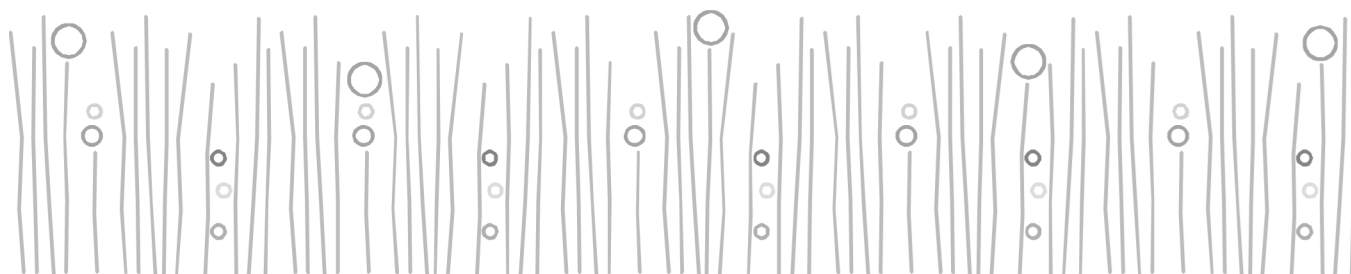
Luke 1:35
The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will _____ you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

He lives forever.

Hebrews 9:14
How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the _____ Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

The scriptures reveal that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit co-exist in absolute unity and equality, with one nature, but that each has a distinct personality and function.

The idea of the trinity is incomprehensible. If we would try to describe the trinity any further could cause us to border on error. We would do better to embrace the revelation of God given in the Bible and to cultivate the simple personal relationship that he desires to have with us.



Why is This Important

Why is the teaching of the person and personality of the Holy Spirit important to us today?

It is important from the standpoint of worship.

If we think of the Holy Spirit as an impersonal influence or force, we are robbing a divine person of the worship and love which he deserves.

It is important from a practical standpoint.

If He is a mere influence or force, we could say, "How can I get hold of the Holy Spirit and use it..? When we realize that He is a divine *person*, we think, "How can the Holy Spirit get hold of *me* and use *me*? This brings humility, not selfish exaltation.

It is important from the standpoint of experience.

The Holy Spirit provided the warmth, the dynamic, and the joy that characterized the whole movement of the Gospel in the first century. Every part of the daily life of the believers, including their work and worship, was dedicated to Christ Jesus as Lord and was under the direction of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean, of course, that their own minds or intelligence had no place, or that they were moved by emotion only. Emotion had a vital place, but they were expected to search the scriptures, accept reasonable proofs, and in understanding (thinking) be men (become mature).

In the early church, described in the New Testament, the Christian life and worship of the new believers surpassed the merely natural and human. The supernatural was part of their experience. The qualities they needed in order to work

together and bear testimony by their lives were not ordinary graces, but the fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23

But the _____ of the _____ is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

They never assumed that if a person tried hard enough he could live a good life and please God. They knew they needed the constant help of the Spirit. In their worship, they knew they were quite inadequate in themselves to praise and glorify the Lord. They expected singing "in the Spirit," "praying in the spirit," and gifts and ministries "of the Spirit"

I Corinthians 14:15 & 26

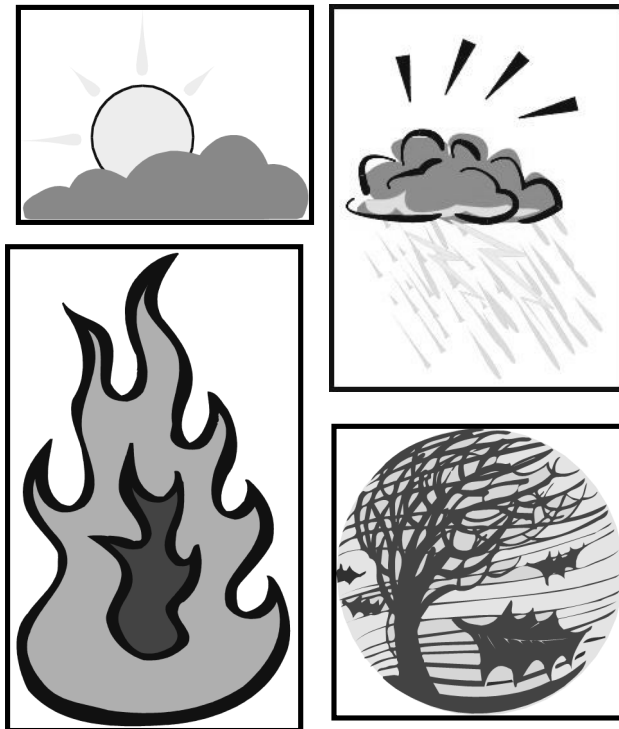
So what shall I do? I will _____ with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will _____ with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. . .²⁶ What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a _____ of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.

They did not claim external miracles every day, but every day was a miracle as they lived and walked in the Spirit.

Why is This Questioned?

Why is the Personality of the Holy Spirit Questioned?

- Perhaps because, when contrasted with the other persons of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit seems impersonal. So much is said of His influence, graces, power, and gifts, that we have a tendency to think of him as merely an influence, a power, a manifestation, or an agent rather than a person. However, these are merely descriptions of how he operates.
- Perhaps because of the names given to symbolically represent the Holy Spirit – breath, wind, power, oil, etc. In view of this, many people are led to believe that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal influence emanating from God the Father.
- Perhaps because He is not usually associated with the Father and the son in the greetings and salutations of the New Testament books.
- Perhaps because the word or name “Spirit” is of neutral gender. The same Greek word means “wind.” Some translations use the neutral pronoun “itself” instead of “himself.”



Please Him or
Grieve Him?



The “Age” of the Spirit

We are now living in what many call the “Age of the Spirit.” Therefore, all matters pertaining to or relating to the teaching of the Holy Spirit should be of special interest in this age.

John 16:13-14

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will _____ you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and _____ it _____ to you.

John 8:32

Then you will know the _____, and the truth will set you free.”

The Holy Spirit’s relationship to the Scriptures

He is the author of the scriptures.

II Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the _____.

II Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is _____ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

Revelation 2:7

He who has an ear, let him hear what the _____ says to the churches.

He is also the **interpreter** of the Scriptures.

I Corinthians 2:9-10

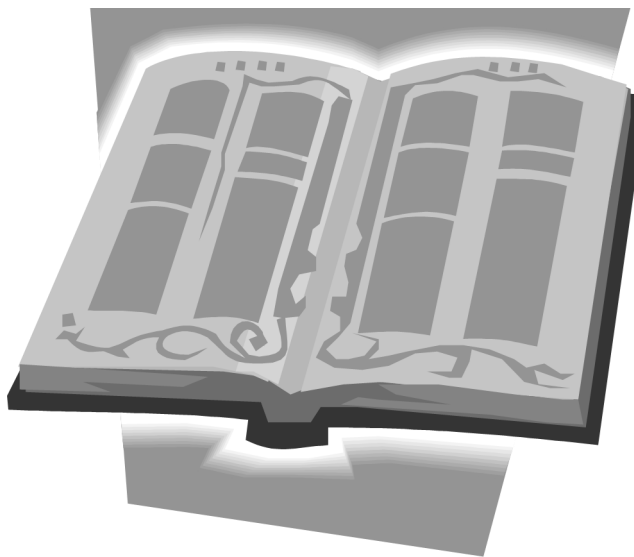
However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"- ¹⁰ but God has _____ it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit _____ all things, even the _____ things of God.

John 16:15

All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and _____ it _____ to you.

I John 2:27

As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as _____ teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit-just as it has taught you, remain in him.



How Can We Offend the Spirit?

Offenses committed against the Holy Spirit

- **Grieving the Spirit.**

Bitterness, Bad temper, resentment, quarreling, abusive and evil speech are things that make the spirit sad and sorrowful.

Ephesians 4:30-32

And do not _____ the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- **Rebellion also grieves God's Holy Spirit.**

We can see from the following scripture that if we continue to grieve the Spirit, then the grief turns to vexation (holy anger).

Isaiah 63:10

Yet they _____ and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.

- **Lying to the Spirit.**

Acts 5:3-4

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have _____ to the Holy Spirit . . . ⁴ . . . You have not lied to men but to _____."

- **Quenching the Spirit.**

To *quench* means to *put out, as fire or light, smother, cause to cease, cool off*. The Holy Spirit may be

quenched through criticism and unbelief. When we stop the moving of the Spirit in relation to testifying, praising, manifesting spiritual gifts, ministries, etc. this quenches His power and operations.

I Thessalonians 5:19

Do not _____ the Spirit's fire; (King James Version = "Quench not the Spirit.")

- **Resisting the Spirit.**

To *resist* means to *oppose, strive against, any force tending to hinder motion*.

Acts 7:51

"You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always _____ the Holy Spirit!

II Timothy 3:8

Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men _____ the _____-men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.

- **Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.**

This sin constitutes a rejection of Christ following the Holy Spirit's revelation of who He is. To slander and refuse Christ with our eyes open.

Matthew 12:31-32

And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the _____ against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks _____ the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Continued on next page

How Can We Offend the Spirit? (continued)

do. . ." (Luke 23:34). This would be rejecting a spiritual revelation of who Jesus Christ is as the Holy Spirit reveals Him.

Matthew 16:16
Simon Peter answered, "You are the _____, the Son of the living God."

This is a point of illumination (not information), where a person might receive Christ as their Savior. This would never be thought of as a single act, but persisting in a hardened attitude, as Pharaoh did in the book of Exodus.

Hebrews rews 10:26
If we _____
keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,

When you consider that the Holy Spirit can be offended and grieved over some of our choices, other things become increasingly clear. We must be aware that it is very possible for us to fall into spiritual error. We must constantly be on guard against allowing error to creep into our lives.

II Peter 3:17
. . . be on your guard so that you may not be _____
by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.

Spiritual Error

There are two different categories of lapsing into spiritual error

- 1) Those who consider the sacrifice of Christ as incomplete or insufficient, and go on to work out their salvation by **dead works**.

Hebrews rews 6:4-6
It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the

Holy Spirit,⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,⁶ if they fall away, to be _____ to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

As long as they refuse God's plan of the sufficiency of the Cross and persist in trying to earn God's acceptance, it is impossible for them to be saved.

As long as a person repents and believes, he can be saved. Those who will not repent and accept Christ's work, it is not God's forgiveness that is impossible, but man's repentance that is to blame.

- 2) Those who are not necessarily in doctrinal error, but **backslide** into sin.

Hebrews rews 10:26
If we deliberately keep on sinning _____ we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,

II Peter 2:20-22
If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are _____ in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.²¹ It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.²² Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

Letting Him Lead Us

Have you ever been to a class reunion? If you have, you have observed that of the people you see again after many years . . .

- some have changed a lot
- some haven't changed much
- some are living in the past
- some live in the present

Proverbs 29:18 says, "Without vision, my people perish" (KJV)

We need to have a "vision" for our lives. And we can begin today to seek God for that vision. What you decide today for your individual life will determine where you will be 5 years from now. So it is with the church. What we determine today is what we will be 5 years from now.

Carpenter's rule – "Measure twice, cut once." We should know what we're building before we make a cut. Cutting too soon makes extra work, extra expense, and extra exasperation! So we need to take care, and perhaps some extra time seeking the Lord for His plan for our individual life.

As much as possible, it's important to know what the end product is going to look like before we start construction. That way, if things don't seem to be going according to the way it should look, we can make adjustments.

According to the scriptures, God has a plan for man. We're going to look at a natural example He gives us from the Old Testament.

Psalm 92:12-15
The righteous will _____ like a palm tree, they will _____ like a cedar of Lebanon; ¹³ planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. ¹⁴ They will still bear _____ in old age, they will stay fresh and green, ¹⁵ proclaiming, "The LORD is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."

Jeremiah 17:7-8

"But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. ⁸ He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does _____ when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has _____ in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

What a great metaphor! Oaks of Righteousness displaying the glory of God. This is an example of what a mature Christian will look like.



Now let's look at some New Testament direction concerning the idea of maturity.

James 1:4

Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be _____ and _____, not lacking anything.

God wants us to become **mature** and **complete**, not lacking anything! The Holy Spirit helps us in our growth process.

Here is a definition of the word “**Mature**” from James 1:4 = *complete* (in various application of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.); *completeness*: – of full age, man, perfect.

Let’s look at some more references that describe maturity.

Ephesians 4:13
. . . until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the _____ of the fullness of Christ.

So, maturity is striving to be like **Christ**. God instructs the saints to **pray** for the maturity of the believers:

Colossians 4:12
Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, _____ and fully assured.

Maturity should be the **goal** of every Christian.

Hebrews 6:1
Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go _____, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God,

Being mature is:

- Putting away **childish** things.

I Corinthians 13:11
When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways _____.

- Starting to have **biblical** values.

I Corinthians 14:20
Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking _____.

- Having spiritual discernment through **understanding** Biblical truths.

Hebrews 5:14
But solid food is for the mature, who by constant _____ have trained themselves to _____ good from evil.

- Being able to **overcome** temptation.

I John 2:14
I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have _____ the evil one.

It's not wrong to be in a state of immaturity if you're young, or to be spiritually immature if you're a new-born Christian. What is wrong and destructive is if we *remain* in a state of immaturity. God wants us to grow up. We should have a great desire to grow up in God.

I Peter 2:2-3

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may _____ up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

What does immaturity look like?

- Inability to receive strong **doctrine**.

I Corinthians 3:1-2

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly-mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were _____ for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.



- Need for **teaching**.

Galatians 4:1-3

What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. ² He is _____ to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. ³ So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.

- Instability of **faith**.

Ephesians 4:14

Then we will no longer be infants, _____ back and forth by the waves, and _____ here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

- Remaining in **elementary** principles.

Hebrews rews 5:12-13

In fact, though by this time you _____ to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word _____. _____ You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being _____ still an _____ infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.

Here are some questions to ask yourself, to help you to evaluate your progress and your growth in the Lord.

1. **Do you have a greater love for Jesus today than, say, one year ago? How about a love for others?**

Colossians 1:10

And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, _____ in the knowledge of God,

I Thess 3:12

May the Lord make your love _____ and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

2. **Are you increasing in the knowledge of the Word and your ability to relate to Christ?**

II Peter 1:5-7

For this very reason, make every _____ to _____ to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

3. **Are you growing in grace? Are you a merciful, graceful person, or are you hard on people (judgmental)?**

II Peter 3:18

But _____ the _____ and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

4. **Are you overcoming temptations?**

Rom 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but _____ evil with good.

5. **Are you able to give of your surplus to others?**

II Corinthians 9:10

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and _____ your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.



The Work of the Holy

Spirit



Creation & Prophecy

Creation

One of the works ascribed to the Holy Spirit is the work of **creation** itself. We know that he was, at least, *present* before and during creation.

Genesis 1:2

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the _____ of God was hovering over the waters.

The word “God” used in the first few chapters of Genesis, “*elohiym*” is a *plural* form, meaning that it encompasses more than one. And in Genesis 1:25, when God spoke, He did *not* say, “I will make man in *my* own image;” He said,, “Let **us** make man in **our** own image, in **our** likeness . . .” using *plural* pronouns. And so it is understood that the Holy Spirit was very much involved in creation of the world and all that is in it, and specifically man:

Job 33:4

The Spirit of God has _____ me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

It is clear that the Holy Spirit did not just participate in creation, but He also helps to **preserve** God’s creation up until this present time.

Psalm 104:30

When you send your Spirit, they are _____, and you renew the face of the earth.

Prophecy

The Holy Spirit is the **Author of Divine Prophecies**.

II Peter 1:21

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the _____.

II Samuel 23:2-3

“The _____ of the LORD spoke _____; his word was on my tongue. ³ The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: ‘When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God,



The Development of the Church

Around 2000 years ago there were significant changes taking place that still affect us today. The center of Jewish culture in those days was the **Temple**. The people worshiped there, they bought and sold things there, they spent time together there. And then after Jesus came, things started to change. He began to declare some changes. Let's examine them here:

Matthew 12:6
I tell you that one _____
than the temple is here.

Jesus declared that **“one greater than the Temple is here.”** He was, of course, speaking of himself, meaning that HE is greater than the temple. For us, this meant that the people of God would no longer center their lives around a location or a building. We are to center our lives around Jesus Christ Himself.

At Jesus's death, the temple veil is torn in two — and captives are set free.

Matthew 27:50-53
And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was _____ in _____ from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. ⁵² The tombs broke open and the _____ of many holy people who had died were _____ to life. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

God's message now is to be given to ALL people, not just to the Jews. The Great Commission that Jesus gave us in Matthew 28 is a ***New Testament*** concept.

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of _____
_____, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Then we see God's public acceptance of the church in Acts 2.

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all _____ in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were _____ with the _____ and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

First, we see that they are gathered together on the day of Pentecost (Harvest) and all of a sudden, a mighty wind blows and a fire came and separated on each of them.

This, I believe, was very significant to the Jewish people surrounding them watching this. Perhaps the fire was not a fire of judgment or cleansing, but rather of acceptance. Acceptance of what? Acceptance of the sacrifice and worship that they offered to Him. We will discuss this in more detail as we further explore the progressive development of the church.

The Development of the Church

The Progressive Development of the Church

With Noah and Abraham, it started with the **Altar**.

Genesis 8:20

Then Noah built an _____ to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he _____ burnt offerings on it.

Genesis 12:7

The LORD appeared to _____ and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an _____ there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

With Moses & Aaron, it was the **Tabernacle** (tent).

Leviticus 9:23-24

Moses and Aaron then went into the _____ of Meeting. When they came out, they blessed the people; and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. ²⁴ Fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy and fell face down.

Then Solomon built the **Temple**.

I Kings 9:1,25

When Solomon had finished building the _____ of the LORD and the royal palace, and had achieved all he had desired to do, . . . ²⁵ Three times a year Solomon sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar he had built for the LORD, burning incense before the LORD along with them, and so fulfilled the temple obligations.

In the New Testament, the Body of Believers gathers together and began to be called the **Church**. The Church is not described as a specific building, but as a *gathering of believers*.

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were _____ in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

In all four of the places, there was fire. Fire on the altar to sacrifice burnt offerings, the fire of the Lord in the tabernacle to show that he accepted their sacrifice; fire in the Temple for burnt offerings and incense. Then, in Acts 2, the appearance of fire came over the whole group to indicate God's acceptance of the whole body as a sacrifice, as if in a temple. Then it broke up with the single tongue of flame on the head of each one to show God's acceptance of the body of each person as a temple of the Spirit.

The Development of the Church

As a result of us being accepted by God as His Temple . . .

We are priests and living stones for the Temple.

I Peter 2:4-5

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—⁵ _____ also, like _____, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy _____, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The believers are united together as the body. We're living sacrifices

Romans 12:1

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as _____, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Along with these truths is the fact that the Body of Believers are corporately the temple of God, as well as individually the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:21-22

In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him _____ too are being _____ to become a _____ in which God lives by his Spirit.

I Corinthians 3:16

Don't you know that _____ yourselves are God's _____ and that God's Spirit lives in you?

I Corinthians 6:19-20

Do you not know that your _____ is a _____ of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;



Changed from the Old Covenant

How did God Confirm these changes?

- Through **empowerment** of the disciples.

Acts 4:13

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were

_____,
_____ men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

- Through **Judgment**. Read the whole story in Acts 5:1-11, which ends in the judgment of God upon a couple who sinned against Him.

Acts 5:1-1

. . . ⁹ Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." ¹⁰ At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

- Through the empowerment of the Gentiles through the **Baptism in the Holy Spirit**.

Acts 10:44 - 11:3

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gen-

tiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." ⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days. ^{11:1} The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him ³ and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."

- Through the **witness** of the people.

Acts 11:26

. . . So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called "_____" first at Antioch.

- Through **revealing** that there is no Temple in Heaven.

Rev 21:22

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

The Bible tells us that "Man looks on the outside, but God looks at the heart."

The Holy Spirit Within Us



You Are The Temple

After Christ's ascension to the Father (Acts 1:10), He sent the Holy Spirit to reside within the life of every person who would receive Jesus Christ as their Savior.

John 1:12

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God

The Holy Spirit enters our life when we are born again. Just as our physical birth brings us into contact and relationship with the natural world, so our spiritual birth introduces us to the spiritual world.

John 3:6

Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to _____.

We immediately receive the capacity to know the spiritual realities of the Kingdom of God. ". . . *no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.*" (John 3:3) The sense of distance and alienation that we used to feel with God is removed. The Holy Spirit, within us, communicates an assurance of our adoption into the divine family.

Romans 8:15

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the _____ of _____. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

Our bodies now become the **temple of the Holy Spirit**. We do not belong to ourselves any longer. We belong to God.

I Corinthians 6:19

Do you not know that your body is a _____ of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not _____;

We have been "sealed" by the Spirit until the day of redemption, when the Lord comes back to claim those that are His. Before the advent of the modern envelope, documents were sealed with sealing wax. The wax would be melted and dripped onto the closing of the document, and then a special seal would be pressed upon it, leaving a symbol of the one who was sending it to the one who would receive it.

Ephesians 1:13-14

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a _____, the promised Holy Spirit,¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's _____ — to the praise of his glory.

So, we have been sealed, or "stamped" with the mark of God, Himself. We belong to Him. We will be delivered to Him. The Holy Spirit remains in us permanently, based upon our faith and relationship to Jesus Christ.

I John 2:24

See that what you have heard from the beginning _____ in you. If it does, you also will _____ in the Son and in the Father.

He Calls Us To Excellence

John 16:12-13

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will _____ into all _____.

A main work of the Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth so that the excellence of God can be developed and displayed in our lives. What is excellence? A dictionary definition is this: **The fact of being better or greater; extra goodness.** Jesus, in the *Sermon on the Mount*, gives an even better description through a series of **five heart attitudes of the heart**. Let's look at them.

Jesus talks about anger in the heart as murder. Therefore His word to us is **reconciliation**, not anger. With this, Jesus denounces anger as a motive for living.

Matthew 5:21-25

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, . . . ²² But I tell you that anyone who is _____ with his brother will be subject to judgment. . . ²⁴ . . . go and be _____ to your brother; . . . ²⁵ 'Settle matters _____ with your adversary . . .

Next, he moves on to immorality. He orders us to abstain from immorality and live in the fulness of an appropriate, marital sexual relationship. His word about immorality is simply to **abstain**.

Matthew 5:27-28

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who _____ at a woman _____ has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

I Peter 2:11

Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to _____ from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

He tells us not to take oaths, rather let your word be "yes" or "no"; In other words, **fulfill what we say**.

Matthew 5:33-37

"Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but _____ the _____ you have made to the Lord.' . . . ³⁷ Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Next, he tells us that vengeance is no longer to be a part of our lives. Jesus replaces vengeance with serving people. We are to find a way to serve even people who afflict us.

Matthew 5:38-41

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' ³⁹ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, _____ to him the _____ also. ⁴⁰ And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. ⁴¹ If someone forces you to go _____ mile, go with him _____ miles.

Finally, he does not permit hatred, especially of our enemies. His word to us is love your enemies. Love, in practical terms, is serving, so in essence, he is saying "serve your enemies."

Matthew 5:43-44

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I tell you: Love your _____ and _____ for those who persecute you, . . .

Excellence

Anger, immorality, oath, vengeance, and hatred – if you remove these negative motivations from a believer’s life, he will begin to approach excellence. Jesus finishes Matthew chapter 5 by saying “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Replacing those negative motivations with godly motives such as reconciliation, abstinence from immorality, fulfilling your word, serving people, and loving people, you become a person of excellence. Jesus begins teaching excellence by pointing to the inner motivation of our heart. If we neglect heart excellence, we become demanding and begin to judge others. Jesus addresses this in Matthew 7.

Matthew 7:1-2

"Do not _____, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the _____ you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

He commands us to stop judging – if you judge, then the same measure of judgment you use will be applied to you, personally. That is a promise of the Living God.

When Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount, the disciples must have been devastated to realize that it is the purity of heart that defines excellence, not their performance level. Jesus was teaching them a better way! When we deal with excellence from the viewpoint of performance without considering motive, we sink into error and the results can tarnish our witness to the world.. Of course, we want to do things as well as we possibly can – but if our motivation is wrong, our excellence becomes legalism and therefore powerless. We fulfill this scripture:

II Timothy 3:5

“ . . .having a _____ of godliness but _____ its power. . . ”

Without a motive of excellence toward God, then performance simply turns into a modified form of earning your own salvation. This is devastating in the denominations because the pastors take on the attitude that they are being evaluated and judged and that if they work hard enough, they will get a better job, their salary will go up, they will have better retirement, and so forth. The very men who are called to reflect the nature and purposes of God get caught in this trap of false excellence.

Let’s not get caught up in the trap of the Pharisees.

Regeneration

Another of the works of the Holy Spirit is the work of **regeneration**. The word *regeneration* means “*rebirth*, or *conversion*.” Without the Holy Spirit, none of us would have been born into the Kingdom of God.

John 3:5

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the

_____.

Titus 3:5

he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the

_____ of rebirth and

_____ by the Holy Spirit

In relation with humanity as a whole, The Holy Spirit has the work of **convicting** the world of sin and of unbelief in Christ. He is the **witness** of the righteousness of Christ, and of the fact that Satan’s power has been broken. It is the work of the Spirit to constantly bear witness of Christ and His finished work to sinful people.

John 16:8

When he [The Holy Spirit] comes, he will _____ the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment . . .

Acts 5:32

We are _____ of these things, and _____ the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

The Holy Spirit is also at work in the **impartation of life**.

Romans 8:11

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies

_____ his _____, who lives in you.

Genesis 2:7

the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and

_____ into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

He also **strengthens** us for the purpose of having Christ live through us.

Ephesians 3:16-17

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may _____ you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ **so that** Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

The Holy Spirit **liberates** us from the power of sin and death.

Romans 8:2

because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life _____ from the law of sin and death.

He Gives Us a New Nature

He gives us a **new nature** and a **new identity**. When the Holy Spirit comes inside of us, we also receive a new nature.

Galatians 4:6

Because you are _____, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

II Peter 1:4

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may _____ in the _____ and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

This new nature is our new identity. Our old sinful nature was crucified with Christ and its power has been broken (Rom 6:6). Though we still experience and must battle with the sinful tendencies

of our old nature, our identity is secure. We are new creations in Christ! We may have two conflicting experiences within us, but we have only one identity – we are sons and daughters of the living God. (Jn 1:14)

This divine nature expresses the likeness of God, along with new motives, desires, and attitudes. As we stand in faith in our new identity and keep our hearts centered on Jesus Christ, we are being transformed to become more like Jesus.

II Corinthians 3:18

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being _____ into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.



He Gives Us Power Over Sin

First, the Holy Spirit *convicts* us of sin. That means that when we sin, he causes us to become *aware* of it. Before we become Christians, most of the time we are blissfully unaware that we are sinning, and sometimes even if we *are* aware we don't care. When the Holy Spirit causes us to sense conviction of sin, we feel *sorrow* over it. We don't feel good about sinning, and we don't try to justify ourselves. Instead, we are led to repent and allow God to change us so that our ways will be pleasing to Him.

John 16:8

When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will _____ the world of guilt in regard to _____ and righteousness and judgment:

II Corinthians 7:10

Godly _____ brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

It is God's desire that we don't live in sin any longer. So He gives us the power to overcome habitual sin.

Romans 6:1-2a

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; _____ _____ live in it any longer?

He gives us a new identity, under the covering of God's grace, which protects us from the overwhelming onslaught of guilt and condemnation that the enemy continuously throws at us.

Romans 6:14

For sin shall _____ be your master, because you are not under law, but under

grace.

Romans 8:1

Therefore, there is now _____
_____ for those
who are in Christ Jesus, . . .

For daily power over sin, we are to learn to "live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature." (Galatians 5:16) Living in the Spirit requires a growing sensitivity to His presence in our lives. This comes through primarily through spending time with Him in prayer, reading the Word of God and learning to hear the Spirit's voice within.

The more we spend time in prayer and reading the Bible, the more familiar we become with the ways of God, and the more His word lights our way in life.

Psalms 119:105

Your word is a _____ to my feet and
a _____ for my path.

He Opens the Word of God

Before we are born-again, we are really blind to the things of God. Some people even try to read the Bible, but have a hard time understanding it. But when the Spirit of God comes to live inside us, He **clarifies the Word of God** to us. He helps us to comprehend it, to understand it, and to put it into practice in our lives. The Holy Spirit is also called “The Spirit of Truth.” (Jn 14:17) The Bible is a spiritual book that requires the illumination of the Holy Spirit revelation to our hearts and lives.

John 14:26

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will _____ you all things and will _____ you of everything I have said to you.

John 6:63

The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The _____ I have spoken to you are _____ and they are _____.

The Holy Spirit **lives in us, comes upon us, and moves through us**. Jesus promised to show himself to those who loved Him and kept His commandments (John 14:21). His presence includes all three of these aspects of the Holy Spirit’s ministry. When the Holy Spirit “comes upon us,” it is always with purpose. His purpose may be to bring us into deeper intimacy with Christ. He may be imparting a greater spiritual anointing and power. He may be releasing grace in our lives to break bondage or bring physical or emotional healing. He may be wanting to speak something to us. When the Holy Spirit comes upon us, we experience a

greater measure of God’s presence. Usually we can respond to this presence by deeper worship and waiting upon Him. Occasionally, the Holy Spirit may come upon us in a stronger measure, producing unusual physical and emotional responses in us (falling, shaking, crying, visions, dreams, great joy, etc.). While these occasions may not be frequent or common, they are legitimate and purposeful. Toward the end of this book, there will be a segment about “The Unique vs. the Normal.” where we will discuss these things further.

John 16:13

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will _____ you into all truth.



He Guides Us

The Holy Spirit gives us **guidance and direction**. Following are the most common ways He may use to guide us.

- **An “Inner Witness.** This is an inner sense of peace and affirmation about the direction of the Lord. In order for this “witness” to be valid, we must be totally committed to doing whatever God’s will may be.
- **A “Rhema” Word.** The word *Rhema* is Greek, meaning *specific utterance*. The Holy Spirit may give us direction through a specific scripture or an anointed flow of thoughts. When it is the Holy Spirit speaking, there will be a definite sense of faith accompanying the scripture or thought.
- **Godly Counsel.** Proverbs 12:14 states that “. . . *in the multitude of counselors there is safety.*” the Holy Spirit uses the wise counsel of others to guide us.
- **Circumstances.** The Holy Spirit may arrange circumstances to show us God’s direction for our lives. However, we should not only rely on circumstances but should look for other indicators as well.
- **Prophecy.** He may speak to us through a personal, directive prophecy (Acts 13:2). A personal directive prophecy should be either given or confirmed by mature Christian leaders.
- **Visions.** He may speak to us in a divinely inspired vision (Acts 16:9). Vision should also be checked against the word of God and confirmed by mature Christians.
- **Dreams.** We may occasionally have a divinely inspired dream (Genesis 28:12). These dreams will be vivid, and their message clear and understandable through consideration. If we have questions, we should seek counsel.

The Holy Spirit gives us **direction**. He leads us in our walk through life. He may speak to us and call us to special service in the kingdom of God. And when that happens, he also guides us in that service. His direction is often very specific.

Romans 8:14
because those who are _____ by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Acts 13:2-4
While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit _____, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." . . .⁴ The two of them, _____ on their way by the Holy Spirit . . .

Acts 8:28-29
and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet.²⁹ The Spirit _____ Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

The ways of God are truly wondrous – beyond understanding. We can be forever grateful that He doesn’t want to leave us in the dark, but communicates with us so that we may find the best for our lives.

Hearing His Voice

There are many ways for the Holy Spirit to communicate the will of God to us, both directly or indirectly. Following are some of the more common ways that He may speak to us directly. He can use these individually or in combination. Actually, He can do **WHATEVER HE WANTS!**

- **He will cause us to feel His burden.**

The Holy Spirit may cause us to emotionally experience God's burden for someone or something. (Matthew 14:14). If it is God speaking to us, the burden will remain or come back repeatedly until we act upon it.

- **He will plant a picture in our mind.**

He may come upon us with a strong mental image of something or someone, accompanied by a sense of His will concerning what we are seeing. We may even have a dream in the night or a vision during the day. (Acts 10:9-15)

- **He will speak to us in a flow of thoughts.**

We may receive a sudden flow of thoughts or ideas, accompanied by a sense of divine inspiration. (John 16:13)

How do we distinguish our own thoughts and feelings from the voice of the Lord? Whenever the Lord is truly speaking to us, there will be an immediate and continuing sense of faith and "spiritual witness." His voice communicated through our thoughts will also contain a sense of wisdom and truth and will be "life-producing" (James 3:17). God's voice will never contradict his personality or character as it is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ or in the

Word of God. Thoughts inspired by the Lord will never be self-serving, critical, judgmental, manipulative, sensual, etc. (James 3:14-16).

A picture, burden, or flow of thoughts from the Lord will never contradict His written word. Check everything out in the Word of God. (Acts 17:11). It is our responsibility to test what we believe we are receiving from the Lord. (This will be further discussed later in the chapter about Prophecy, under "What are the 'tests' of prophecy?")

Finally, a picture, burden, or flow of thoughts from the Lord will stand the test of time and will be witnessed by other mature Christians. It is wise to submit to mature Christians or church leaders anything we feel we have heard from God that will have a significant impact on our life or the lives of others.

- **He speaks through the leadership (authority) He has placed in our lives.**

God often gives those in authority over us divine insight with which they can help to guide us. Leaders may also be used to confirm something we have *already* received from the Spirit of God – or to help us to check something that we *think* we may have heard from God. It is wise to listen to your leaders.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They _____ over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

The Fruit of the Spirit



Fruit

fruit (frōōt) *n.* 1 the parts of certain plants or trees that can be eaten, containing the seeds inside a sweet and juicy pulp, as apples, pears, or grapes. In botany, the seed-bearing part of any plant is called its *fruit*, as a nut, pea pod, tomato, etc. 2 the product of any plant, such as grain, flax, cotton, etc. [to harvest the *fruits* of the field]. 3 the result or product of any action [Success can be the *fruit* of hard work.] • *v* to bear fruit. (From Webster's New World Dictionary)

When we consider the word, "Fruit," We think of something that is planted, usually from seed. This planting is watered and nurtured until it grows into its own. Then it begins to produce fruit which can be distributed and enjoyed by others. What a wonderful analogy to use to describe the characteristics that the Holy Spirit grows in us.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the _____ of the _____ is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Before we delve into a description of the fruit mentioned here, it's important that we grasp how this fruit is developed in our lives. Paul makes an intriguing comment in this passage when he says, "Against such things there is no law." While it would seem evident that there would be no law against these type of things, another shade of meaning might be that the fruit cannot be legally demanded nor produced. A tree does not bear fruit by an act of legislation! A tree bears fruit through a growth process. And this spiritual fruit is the result of our growth as we continue to walk with Christ.

John 15:1-2

"I am the true vine, and my _____ is the gardener.² He _____ off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he _____ so that it will be even more fruitful.

The first step to develop spiritual fruit in our lives is to be connected to the true vine, Jesus Christ. Once we are connected with him through accepting him as our savior and Lord, we place ourselves into the hands of the master gardener, God the Father. Then the Father begins his pruning process so that we can be good fruit-bearers. Sometimes this pruning process is painful, but you will find that it is worth any pain or struggle to have this gracious character developed within you.

John 15:4-6

_____ in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must _____ in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear _____ fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Do you see how many times the word "remain" is used in this passage? Once we are joined with Christ, we must *remain* in Him! We will never bear fruit if we do not remain! And the end result of not remaining and not bearing fruit is to be totally cut off and even burned! So there is a consequence for not remaining in Christ.

John 15:8

This is to my Father's _____, that you bear much fruit, _____ yourselves to be my disciples.

When we bear fruit, we bring glory to God the Father and we show ourselves to be disciples of Jesus.

The Fruit of Love

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul begins his nine-point listing with “love”—*agape* in Greek—God’s special attitude leading to benevolent action; the very quality He wants perfected in His children; a major pillar upon which the Christian life is built. The obvious importance of “love” in the Bible is seen in the fact that “God is love” (1 John 4:8), that He “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16) and that “the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13).

Luke 6:27

"But I tell you who hear me: _____ your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

1 John 3:18

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with _____ and in _____.

Love, *agape*. A word to which Christianity gave new meaning. Outside of the New Testament, the word *agape*, meaning *love*, rarely occurs in existing Greek manuscripts of the period. Christianity really gave new meaning to the word *love* by describing it with the word *agape*. *Agape* indicates an invincible kindness and unbeatable goodwill that always seeks the highest good of the other person, no matter what he does. It is the self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return, and does not consider the worth of its ob-

ject. *Agape* ... refers to the will rather than the emotion. *Agape* describes the unconditional love God has for the world. There are two other major words in Greek for “love”—*eros* and *philos*. *Eros* is used basically for passionate love which desires another for oneself and seeks to transport one beyond rationality, often through intoxication. We get our English “erotic” from it. *Philos* is an inclination toward or solicitous love of gods for men or friends for friends, although in the New Testament the distinction between *agape* and *philos* sometimes blurs. For example, John sometimes uses *philos* and *agape* interchangeably to describe God’s love for Jesus and for His children.

How love works. No study on Love would be complete without a study of I Corinthians 13:4-8.

I Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is _____, love is _____. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.⁸ Love never _____.

Ask yourself, “Am I patient and kind?” “Do I envy or boast?” “Am I proud?” etc. Every phrase of this passage can be used to measure how well we are doing when it comes to the fruit of love. If you become angry easily, or have a hard time forgiving others, you might want to seek more of the fruit of love in your life. Ask yourself if you protect others, trust others, hope for the best in others? Do you have a tendency to “give up on” others instead of persevering with them? God’s love never fails, and we can cultivate that kind of love in our own hearts and lives.

The Fruit of Joy

So much of the joy we experience in this world is temporary – lasting only for a short time. Yet Jesus said, “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” (John 15:11). Let’s see what this complete and lasting joy is all about.

In the New Testament, *chara*, the Greek word for joy is found only in a relationship with Jesus Christ (Romans 5:11). It is the assurance that we are members of God’s family regardless of what life brings (Luke 10:17-20; Romans 8:38-39). It is closely aligned with *hope*, which is the confident assurance that God is ultimately in control and will someday right all wrongs with the return of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

I Peter 1:8-9

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are _____ with an inexpressible and glorious _____, ⁹ for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

The one thing that brings this inexpressible joy to us is our love for Christ and our trust in Him.

II Corinthians 8:2

Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing _____ and their extreme poverty welled up in _____ generosity.

One of the ways joy can express itself is through generosity. When we realize that God is in control of everything, it becomes easier to give ourselves

and our possessions to others. And then, the law of sowing and reaping comes into play. When we sow pleasant things into the lives of others, God sees that and allows us to reap pleasant things from His hand.

Joy, then, is that ever-growing awareness that we are hidden in Christ and that we can be led by the Spirit through anything. Afflictions, trials, pressures or frustrations may come, but they cannot destroy us; so we experience joy. We may genuinely hurt (2 Cor. 1:8), we may weep (John 11:33-35), we may be tempted (Hebrews . 2:18), we may not understand what God is allowing to come our way (James 1:2-5); but none of this causes us to lose God’s focus in our life. We can even look beyond our own circumstances during difficulties and minister to the needs of others. “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose” (Romans 8:28). This is biblical joy.



The Fruit of Peace

The human heart longs for peace; Jesus promises it (John 14:27), and the Spirit longs to develop it. Our positional “peace with God” (Romans 5:1) ushers in the possibility of “the peace of God ... [guarding our] hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7). Let’s see what this entails.

The Greek word for *peace* is *eirene*, which means *a state of rest, quietness, and calmness; an absence of strife; tranquility*. *Eirene* includes friendly relationships between God and men, men and men, nations, and families. Jesus, as Prince of Peace, gives peace to those who call upon Him for personal salvation. *Eirene* in the New Testament has its roots in the Old Testament *shalom* which has as its root meaning the idea “well-being” in all areas of life—health, wealth, success, and security.

It was through the willing sacrifice of Jesus that we are offered the fruit of peace. The fruit of peace begins when we receive Jesus as our savior, accepting His sacrifice on our behalf. Then we start walking in obedience to His ways, and in so doing, we obtain more of this precious fruit.

Colossians 1:20
and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace _____ his _____, shed on the cross.

Psalms 119:165
Great peace have they who love _____, and nothing can make them stumble.

It is clear that the Lord wants his people to have peaceful relationships with others, both within and outside the church.

Romans 12:18
If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, _____ at peace with _____.

I Corinthians 7:15
But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to _____ in _____.

I Corinthians 14:33
For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints,

Romans 14:19
Let us therefore make _____ to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

Matthew 5:9
Blessed are the _____, for they will be called sons of God.

Peace then has to do with wholeness for each person and edifying relationships with others. We can be sure that because we are positionally right with God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, we have access to His power for all the aspects of our lives. Hence Hebrews 13:20, 21 says, “Now may the God of peace ... make you complete in every good work to do His will,” so that life’s relationships and circumstances reflect God’s intent rather than that of selfish flesh.

What has all this said to you personally? Can you identify anything that’s robbing you of your joy (the assurance your life is hidden in Christ and that you can be led by the Spirit through anything)? Would you say your life is characterized mostly by peace (personal wholeness and beneficial relationships) or chaos?

The Fruits of Patience, Kindness, and Goodness

Ever feel like you've exhausted your ability to be understanding? Ever feel like you just don't have any more "grace" to extend to someone? Ever struggled with being generous with others? Ever wish others would extend more understanding, grace and generosity to you?

If the truth of these realities intrigues you, our current lesson is custom-made! As we delve into the next triad of the fruit of the Spirit – longsuffering, kindness and goodness – we'll see that it is a study in understanding, as well as gracious and generous living. It's a call from the Spirit to learn to interact with others in the same manner God interacts with us!

"You know, Pastor," says the young husband struggling in his new marital relationship, "if I were truly honest with myself, I'd have to admit I don't want to treat my wife as graciously as God treats me. Quite frankly, I'm so hurt and we've struggled so much in our relationship, I sort of want 'grace for myself' and 'judgment for her'! I know it's wrong, but that's how I feel."

"You know, Pastor," says the corporate executive, "it seems my generosity is going unnoticed these days; I think I'm going to fire the whole lot of them and let them try to find another CEO as generous as I. I know we're not supposed to give with strings attached or give to get back, but I'm quite frankly ready to take matters into my own hands. Even if I don't end up firing them, lets see if they get a bonus this Christmas."

"Not even a turkey?"

"Not even a turkey. . . Pretty bad attitude,

Both of these men know they're wrong! If we are honest with ourselves, we can admit that these are the very same attitudes that we all deal with in our daily lives, It's part of the battle between the Spirit and the flesh.

Galatians 5:17

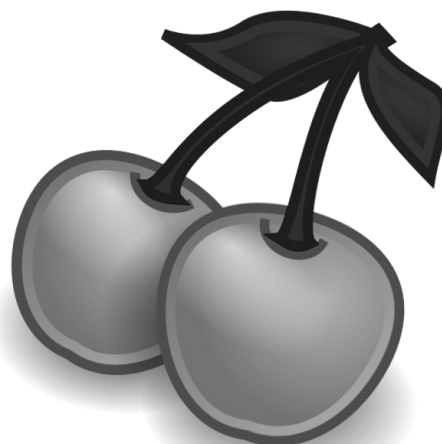
For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is _____ to the sinful nature. They are in _____ with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

It's so easy to slip into judgmental, selfish attitudes, which are in conflict with the Spirit of God. These three fruits of the Spirit really get down to basics—learning to deal with others exactly as our understanding, gracious, and generous heavenly Father.

Galatians 5:24

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have _____ the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Ready to crucify a bit more of your sinful nature? Then let's proceed to the next chapter and see what God's word has to say about the next trio of the Fruit of the Spirit.



The Fruit of the Spirit II



The Fruit of Patience

Patience, *makrothumia*. From *makros*, “long,” and *thumos*, “temper.” The word means *lenience, forbearance, fortitude, patient endurance, longsuffering*. Also included in *makrothumia* is the ability to endure persecution and ill-treatment. It describes a person who has the power to exercise revenge but instead exercises restraint. It characterizes true, godly love, for “love suffers long” (1 Cor. 13:4). So we can see why other translations of the Bible use the word “longsuffering” to describe “patience.”

I Timothy 1:15-16

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited _____ as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.

II Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is _____ with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

God is so untiringly patient with us. He is so forgiving and enduring. And since our desire is to be more like Him, and His desire is that we be conformed to His image. God’s patience, or longsuffering, knows how to balance justice and mercy perfectly. It is always redemptive in nature, with the goal of bringing people to repentance.

Romans 2:4

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness _____ you toward repentance?

Especially in leadership, the Word of God seems to place a high standard for patience.

II Timothy 4:2

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with _____ patience and careful instruction.

Do you have a special promise from God for which you’re waiting? What does Hebrews rews 6:12-15 teach about the process often involved in inheriting such promises?

Hebrews 6: 12-15

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who _____ faith and patience inherit what has been promised. . . ¹⁵ And so _____ waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

The Apostle Paul often encourages us to live out our relationship with God by practicing patience and longsuffering toward others.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make _____ to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, _____ yourselves _____ compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

We can conclude then that the patience the Spirit wants to develop in us is the same patience repeatedly seen in God Himself. The way God extends Himself to us in Christ is how we are to extend ourselves to each other in Him. Patience is inseparable from love (Ephesians 4:2), and it knows how to balance “justice and mercy.”

James 2:12-13

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom,¹³ because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. _____ triumphs over _____!

What does it mean to say, “mercy triumphs over judgment?” The truth is that it’s so easy to judge others. But it’s a work of the Spirit when we long to gain understanding about another’s actions and respond with mercy rather than responding hastily in judgment.

Would you agree right now with God to have Him further develop patience in your character? Will you pray that He will help you not to be judgmental, but that you will show mercy and understanding to others? He has been so patient with all of us, how can we not extend that patience to others?

The Fruit of Kindness

Kindness seems to be sadly lacking in our current society. Graciousness and good manners have been replaced by rudeness. Remember those words from dear old Mom or some other person responsible for training you in proper attitudes and social skills? “If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all.” They meant, “Be kind and favorable, even though you probably don’t want to!” This is what biblical *kindness* is all about—acting with godly graciousness toward others, even if we’re inclined to do otherwise.

The Greek word for Kindness, is *chrestotes*. It means *goodness in action, sweetness of disposition, gentleness in dealing with others, benevolence, kindness, affability*. The word describes the ability to act for the welfare of those who are taxing your patience. The Holy Spirit is working to remove abrasive qualities from the character of one under His control.

Romans 11:22

Consider therefore the _____ and _____ of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

Here, too, as we discussed about the fruit of patience, God has the perfect balance of kindness and sternness. Sometimes it is kind to be stern! We receive God’s kindness when we continue to be kind to others. We receive his sternness when we fall away.

Ephesians 2:7

in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us _____ Jesus.

Titus 3:4-5

But when the _____ and _____ of God our Savior appeared,⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

God has shown His kindness to us by sending us His one and only precious and perfect Son. He continues to show His kindness by showing us the riches of His grace. And finally, he renews us by His Spirit.

Colossians 3:12-13

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.¹³ _____
_____ each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Here in Colossians 3:12-13, we see the words, "clothe yourselves with . . . patience." This implies that patience is something we can "put on" like a garment, to "wear" it and have it with us throughout our days. Therefore, it is a choice we make whether to put it on or not. The words "bear with" imply that we just sometimes need to put up with one another and not give up on each other because of our shortcomings. How would you feel if someone gave up on you?

Ephesians 4:31-32

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.³² Be _____ and _____ to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Another way we can extend kindness to others is by forgiving them, by getting rid of any bitterness we might have in our heart toward them. In His kindness and mercy, God has forgiven us, and He wants us to extend that forgiveness to others.

Luke 6:35

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

In Luke 6, Jesus teaches us to go far beyond loving and forgiving our family, friends and fellow Christians. We are to love and forgive our enemies as well. We are even to forgive those who do wrong to us and betray us. This is what Jesus did as he was dying on the cross, he asked His father to ". . . forgive them, because they don't know what they're doing." When we can actually feel compassion and mercy toward those who deliberately hurt us, we have taken a major step toward maturity in God and becoming more like Christ.

The Fruit of Goodness

Remember the old proverb, "It is easy to be generous with other people's money"? That well depicts the attitude of natural man—it's okay to be generous, so long as it doesn't require much self-sacrifice! Not so with our next fruit of the Spirit—*goodness*, the fruit of dealing generously with others.

Goodness (*agathosune* in Greek) means *beneficence, kindness in actual manifestation, virtue equipped for action, a bountiful propensity both to will and to do what is good, intrinsic goodness producing a generosity and a Godlike state or being*. *Agathosune* is a rare word that combines being good and doing good.

We read many scriptures and sing many songs about the goodness of God. For our own personal character, God alone is our source of goodness

Matthew 19:16-17

Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"¹⁷ "Why do you ask me about _____ is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is _____. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

Notice that the word "One" in verse 17 is capitalized. That means that the "One" Jesus is talking about is God Himself. And so, he's saying that only God is good.

I Chronicles 16:34

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is _____; his love _____ forever.

It is the *nature* of God to be good. It is impossible for Him to be any other way. Do you ever wish you had somewhere safe and peaceful to run to? God Himself is that refuge for us. He cares for us as we put our trust in Him.

Nahum 1:7

The LORD is good, a _____ in times of trouble. He _____ for those who trust in him,

The goodness of God always leads to action in human history as evidenced by the fact that they "enjoyed His great goodness" (Neh. 9:35) and by the fact that "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights . . ." (James 1:17).

Psalm 107:1 says, "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good." It then goes on to list several reasons why He is good. Having established that the goodness of God leads to His doing good works, let's now look at His goodness producing good works in us.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good _____, which God _____ in advance for us to do.

God is continually working in us. Before we were born, He had good things prepared for us to do.

Matthew 12:35

The good man brings good things out of the good _____ up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.

Good works come from the good things we store up within ourselves. That's why it's so important that we read the Bible and spend time in God's presence, so that we can be filled up with Him and His word.

Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may _____ your good deeds and _____ your Father in heaven.

When other people see the good things we do, and they know we are Christians, they put two and two together and realize that it is God at work in us. They thank God! They give Him glory. We are glorifying Him just by doing good things.

Many people do not realize that, biblically, the opposite of *goodness* is *envy*. Studying the opposite of a word brings further clarity.

Matthew 27:18

For he knew it was out of _____ that they had handed Jesus over to him.

Titus 3:3

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and _____, being _____ and hating one another.

When we look at the opposite vice of envy, we learn more about the virtue of goodness. For example, we see that it was because of envy that Jesus was handed over to Pilate, so we can see the “fruit” of envy – the results of envy. When we understand that envy produces hatred, that should spur us on to pursue goodness even more

Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control

Coming to the final triad in the list of the fruit, we encounter some of the most challenging aspects of life—faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We live in a society in which people are becoming increasingly untrustworthy; even within the confines of church leadership we wonder, “Where’s the integrity? the trustworthiness?” And what about marriages in which one or both spouses lack loyalty? Yet, trustworthiness and loyalty are what the fruit of faithfulness is all about.

And then there’s *gentleness*—having control over rage; being courteous. Don’t you sense society could use a little more “rage control” and courte-

sy? Physical abuse is on the rise in many homes; fits of anger regularly lead to needless killings. As for courtesy—it’s almost gone! Even those in the service industry often make customers feel as if they’re doing them a favor to render their paid-for service!

As for *self-control*, need we say more than illicitly contracted AIDS? Again, society is increasingly saying that an “inalienable” human right is the “right” to exercise unbridled sensual passion. They say, “Having to learn to resist temptation is emotionally and psychologically draining; it could possibly even damage one’s inner psyche and stunt his/her development as a ‘whole’ person!” And yet the pages of ancient Scripture still scream out, “. . . make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control . . . For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet. 1:5-8).

Ready to dive into the final triad? They may prove challenging, but they present an exciting opportunity to plunge further into the depths of His life and to become a sweet fragrance in an otherwise decaying society. People need positive role models; they need Christians who accurately reflect the life of God. They need to see “children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation,” (Phil. 2:15). Let’s give the Spirit our lives, the needed raw material to produce many King’s kids who “shine like stars in the universe!”

On to the next chapter!

The Fruit of the Spirit

III



The Fruit of Faithfulness

When you hear a phrase like, “I can always count on _____!” Wouldn’t you like your name to be in that blank? Wouldn’t you like it if people felt they could always count on you? And even more, wouldn’t you want God to be able to put your name there? Do you have a hope that someday Jesus Christ will say to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:23). This is what the fruit of *faithfulness* is all about.

Even society outside the church recognizes the need for faithfulness. Banks lend money anticipating the faithfulness of the payer to make the monthly payments; children anticipate the faithfulness of their parent(s) to provide food, clothing and lodging for them; governments anticipate the faithfulness of foreign powers in maintaining treaties. Where there is a lack of faithfulness, there is confusion and chaos. How much more so the need for faithfulness in God’s church, built on Christ Jesus Himself, “the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness” (Rev. 3:14)?

The Greek word for faithfulness is *pistis*. *Pistis* has a wide range of meanings. It can refer to a body of truth which we believe; the basic trust which one has in God for salvation; or the dynamic power which realizes the energy contained in the promises of God. It can be translated conviction, confidence, trust, belief, faith, reliance, trustworthiness, faithfulness, or persuasion. Thus, the idea of “faithfulness” reflects a fullness and steadfastness of such trust and trustworthiness as a character trait of the believer.

In lists of practical ethical responsibilities, as in this text, the focus is on one’s *reliability*. Because God is faithfully dependable, the Holy Spirit is able to develop dependability in God’s people. The statement regarding the early apostles and

their colleagues undoubtedly holds true for all Christians: “It is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:2). Since we are destined by God to become more like Christ, we need to take into consideration that God, Himself is faithful, and therefore we are called to be faithful.

I Corinthians 1:9

_____, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is _____.

I Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted _____ what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a _____ so that you can stand up under it.

I Thessalonians 5:23-24

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is _____ and he _____ it.

II Thessalonians 3:3

But the Lord is _____, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

I John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and _____ us our sins and _____ us from all unrighteousness.

The parable of the talents ties together readiness for Jesus' return with responsible activity. Open your Bible now to Matthew 25:14-30, read this parable and consider the following aspects of faithfulness.

"Talents" here represent privileges and opportunities given us to serve the purposes of the kingdom of God. According to verse 15, the master entrusted his servants with HIS property. It helps to realize that our possessions and our talents are not our own. They belong to God. He is the one who entrusted them to us.

According to verses 16-17, we are expected to use the possessions and talents God has given us to do work that will bring increase. Then in verses 18 and 24-27, we see what amounts to a lack of faithfulness to that work.

In light of the this parable, how would you evaluate your direct involvement in kingdom purposes? Are you praying for more opportunities to faithfully serve? Are you being faithfully responsible to the duties you currently have? Discuss these issues with God and some trusted friends; set some further goals and a time frame in which to possibly fulfill them as the Spirit increases your faithfulness.

Paul gives an exhortation to church leaders if they want to invest themselves in people. There is a character quality leaders must look for when they seek to raise up another leader. That quality is faithfulness, or reliability.

II Timothy 2:2

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to _____ men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Rev 2:10

Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be _____, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

We all go through hard times. And indeed, the Bible predicts that there will be hard times to come in the future. But God calls us to be faithful, not to give up, even to the point of death.

The Fruit of Gentleness

Ephesians 4:26

"In your _____ do not _____"

Fulfilling the above command from Ephesians is not an easy matter. It's obviously a fruit of the Spirit! The Bible does not teach that we're never to become indignant; it instead teaches us to draw the line between what might be called "righteous" and "unrighteous" anger and between controlled and uncontrolled expressions of anger.

Jesus is said to be "gentle and humble in heart" (Matt. 11:29); yet, at one point the hardness of the people's hearts caused Him such grief He "looked around at them in anger" (Mark 3:5). When Jesus became angry at the money changers at the temple, it says that "He made a whip out of cords, and drove them all from the temple area" (John 2:15). Anger under the Spirit's control; this is a major part of what *gentleness* is all about.

The Greek word for gentleness, is *praotes.*, meaning a disposition that is even-tempered, tranquil, balanced in spirit, unpretentious, and that has the passions under control. The word is best translated “meekness,” not as an indication of weakness, but of power and strength under control. The person who possesses this quality pardons injuries, corrects faults, and rules his own spirit well.

Praotes is derived from an ancient Gothic root meaning “to love.” A social virtue of high value, it was popular in ancient Greek culture and philosophy. Aristotle saw *praotes* as that happy medium between passion and no feeling at all.

Moses is described as being “more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.” (Num. 12:3) This Hebrews reword, translated as *humble*, also means *gentle or meek.* When Moses was faced with undeserved criticism, he did not react, but actually prayed on behalf of those who criticized him.

Matthew 5:5

Blessed are the _____, for they will inherit the earth.

Jesus taught in his Sermon on the Mount that the meek will inherit the earth. Have you ever heard this adage, “If you think it’s weak to be meek, try being meek for a week.” It is actually very difficult to practice meekness. It takes great strength and self-control

I Peter 3:4

Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a _____ and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

Here, Peter is exhorting women about what gives her unfading beauty. It’s not her outward appearance, it’s her inner attitude.

I Peter 3:15

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with

_____ and _____,

If we are to properly influence others around us, an attitude of gentleness and respect is necessary, especially when we encounter those who have a serious contempt or animosity toward the gospel.

James 1:21

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and _____ accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

An attitude of meekness and humility must be cultivated so God’s word can be effectively implanted in our hearts. Humility is absolutely necessary if we are going to follow Christ with any success.

Galatians 6:1

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him _____. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Gentleness is a sign of spiritual maturity, especially when we're trying to help someone else to overcome a stronghold of sin in his or her life.

II Timothy 2:24-25

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be _____ to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.²⁵

Those who oppose him he must _____ instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,

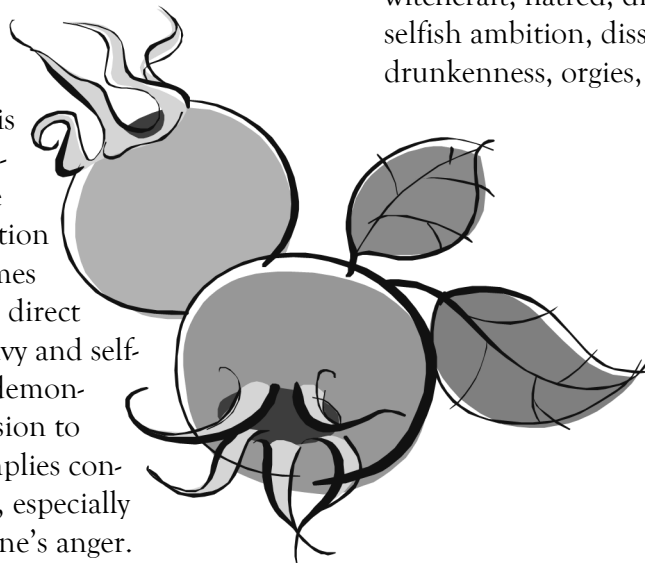
Quarreling does not bear fruit in the kingdom of God. Here in II Timothy, we see that it is just the opposite. When someone opposes the word of God, we are to *gently* instruct them.

Titus 3:1-2

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good,² to slander no one, to be _____ and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.

Our general attitude toward everyone should be one of gentleness and consideration. This is especially true when it comes to those who are in authority over us.

It becomes rather clear, therefore, that *gentleness* is not a personality type; rather, it is a heart attitude that controls our disposition toward others. In the James 1:21 passage, it stands in direct contrast to the "bitter envy and self-seeking" of James 3:14, demonstrating a willing submission to God and His word. It implies consideration toward others, especially in terms of controlling one's anger.



The Fruit of Self-control

"But I have a right to . . .!" We've probably heard that phrase many times. We've even said it ourselves! The works of the flesh listed in opposition to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 make it obvious that mankind in general does not want to bridle his passions—especially his sexual ones. This is where *self-control* enters the picture. The final fruit of the Spirit has to do with controlling our sensual passions. It doesn't have to do with denying them through self-righteousness; rather, it's bringing God-given passions under His domain and control rather than that of the flesh or the devil.

The Greek word *enkrateia* is translated as "Self-control." This word, *enkrateia*, was used by the ancient Stoics to define the person who's able to morally restrain himself when tempted by evil pleasures, so as to maintain his ethical freedom. In the New Testament it refers to allowing the Holy Spirit to empower a person so that he/she is able to voluntarily abstain from anything (especially out-of-control sexual passion) which might hinder ultimately fulfilling his/her divinely appointed task. It stands in Galatians 5:23 in contrast to the gross sins of verses 19–21 (sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, etc.).

I Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict _____ . They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.²⁶ Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air.

We can learn a lot from I Corinthians 9:24-27 about the place of self-control in our spiritual growth. It is necessary for us to go into “training.” Training involves a lot of practice in self-control. We are to “run the race” in such a way as to get the prize – we’re not just running to run! We want to win!

Titus 1:7-9

Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.⁸ Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.⁹ He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

This passage in Titus is speaking about leaders, or overseers, in the body of Christ. It says that they

must have control of themselves. Think of what a disaster it would be if that weren't true. Indeed, in the not so distant past, we have seen many examples of this in our culture. Self control is one of the qualifying factors that is considered before we ordain or appoint any leader at HCF.

A major stumbling block to the development of the spiritual fruit of self-control is the religious tendency to allow it to become pharisaical self-righteousness. The Pharisees, as we read in the four gospels, were rebuked by Jesus Himself because of this tendency. They used their self-righteousness to judge and condemn others, and in so doing, they lost sight of the heart of God toward people. Turn in your Bible to Colossians 2 and read verses 16-23.

Colossians 2:23

Such regulations indeed have an _____ of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they _____ any _____ in restraining sensual indulgence.

We can see how having a wrong viewpoint of self-control can affect us. We are not to judge others by what they eat or drink, nor are we to allow others to judge us on such a basis. It goes on to point out other false teachings, attitudes, and rules that we are to be wary of. In truth, these things do not help us to control ourselves in regards to our own sensuality. The proper route to biblical self-control is in Christ alone.

Paul's list of "the works of the flesh" and his list of "the fruit of the Spirit" are examples of his major premise: "The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish" (v. 17).

The works of the flesh

sexual immorality
impurity
debauchery
idolatry
witchcraft
hatred
discord
jealousy
fits of rage
selfish ambition
dissensions
factions
envy
drunkenness
orgies

**emphasizes self-centeredness
and egocentricity**

The Fruit of the Spirit

Love
Joy
Peace
Patience
Kindness
Goodness
Faithfulness
Gentleness
Self-control

**Emphasizes selflessness and service
toward others**

Each of the fruit finds its Model in Jesus Christ who "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The conclusion is therefore clear: with Christ our Model and the Holy Spirit the Source of our ena-

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit



Foretold

Joel 2:28-29

'And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will _____, your old men will dream _____, your young men will see _____.²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit only came upon a select group of people, called the Prophets. Here, the prophet Joel is foretelling, or prophesying about something that was to take place in the future, what we now call the 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit.' One significant thing about it is that the Lord is saying He is going to pour His Spirit out on ALL people. Notice also that he foretells that your 'sons and daughters' will prophesy, not limiting it to only a small group of prophets. Dreaming spiritual dreams and seeing spiritual visions are also a part of this promised outpouring.

In the New Testament, John the Baptist, while baptizing believers in water, also foretold of the coming Spirit baptism.



Matthew 3:11

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will _____ you with the Holy _____ and with fire.

Also in the New Testament, after Jesus was raised from the dead and before He ascended to His Father, he was having a meal with his disciples. At this meal, He foretold the coming "gift" or "baptism" of the Holy Spirit, telling them to wait for it in Jerusalem.

Acts 1:4-5

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the _____ my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be _____ with the Holy Spirit."

During that same conversation, Jesus brought a little more clarification about this gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:7-8

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.⁸ But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my _____ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

And so we see that when this gift of the Holy Spirit comes upon us, we receive power – power for what? Power to be witnesses in the world in which we live. So, the disciples waited in Jerusalem for the coming of this gift, this baptism. And then the great day came.

Promised

What was the promise and outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

- The **Old Testament** taught us about it ahead of time.

Joel 2:28-29

'And afterward, I will _____ my _____ on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

Isa 28:11

Very well then, with foreign lips and _____ God will speak to this people . . .

- **Jesus** told what was going to happen ahead of time.

Luke 24:49

“ . . . I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been _____ with _____ from on high.”

- **John the Baptist** talks about it ahead of time.

Matthew 3:11

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will _____ you with the _____ and with _____.

- Afterward, **Peter** confirmed what took place – he had been a witness to it. (Acts 2)

Acts 2:38-39

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the _____ of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The _____ is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

- **Luke**, when he wrote the book of Acts, spoke of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the disciples were waiting in the upper room.

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were _____ with the Holy _____ and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Also see:

Acts 8:14-17, Acts 10:44-46, Acts 19:2-6



The Promise Fulfilled

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were _____ with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other _____ as the Spirit enabled them.

Now, we come to what has become a controversial issue in the modern day church – the “speaking in other tongues.” Many people have made such an issue of speaking in tongues (even though Jesus also foretold about tongues in Mark 16:17) that they have lost sight of the **purpose** of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is the **power to be witnesses** for Christ on the earth. We will discuss more about speaking in tongues in another chapter. For now, let’s continue with what was happening there in Jerusalem as reported by Luke in the book of Acts.

Acts 2:6-11

When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his _____ . ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our _____ !"

The people who saw and heard what was happening were bewildered. They had never experienced such a thing before. They didn’t know what to make of it. Some of them ridiculed the disciples, saying that they had had too much to drink (Acts 2:13). Then Peter rose up within the crowd and began to address the crowd.

Acts 2:14-18

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet _____ : ¹⁷ "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

As we stated earlier, one of the purposes of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to empower us as witnesses. Jesus’ clear statement that “when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ... you shall be my witnesses . . .”

The Promise Fulfilled

Read the following passages in Acts and note the specific activity associated with those who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:6-8

When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. ⁷ With shrieks, _____ came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were _____. ⁸ So there was great joy in that city.

Acts 8:26-29

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The _____ Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

Acts 8:39-40

When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly _____ Philip _____, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, _____ at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Acts 13:2

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "_____ for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Acts 16:6-8

Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been _____ by the Holy Spirit _____ the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.



So we clearly see that some of the activities associated with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit are as follows:

- deliverance from evil spirits
- healing
- hearing the voice of God
- sudden transport from one location to another
- the setting apart of individuals for specific ministry
- discernment, direction, and warning

Believing & Receiving

Baptism, *baptisma*. The essential meaning of “baptism” is to be immersed into something; a person “baptized” in water becomes fully immersed in the water. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, then, is being fully immersed into the life of Jesus Christ, allowing Him to have maximum control in our lives. That control then manifests itself in our moral life-style, our love and commitment to God and our service for Him. It seems obvious that the New Testament writers, especially Luke, wanted us to see the connection between the work of the Spirit in Jesus’ life and the life of His disciples.

So How Do We Receive this Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

Because of our natural human tendency to want to “work” for God’s free gifts, we need to look at how we encounter and maintain our lives in the Spirit. Let’s consider the words of Paul to the Galatians.

Galatians 3:2-5
would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by _____ what you heard? ³ Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? ⁴ Have you suffered so much for nothing— if it really was for nothing? ⁵ Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you _____ what you heard?

In this passage, Paul is correcting the faulty thinking of the Galatians by asking them some questions and goes on to clarify that we receive both our salvation and the baptism in the Holy Spirit by simply believing. We just believe it and receive

it by *faith*. Let’s see how this principle is modeled in the book of Acts.

Acts 11:17

So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who _____ in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"

Acts 8:12 & 17

But when they _____ Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. . . ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they _____ the Holy Spirit.

This does not mean we are totally passive; the baptism of the Holy Spirit is clearly tied into a couple of other important elements — **praying and asking**.

Acts 8:15-17

When they arrived, they _____ for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:38-39

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for _____ and your children and for _____ who are far off—for _____ whom the Lord our God will call."

How to Receive

By Receiving the Promise. When God makes a promise, He keeps it. You can begin seeking the Baptism in the Holy Spirit because the Lord said you could have it. It is for you, for your children, and for every believer. The first key to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is by saying, "The promises are mine."

By Divine Revelation. The Apostle Paul received divine revelation from God, as he describes in Galatians 1:17-18. Paul went to Jerusalem to show Peter all the gifts and revelations he had received. No human being had taught Paul these things. He had been instructed by the Holy Spirit.

In Matthew 16:16, Peter said to Jesus, "*You are the Christ, the son of the Living God.*" Jesus answered with these words, "*Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.*" Peter did not learn this from any earthly source, The Father in Heaven revealed it to him.

We can receive this Baptism directly by revelation from God. There are people in many countries who have received it, having never heard one word about them from any human. God can do things sovereignly.

By Laying on of Hands. Timothy received gifts of the Spirit through the laying on of hands.

I Timothy 4:14

Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders _____ their _____ on you.

Strong men of God – Paul, Barnabas, and Silas – laid their hands on Timothy and the gifts began to function in this young man's life. Any believer can pray for any other believer to receive this baptism.

By Desiring It. We are encouraged in I Corinthians 12 and 14 to earnestly desire these things. Our desire prompts us to ask. This is something that God is wanting and waiting to give to us. He has promised it - and now all we have to do is want it and ask for it.

Our motivation, of course, is important. We do not want to desire the Baptism in the Holy Spirit for selfish reasons. One person might have the desire to be used in Prophecy so that he can gain a famous name for himself. God is not into glorifying our selfishness. We are to be glorifying God, not the other way around.

Obedience to God is another important element of receiving His Spirit baptism.

Acts 5:32

We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who _____ him."



How to Receive

What should you do?

- Prepare your heart
- Repent of any wrongdoing or bad attitudes (Acts 2:38)
- Seek to hear from God
- Hunger for the things of God
- Ask for it!
- Expect to receive it
- Act upon your belief. (Faith)
- Seek the Lord

Once we have received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, we need to learn how to live in the Spirit in our ongoing daily walk, which includes “continuously being filled with the Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). Let’s explore Romans 8:1–8 to see what we can discover about daily life in the Spirit.

Romans 8:2
because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of _____ and _____.

Before we receive Christ, we are under the law of sin and death. When we are “born again,” by the Spirit of God, we come under the law of the Spirit. So now we are free from the law of sin and

death. That means we now have a choice because we are not bound and blind under the law of sin. We can now recognize sin for what it is and choose not to sin.

Romans 8:5
Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature _____; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

Our desires have now been changed. Once we lived to please ourselves, but now we live to please our Lord.

Romans 8:6
The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and _____;

Our minds are where we experience stress, when our mind is controlled by the Spirit of God, we can experience freedom from stress, which we call peace.

So many people shy away from receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit because it is unfamiliar to them. But it is clear that God wants us not only to receive this baptism, but to move beyond the initial Spirit baptism into a consistent, ongoing relationship with the Holy Spirit.



When You Receive

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is mentioned six times in the book of Acts. Four of those references specifically record the fact that those who received the Holy Spirit began to speak in tongues. (Acts 2, 10, 11, & 19)

Acts 2:4

_____ of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 10:44

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on _____ who heard the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in _____ and praising God.

The record in Acts 4:31 does not specifically mention tongues, but says that, “. . . they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

Acts 8:17-18

Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ When Simon _____ that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money

In this record from Acts 8, it is clear that there was something that Simon “saw” or witnessed that was evidence that the Holy Spirit had been received. Most scholars assume this to be speaking in tongues, even though it is not specifically mentioned.

While we don't wish to be dogmatic, it is our strong belief that *in most cases*, when a person receives the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, he or she will begin speaking in an unknown language as the Holy Spirit enables them to do it. This is the normal initial evidence that a person has received the Holy Spirit, and then becomes what we call a prayer language.



The Greatest of These is Love

Have you ever known someone who seemed to be wonderfully used by God and yet you sensed a need for some additional love or character refinement in his or her life? This is Paul's concern in I Corinthians 13. He knew that it is possible to have the manifestations of the Spirit operate without the fruit of love, stating quite clearly that we can "speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but not have love," or he can "have the gift of prophecy ... but not have love" (I Corinthians 13:1-2). When this happens, it undermines God's intent. The manifestation of tongues without the fruit of love makes one become "resounding gong or a clanging cymbal"; prophecy without love makes it of no worth, or "nothing."

Paul writes that he will show us "a more excellent way." (I Corinthians 12:31) What he meant was that the manifestations of the Spirit should be motivated by love. "A more excellent way" is not a negative comparison between gifts and love, since the adverb 'yet' indicates the continuation of the subject. All manifestations of the Spirit must at the same time manifest the ways of love, for love is the ultimate issue behind all things." The Corinthians were obviously dynamic in spiritual manifestations, but weak in the very fruit that enables the gifts to ultimately be "for the profit of all" (I Corinthians 12:7).

Paul then is not pitting the fruit against the gifts. Such a thought would cause him to shudder. It's GIFTS and LOVE, LOVE and GIFTS. It's a matter of learning to minister with a *proper attitude*, a tremendous harmony in which the beauty of character is interwoven with the power of dynamic ministry. There is probably nothing more destructive to the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives than self-interest. When we separate the fruit, especially love, from the ministry of the Spirit, we're on a collision course — no matter how "anointed" we might appear. Since the basis of all gifts is love, that spirit of love is the qualifying factor for bibli-

cal exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus, those in authority must 'test the spirits' to assure that those who exercise spiritual gifts actually 'follow after love' as well as 'desire spiritual gifts.'" Let's see what we can learn then from an exploration of I Corinthians 12-14.

Let's Not Be Ignorant!

More than likely, each of us has some pre-conceived ideas about the use of the gifts of the Spirit. Unfortunately, our experiences often form our doctrinal understanding of how to operate in the manifestations of the Spirit. This was the problem in the Corinthian church. They were accustomed to pagan rituals, and assumed that they could use them as models for spiritual manifestations; they formed the basis of their model for what they thought would be a truly 'spiritual' meeting." Their hearts were right and their manifestations were of the Spirit, but their motives and methods were similar to those of the heathen! Let's see how Paul refocuses them (and us) toward Christian truth.

I Corinthians 12:1

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be _____.

As he begins to instruct the Corinthian church about these spiritual matters, Paul begins by telling them not to be ignorant. This implies that they needed some instruction. And then he goes on to give them that instruction. In our lives, we must also realize that we may need to receive some instruction, that we may not know all there is to know at this point in time, that we may even be in error in some of our assumptions. Admitting such things takes a measure of humility. The word of God exhorts us again and again to put down pride and put on humility.

Remaining Teachable

I Corinthians 12:2

You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and _____ to mute idols.

If we do not allow ourselves to be instructed, we will continue in our old way of thinking, and be influenced and led astray by our pre-conceived ideas, practices, and assumptions. So, in I Corinthians, Paul sets the stage for ministering in the powerful manifestations of the Spirit. We must be *well-taught* biblically, and we must thoroughly examine our preconceived notions of how to move in the Spirit.

The pagan background of the Corinthians gave them one definition of being “spiritual”; Paul had another. Their focal point was their pagan rituals in which they were “influenced and led astray to mute idols” (I Corinthians 12:2); Paul’s focal point is the truth that “Jesus is Lord” (I Corinthians 12:3) and that all manifestations of the Holy Spirit are subject to self-control (I Corinthians 14:32). In short, the Corinthian church needed to learn some *self-control* and proper *motivation*.

Pagan worship was very frenzied. The Greek words translated “led astray” (I Corinthians 12:2) are intensive, suggesting times in ecstatic heathen worship when a person is believed to be possessed by a supernatural force. The New Testament would see this as participating with demons (I Corinthians 10:20). Realizing that demonic or fleshly forces can **imitate** true manifestations of the Spirit, Paul calls in I Corinthians 12–14 for analysis of their Christian enthusiasm in worship.

I Corinthians 12:3

Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is _____,” except by the Holy Spirit.

Many Christians assume that power and gifts are the ultimate tribute to the Spirit’s presence. But

this is definitely not true. The Lordship of Christ (resulting in obedience and changed lives) is the ultimate tribute to the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The word “Lord” is the Greek word *kurios*, which means “supreme in authority.” I Corinthians 12, verse three says that we can’t say that Jesus is our Lord without the Holy Spirit. So, when we allow Christ to be our ruler, our master, our boss, our authority – that is the most powerful testimony of the Spirit of God in us.

I Corinthians 12:7

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the _____.

Paul goes on in verse 7 to teach that the motivation for these spiritual manifestations is to be for the good of every one in the church.

I Corinthians 12:11

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and _____ gives them to each one, just as _____ determines.

Paul realized the vulnerability of the human ego. He knew how prideful and selfish we can be. So he makes the point here that it is the Spirit of God who is doing the work, using those whom **He** chooses. It is not up to us to choose the “best” gift or manifestation. It is not by our own strength or wisdom that we are used by the Spirit of God. It is all His doing, and by His choosing.

Verses 12-16 further illustrates how the people of God are a body – made up of many parts – all useful. We cannot say we don’t need another part, no matter how insignificant they may seem to us. We must all recognize the value of each member, neither rejecting nor envying one another. It is God who has placed us in the body as He chooses. It is God who gives us the gifts we are to use, whether natural or spiritual. And it is God who builds us together for **His** purpose upon the earth in our lifetime.

The Noble Facets of Love

Although we've already discussed love as a Fruit of the Spirit, certain aspects of Paul's definition of love in I Corinthians 13:4-8 emphasize our current point – operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit “for the common good” (I Corinthians 12:7). Paul tells us what love is *not*.

Love is not boastful. (Vs 4)

The idea here is that of not behaving as a wind-bag, of not falsely bragging. Sad to say, we humans are tempted to boast, or to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to. This often happens in regard to the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians 8:1-2

... We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² The man who _____ he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.

Even now, by doing this study, we are gaining knowledge. But knowledge is not something to take pride in, or something to boast about. We *all* possess knowledge of some sort or another. Knowledge has a tendency to “puff us up” – make us prideful. The balancing factor to this tendency is to allow love to have precedence. Love builds up. Wouldn't you agree that “building up” is much more valuable than “puffing up?”

Love ... is not proud. (I Corinthians 13:4).

False pride was a problem in Corinth. These verses in I Corinthians declare how they were falsely puffing themselves up.

- I Corinthians 4:6, choosing one man over another
- I Corinthians 4:18-19, the way they spoke, not desiring accountability.
- I Corinthians 5:1-2, allowing sexual immorality, taking pride in their “mercy”

- I Corinthians 8:1-2, in their knowledge (opinions)

Love ... is not rude. (I Corinthians 13:4-5).

The idea here is that of behaving shamefully. This same Greek word is translated in I Corinthians 7:36 as “acting improperly.”

Love ... is not self-seeking. (I Corinthians 13:5).

We are not to be captivated with self-gain or self-worth. Christ modeled this principle. He did not live to please himself. He lived for the purposes of God and the benefit of others.

So then, love, is behaving exactly the opposite of our innate, human nature. Can you see the need to closely combine love and the gifts? Have you ever seen someone used powerfully by the Holy Spirit, only to have his or her ministry tainted by a lack of love and humility? Can you look at your own life and see any areas of pride or selfishness?

Phil. 2:5-7

Your _____ should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be _____, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a _____, being made in human likeness.

Let's be careful how we measure other people's spirituality and maturity. Let us not exalt a person who is used in the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit over the character of humility and love.

Spiritual Gifts



Spiritual Gifts? What ARE They?

I Corinthians 12:1
 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do
 _____ want you to be
 _____.

Paul exhorts us here in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians that he does not want us to be ignorant. Ignorant about what? He is talking specifically here about not being ignorant about spiritual gifts. As we read through the entire book of I Corinthians, we can see that the Corinthian church was having some problems over spiritual gifts. Paul wrote this letter to that church in order to clear up some misconceptions. Studying this today can go a long way in keeping ourselves from error in our use of spiritual gifts in our church and in the world.

What are the “gifts” of the Holy Spirit?

They are divine *enablements* in the life of the believer.

They are “tools” given by the Holy Spirit to build up the Body of Christ.

It is the Holy Spirit that **imparts** different ministries to different Christians (I Corinthians 12:7)

Gifts of the Spirit are **good** and **perfect**.

James 1:17
 Every _____ and _____ gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

So often, churches focus only upon the nine gifts of the spirit listed in I Corinthians 12. But in reality, there are many distinct areas of gifting listed in different portions of New Testament scripture.

Gifts of Function (Romans 12:6-8)	Gifts of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:8-10)	Five-fold Ministry (Ephesians 4:11)
Prophecy Ministry Teaching Exhortation Giving Leadership Mercy	Word of Wisdom Word of Knowledge Faith Healing Miracles Prophecy Discerning of Spirits Tongues Interpretation of Tongues	Apostle Prophet Evangelist Pastor Teacher

We will describe these gifts in more detail in another chapter. For now, let’s go on to the purpose of spiritual gifts.

The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

What is the purpose of Spiritual Gifts?

- For the **glory of God** in His church

I Peter 4:10-11

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in

_____ God may be _____ through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

- The **building up** of the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12

... to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be _____.

- The **unity** of the body.

Ephesians 4:13

... until we _____ in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole

measure of the fullness of Christ.

- The **maturity** of the body.

Ephesians 4:14-15

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things _____ into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

- The **growth** of the Body.

Ephesians 4:16

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, _____ and _____ itself up in love, as each part does its work.

- The common **good** (for the good of the whole).

I Corinthians 12:7

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the _____.

How Spiritual Gifts Are Given

Every person on the face of the earth is gifted in some way. We receive some gifts when we are born, natural abilities that we can use or neglect. Other gifts may be obtained through life from parents or other people. In the same way, every *believer* is spiritually gifted when we are born spiritually – or “born again.” When we receive God’s gift of Jesus as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us and with Him, the opportunity for God to use us in a greater way.

I Peter 4:10

Each one should use

_____ he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.

I Corinthians 12:7

Now to _____ the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Ephesians 4:7-8

But to _____ of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.⁸

This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.”

God chooses your place in His body.

I Corinthians 12:11-18

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as _____ determines.¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.¹³ For we were all baptized by one

Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.¹⁵ If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?¹⁸ But in fact _____ has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he _____ them to be.

The point is, we need to seek God to find what part we have. We don’t choose our own part! A hand cannot just choose to be a foot.

For example, one lady had God show her she was a “shoulder” in the body of Christ. From that insight, she began to meditate about how a shoulder was used in a human body. From that, she realized that she was a good support to the head, but she was not the head! Other people could lean on her, cry on her, be held up by her. She could carry heavier loads than other parts of the body. She could be used to push against or brace against obstacles, etc.

Isn’t that amazing? Wouldn’t you like to find out what your place is so that you can begin to function to the best of your ability exactly as God has created you to be? Begin by asking God to show you what part you have in His body.

Talents vs. Spiritual Gifts

What are the differences between human talents and spiritual gifts?

TALENTS	SPIRITUAL GIFTS
Inherited from forefathers.	Given by the Holy Spirit
Present from natural birth.	Present from New Birth
God-given to all members of the human race.	God-given to members of Christ's body.
For human activities.	For ministry of the body.
Can be operated independent of the Holy Spirit.	Dependent on the Holy Spirit.
Ministers primarily on the natural level	Ministers on the Spiritual level
Effects are usually temporal/finite.	Effects are eternal/infinite
Glorifies self.	Glorifies God.

What are the differences between the fruit of the Spirit and the Gifts of the Spirit?

The Spirit *produces* fruit in our lives. He *bestows* His gifts into our lives. (I Peter 4:10-11). Take some time to consider the difference between fruit and gifts as described below.

FRUIT	GIFTS
Galatians 5:22-23	I Corinthians 12:7-11
Defines what a Christian is	Determines what a Christian does
Same in every Christian	Different in each Christian
Satan can imitate, but not duplicate	Satan can counterfeit
Deals with Character	Deals with service/ministry
End in itself	Means to an end
Permanent/Eternal	Will cease
According to Spirituality and maturity	Not according to spirituality/maturity.

Attitudes Toward Spiritual Gifts

The Bible says that God does not want us to be ignorant about Spiritual gifts. That is why, when we teach about them, we use a lot of scripture. Take your time looking these scriptures up in order to verify what we're trying to teach you in these lessons.

What kind of Attitude should we have toward the Gifts of the Spirit . . .

- not to be **ignorant**.

I Corinthians 12:1
Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be _____.

- not to be **neglected**.

I Timothy 4:14
Do not _____ your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

- To be **desired**.

I Corinthians 12:31
But eagerly _____ the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

- To be **stirred up**.

II Timothy 1:6
For this reason I remind you to _____ into _____ the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

What do the Gifts of the Spirit Accomplish?

- They **build up**, or edify.

I Corinthians 14:3-5
But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, _____ and comfort. ⁴ He who speaks in a tongue _____ himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵ I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be _____.

- They **strengthen** you.

Rom 1:11
I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to _____ you _____ . . .

- They are for our **good**.

I Corinthians 12:7
Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common



We Need Spiritual Gifts

The Gifts of the Spirit are Necessary

In the normal human being there are five senses – seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. These are the senses necessary for the full production and well-being of the *body* of man. It is true that man can live without them but he cannot enjoy life to the fullest without them. It would be ridiculous for man to argue that he could do without his five senses or do with all but one or two.

In a similar way, the normal Church body has senses, or what we call the gifts of the spirit. These gifts of the spirit are just as essential for the growth and the protection of the Body of Christ as the five senses are for the growth and protection of the human body. A child who is missing one or more of his his senses will not develop as rapidly as a normal child.

Some churches struggle along with “professional evangelism” and try to compete with the world in theatrical entertainment, but how much more enjoyment and blessing for the Body of Christ if their blessing was derived from the flow of the Gifts of the Spirit and spiritual worship when we gather together.

The Gifts of the Spirit NEVER Contradict the Word of God

The gifts of the Holy Spirit always confirm the written Word of God. Many have erred by placing an over-emphasis on the prophetic word rather than the written word. The prophetic word will always be in the framework of the written word.

I John 4:1

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but _____ the _____ to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world

II Timothy 3:16

_____ is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. . .

The gifts of God are **never** to be used as a **gimmick**. Sometimes people who have become aware that God has given a ministry in the gifts of the Holy Spirit have fallen into the temptation to use these gifts in a way that exploits God’s people. It’s easy to fall into the trap of needing recognition for being gifted in this way, and to want some of the glory for the gifting.

Jer 5:31

The prophets prophesy _____, the priests rule by their _____ authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?

If we allow ourselves this kind of vain luxury, we can end up mistreating the very gift that God intended for the good of His people. We all must be careful that we don’t rob God of the glory that belongs only to Him, or rob God’s people by the manipulation of the Spiritual Gifts. We must always work on the foundation of love, even if that means denying ourselves the recognition we think we need (I Corinthians 13, I Peter 2).

The Operation of Spiritual Gifts

What are we to remember Concerning the Operation of the Gifts?

The key word is **edify**. (I Corinthians 14:3-5) We must not move in the gifts of the Holy Spirit unless we know it will edify the Body of Christ. I do have the prerogative to ask myself this question, “Will what I am about to do or say or inject into the service in the House of God, edify, strengthen, comfort, and build up the Body of Christ?” If not, then I should not move in the utterance gifts.

Things that a person should remember before injecting anything into the open church service:

The message.

What I am about to say – will it flow into what has already been said or is being said in the open assembly. I may be hearing from God, but maybe it is not God’s time which is the next thing to remember.

Timing.

Would it fit into the flow of the service. I should have an ear to hear what has already been and said through the songs, the exhortation, testimony, and prophetic flow, and then if it is flowing in that direction, it will, no doubt, edify. If it is contrary to what has been said, then it would be better that I wait.

Manner.

We should always consider our mannerisms. Is it too loud, or too soft in volume? Is my physical manifestation distracting from what I am saying, such as screaming, shaking, jumping, waving of the hands, etc. . . The Spirit is subject to the prophet. “Let everything edify” was Paul’s advice by the direction of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Never draw attention to **yourself**. If you truly understand the principles of the Body of Christ, you will never do a thing in an open assembly to take the people’s minds off the Lord Jesus Christ and place them upon yourself. There are some who do, but the purpose of the body of Christ coming together is that they may see Jesus. Even an unsaved person is aware of the difference between seeing the flesh and seeing the Spirit. If you are going to be effective in your church and your ministry, you should do everything that you can to make sure that it is Jesus Christ who is seen, not you. It was for this reason that Paul encouraged us to do everything we can to edify and build up the Body of Christ rather than to receive a personal blessing.



Here at Hope Christian Fellowship, we ask that people who are to be used in spiritual gifts during a worship service to come up to the front row to be acknowledged by a leader who will help them to discern whether or not their gift is to be spoken in a particular service. Coming to the microphone one at a time, at the invitation of the leader, each person can, in an orderly fashion, prophesy, share an appropriate insight, give a word of knowledge, etc. If any comment or summary is appropriate, the leader may add something to give further insight. Usually, spiritual gifts operate after the main worship and preaching are concluded. But this is not a hard and fast rule. The Holy Spirit must be allowed to do as HE wills, not as our traditions dictate.

Various Gifts



The Nine “Gifts of the Spirit”

I Peter 4:10

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.

We’ve learned that The Holy Spirit has given gifts. He has given gifts to men. He uses believers as ministers of God’s grace in “various forms.”

Now, we’re going to describe the various gifts given by the Holy Spirit. As we’ve mentioned before, many churches tend to focus on the nine gifts listed in I Corinthians 12. While we don’t want to place our full focus only upon these nine gifts, we don’t want to neglect them either. So let’s begin with those and then we’ll continue on to the **Gifts of Function** and the **5-fold Ministry Gifts**.

I Corinthians 12:8-10

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

I Corinthians 12:8-10

Word of Wisdom
Word of Knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Discerning of Spirits
Tongues
Interpretation of Tongues

The Message of Wisdom

Normally called the “Word of Wisdom.” This is an inspired nugget of wisdom given by the Holy Spirit to bring insight into a particular situation. Sometimes it will give the receiver clear direction on how to handle a situation. Often, it puts things into biblical perspective. The Word of Wisdom is very useful in many circumstances – counseling, witnessing, teaching, encouragement and exhortation. A test for a Word of Wisdom is that if you put the nugget of wisdom into practice, it has positive results.

The Message of Knowledge

Again, normally called the “Word of Knowledge” – This is not knowledge that can be known naturally. It is a nugget of knowledge, or a fact revealed by God to a person. It usually is used to reveal something in a person’s life that needs to be addressed – sin, need for healing, attitudes, etc. It is truly an expression of God’s care and concern for a person. Sometimes a word of knowledge is given that reveals something that may seem unimportant, but the person receiving it merely needs to know that God is aware and that God cares. The main test for a word of knowledge is that it is found to be true.

Faith

Normally called “a gift of faith.” All believers must have a certain level of faith to believe in God and to put their trust in Jesus for salvation. A person who receives a “gift of faith” is able to believe God for something that is unlikely under normal circumstances. This is not a presumptuous thing. We are not to presume upon God. We can’t manipulate God by saying, “I have faith to believe in such and such – therefore God must do it for me.” But if God gives us a special belief that something is going to happen, then we must trust in Him for that outcome. God is the author of it, not the will of a person. A gift of faith might be given in dangerous situations, or times of illness,

The Nine “Gifts of the Spirit”

Gifts of Healing

Notice that the scripture says “gifts,” a plural noun. This means that is more than one kind of healing. There is physical healing, emotional healing, and even spiritual healing. God also uses more than one method to heal. These gifts of healing are supernatural, not able to be explained by man. These miraculous healings can only be done in the name of Jesus Christ.

Miraculous Powers

These powers bring forth events that cannot be explained by natural causes. This is God intervening natural laws through His mighty power through a person. The person used in the miraculous cannot take credit for it. It is God’s power. Examples: Calming storms, feeding multitudes, walking on water, etc. God is not interested in vain displays of power, but in saving lost people. Therefore, often a miracle will take place to show an unbeliever that God is real.

Prophecy

This is the a gift that enables a person to verbally declare a revelation from God to others. Prophecy is a gift that can be misused, therefore we are warned to apply certain tests to prophetic expression. For example, prophecy should never contradict nor add to the Word of God (Deut 4:2, Rev 22:18-19). It is intended to strengthen, encourage, and comfort believers (I Corinthians14:3), and manifest God’s presence to unbelievers (I Corinthians14:24-25). Before his departure, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, who reminds us of Jesus’s words (John 14:26), so prophecy often reminds us of the content or implications of God’s word. Prophecy should be judged according to scripture by both the speaker and the hearers (I Corinthians14:29). Prophecies which pass the test should be received wholeheartedly.

Discerning of Spirits

Let’s pay close attention to the words here. This is NOT the “gift of *discernment*” – Discernment by itself is merely a skill in perceiving, discriminating or judging. Most of us can discern things. A person can walk into a room with a frown on his face, and we can discern that he is having a bad day. But this Holy Spirit inspired gift is called the “gift of discerning of *spirits*.” This is when the Holy Spirit enables a Christian to distinguish between the spirit of God, the spirit of man, and the spirit of the devil. It is very useful in judging the origin of prophecy (I John 4:1-3, Acts 10:44-46).

Tongues

This gift should not be confused with our private prayer language that we receive as evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26-27). This type of tongues is a Holy Spirit inspired message in another language to be given in gatherings of Christians, and then the message needs to be interpreted. In this way, the combination of tongues and interpretation of tongues is very similar to prophecy. II Corinthians 14 gives us specific instructions as to how this gift is to be exercised in a corporate gathering. “If anyone speaks in a tongue, two – or at most three – should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret” (II Corinthians14:27) If these instructions are not followed, visitors will be repulsed (I Corinthians4:23), and believers will not be edified because the message will not be understood (I Corinthians14:8-9, 14:16-17).

Interpretation of Tongues

We’ve seen in the previous paragraph how the spiritual gift of tongues needs to be interpreted and why. Interpretation is essential (Cor 14:28). When a message comes forth in an unknown tongue, we may pray for the interpretation (I Corinthians14:13).

The Gifts of Function

Romans 12:6-8

We have _____ gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Prophesying

Here we see the gift of prophecy mentioned again. The encouragement here is that a person who is used in this way should use this gift in direct proportion to his faith.

Serving

What an important gift this is! We are all called to serve one another. This is probably the highest calling of a believer (Mark 10:42-45). However, there are some who are specially inspired and gifted to serve (Rom 12:7). This involves any practical form of helping others both within and outside the church. Deacons, for example are servants who dedicate themselves to releasing elders for spiritual ministry (Acts 6:1-7). Serving is usually exercised in the natural realm (Exodus 31:1-5), but is no less spiritual than other gifts (I Pet 4:10-11).

Teaching

All Christians should be able to teach to some degree (Heb 5:12). But this spiritual gift involves a love and a passion for studying scripture and teaching others the Word of God. A person who is gifted in teaching helps to make the meaning of Scriptures clear (Neh 8:6-8). It is done both by instruction and example (I Cor 8:1, Titus 2:1-10). As with prophecy, teaching must be tested as to whether it agrees with scripture (Col 2:2-8).

Encouraging

This is another extremely important and sadly neglected spiritual gift. A person who encourages helps motivate others to change their mind, attitude, or actions. This encouragement comes about by bringing either scriptural principles or passages to mind (Rom 15:4-5, I Thes 4:18) and through the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:31) who is the Comforter or "Parakletos" (John 14:25, 16:7). An encourager's ultimate goal is to turn a person's heart to God who alone brings true comfort.

Contributing/Giving

A person with this spiritual gift is usually one who cheerfully and frequently gives above and beyond the required tithe (II Cor 9:7, Matthew 6:21), and perhaps even beyond his own natural ability (II Cor 8:3, Luke 21:1-4). Such giving is not limited to money (Eph 4:28, Luke 19:8), but may also involve possessions (Luke 3:11, James 2:14-15), and even yourself (I Thes 2:8, II Cor 12:14). The motivation behind this giving is simply to honor God (Pr 3:9-10, Heb 13:16).

Leadership

The word "leadership" means to govern or rule over. It involves having vision for the future and taking the initiative to guide others in that direction (Luke 6:34, Pr 29:18). The Lord promised shepherds who would lead with knowledge and understanding (Jer 3:15) This was fulfilled in elders and five-fold leadership (I Timothy 5:17, Ephesians 4:11-13). Leadership is based on service rather than lordship (Mark 10:42-45)

Mercy

The gift of mercy is an extension of God's mercy and compassion to others whether it be for physical, emotional, or spiritual reasons. There are many places in the Bible that speak of being merciful. The gift of mercy is usually seen in a person who has a special way of ministering to a certain type of people – the deaf, the handicapped, the elderly, the abused, etc.

The “Five-Fold Ministry” Gifts

Ephesians 4:11-12

It was he who gave some to be **apostles**, some to be **prophets**, some to be **evangelists**, and some to be **pastors** and **teachers**,¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

The verse above starts out with the words, “It was *he . . .*” — it was *Christ* himself who gave these gifts to mankind. Then the verse goes on to list what we call the “**Five-Fold Ministry**” gifts. At the end of this list, it goes on to explain that the *purpose* of these gifts is to “prepare” the people of God for doing service to others. The ultimate result of serving one another, then, should be that the entire body of Christ be built up. God’s plan is truly great.

Jesus gave these gifts at the time of his ascension (Ephesians 4:8) So we are not talking about the original twelve apostles of Christ, nor Old Testament prophets from *before* Christ ascended. We are talking about from that time forward until today!

These ministries are **given**, not self-appointed. Men do not choose their gift or calling, But God must impart these gifts to men as **He** chooses.

Acts 13:2

While they were worshiping the lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which ___ have _____ them.”

Ephesians 3:2

. . . the administration of God’s grace that was _____ to me for you, . . .

I Timothy 1:12

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, . . . that he considered me faithful, _____ to his service.

Ministries are not imparted to angels, or to men of a special sinless nature, but God imparts gifts to real flesh and blood men with all their faults, carnalities, and shortcomings (Rom 7:1-20).

What is the difference between an elder and a five-fold minister? “Elder” refers to the man himself. “Pastor” refers to the work he has been called to — or his “office.” All elders, those who rule, do not hold the office of a Pastor, but all Elders must have a shepherd’s heart, be able to teach, be evangelistic, etc. All those ordained to five-fold ministry offices must meet the qualifications of elders listed in I Timothy 3:2-9 and Titus 1:6-9.

We *need* these gifts in the Body of Christ so we can be prepared for “**works of service**, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Ephesians 4:12). And we will continue to need them until, “we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and **become mature**, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

You see, we tend to be “**infants**, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of **men** in their **deceitful scheming**.” (Ephesians 4:14). The Five-Fold Ministry gifts are “equipping” gifts. It is the equipping work of the five-fold gift ministries that will cause us to grow up, and learn the truths we need to learn, to become more like Jesus Christ in every way.


The Five-Fold Gifts Defined

THEIR PURPOSE

The five-fold gift ministries are for the purpose of **equipping** and **governing**, for bringing the body **into unity of faith**. They help to raise the people of God to **maturity** and provide them with **doctrinal stability**. They join the body together and build it up so that each part can do its work.

Ephesians 4:16

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as _____ does its work.



Apostle

The word “**apostle**” is taken from the Greek word “*apostolas*,” which means, “one sent forth as a messenger or ambassador.” Christ himself functioned in apostolic ministry (Hebrews 3:1), as did his original twelve disciples (Mat 10:2). There are other apostles mentioned in the New Testament: Andronicus (Rom 16:7), Junia (Rom 16:7), James (Galatians 1:19), Barnabas (Acts 4:36), Paul (Acts 14:14), Titus (I Thes 1:1), Silvanus (I Thes 2:6), and Apollos (I Corinthians 4:6-9).

The ministry of an apostle is to establish new churches. An apostle has authority as a spiritual father to bring correction to local churches, and he may be able to function as a Pastor, Teacher, Prophet, or Evangelist as well.

Prophet

From the Greek word, “*prophetes*,” meaning, “one who speaks for another, one who speaks for God.” Jesus also functioned in the prophetic gift (Luke 24:19). Other prophets mentioned in the New Testament are Agabus, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Saul, Judas, and Silas (Acts 11:27-30, 21:8-11; 15:32, 15:41, 13:1-3). The ministry of a

prophet is to help establish new churches as a seer or one who is able to receive information from God so as to give counsel, direction, and rebuke to the Body of Christ.

Evangelist

From the Greek word, “*evangelistes*,” meaning, “messenger of good news, to bring glad tidings by preaching.” Christ functioned as an evangelist (Luke 4:18-19), bringing the good news to anyone who would listen. Another evangelist mentioned in the New Testament was Philip (Acts 21:8, 8:1-35). The ministry of an evangelist is more than ministering salvation to the unsaved, it is to *equip*, or *prepare* the people of God to go out and be witnesses of Jesus Christ to the world.

Pastor

“*Poimen*,” is the Greek word for “pastor,” and it means, “shepherd, or one who feeds the flock, protects and provides.” Jesus functioned as a pastor (John 10:11). Other pastors in the New Testament were Timothy, pastor of the large Ephesian church; Titus, pastor in Crete; James, pastor at Jerusalem (Ephesians 4:11; I & II Tim; Titus). The ministry of a pastor is to feed, protect, and discern the needs of the sheep in a given place.

Teacher

The English word, “teacher,” is translated from the Greek word, “*didaskolos*,” meaning “to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, the addition the teacher makes to the knowledge of the one he teaches, to train, educate, disciple.” Jesus was a teacher (John 3:2). Other teachers are mentioned in the New Testament, but not specifically by name (Acts 15:1-2, 13:1-15, I Corinthians 12:28, Rom 12:6-8). The teacher’s ministry is to unfold and clearly expound the Word of God to others. Through his teaching, balance is brought into the local assembly.

The Controversy Over Tongues



A Unique Ministry

“Speaking in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enables” is a unique ministry that hasn’t been used in previous dispensations. It is identified only with the “Church Age” - the age we are living in today.

The phenomenon of speaking in tongues began on the day of Pentecost – the day the New Testament Church was born in Jerusalem. This gift of tongues has been identified with the Church since it started and it has not left the Church since that day. None of the nine gifts have left the Church.

This “sign gift” of different kinds of tongues is a *supernatural* verbalization, which comes from God, the Holy Spirit. This remarkable gift is directed through man’s spirit and manifests as a spirit language, a divine and spiritual communication that is different from his native language.

Tongues is the most misunderstood of all the spiritual gifts. There is no gift in all the world that receives so explosive a reaction as the gift of tongues. But speaking in tongues is dynamic – it will change a person’s life. We need to understand it better, so we can use it intentionally and skillfully

WHAT TONGUES IS NOT:

The “sign gift” of tongues is not the prayer language of tongues that comes with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is not the receiving of the Spirit at baptism when a person is “filled with the spirit,” as in Acts 2:4

Acts 2:4
All of them were _____ with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

The gift of tongues is not the learning of languages. Tongues has absolutely no relationship to the thinking abilities of man. When a person speaks in tongues, he has no understanding of what he is saying. Look at what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

I Corinthians 14:2
For anyone who speaks in a tongue _____ speak to _____ but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters _____ with his spirit.

I Corinthians 14:14
For if I pray in a tongue, my _____ prays, but my _____ is unfruitful.

So, when a person speaks in tongues, his spirit is speaking to God through his voice – a vocal miracle. What a joy it is to speak personally and directly to the Most High God!

This means there is an element of faith and an element of courage related to this gift. You must be able to say in faith, “Lord, I believe this is You.” You must be able to say with courage, “I don’t care what other people think, I’m going to let the blessing of God flow through me.”

God wants it to flow through each one of us. The gift of tongues is a special challenge and a sign to those, the Bible says, who are uninformed.



Tongues Edify

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the door to the operation of spiritual gifts in your life. Therefore, only Spirit-baptized believers are candidates for this gift. Many people want these mighty gifts of the Spirit, but are unwilling to step through that door. It's almost as though they're saying, "I don't want to speak in tongues, but I wouldn't mind giving words of knowledge to people," as if it is *their* choice what spiritual gift God gives them. The Bible is clear that these gifts are given as God wills, not as man chooses. None of us has the right to say, "Let somebody else do it. I won't do it."

Tongues is a part of the Great Commission to the Church – the Lord Jesus's last words on earth before He was taken up into Heaven.

Mark 16:15-17

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will _____ in _____

_____ . . .

There is no doubt or ambiguity about what Jesus said here. He said exactly what he meant and meant exactly what he said! It is available to each of us.

Where does this gift operate?

Tongues is a gift for the body. I Corinthians 14:23 refers to tongues operating when the whole church has come together in one place.

I Corinthians 14:26

What then shall we say, brothers?

_____ you come

_____, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a _____ or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.

This "sign gift" of tongues operates when we assemble ourselves together. However, when you use your own private prayer language, there is no need for anyone else. It is a beautiful experience you can enjoy alone.

Tongues edify.

God specifically says that the vocal gifts of inspiration are designed to edify, or build up, the Church. When we understand this, we can say without reservation, "Let the gifts function." When this beautiful gift of tongues is used, it causes a building up and a strengthening within the speaker. This is why we so strongly encourage you to use your prayer language. And if God would choose to use you to manifest the sign gift in corporate church setting, we strongly encourage you to step out and do it!

I Corinthians 14:4

He who speaks in a tongue

_____ himself,



Do Not Forbid

This gift can function in two ways: by speaking and by singing.

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and

_____ with gratitude in your hearts to God.

This is such a beautiful verse. We are to teach and admonish one another with songs. Have you ever thought of songs being used for teaching and admonishing?

So here we find tremendous evidence of how this gift of tongues can function to build up ourselves individually and corporately.

I Corinthians 14:39

Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and _____ speaking in tongues.

Church leaders must not forbid the use of this gift. The Word of God is very clear about this. There is no confusion.

I Corinthians 14:5

I would like _____ of you to speak in tongues,

Here, Paul is saying that he wishes that we all had this gift. And it should not be neglected.

I Timothy 4:14

Do not _____ your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

Some denominations use the following scripture (I Corinthians 13:8) to teach that tongues and the other gifts has ceased.

I Corinthians 13:8

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part,¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

Their argument is that perfection has come now because we have the written word of God. They didn't have the written word back in those days. But there is no Biblical validation of a change to be made in Church law, policy, or construction from the day the Church was born until it is taken to be with Jesus. *That* is when these gifts will cease - when the Church is with Jesus, the gifts of the Spirit will no longer be needed. It makes sense, doesn't it? Verse 10 says, ". . . when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears." When Jesus comes back - that is when perfection comes.



Why Speak in Tongues?

Here are a number of reasons why Christians should speak in tongues:

Tongues is evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

This is shown three times in the book of Acts: In chapter 2, on the day the Church was born; in chapter 10, about ten years later when Peter ministered to the Gentiles; in chapter 19, about twenty years later, when Paul laid hands on the believers in Ephesus. In each of these passages, the Bible specifically says the people spoke with tongues.

Tongues is your prayer language.

As we find in I Corinthians 14:2, when you speak in tongues, you are speaking supernaturally to God. Your spirit prays, but your mind does not understand. Your spirit is the real you – your inner man – and it is that spirit who is talking to God.

With tongues, you praise God.

To praise God is to make Him great, to put him in His proper place in your heart.

Acts 10:46
For they heard them speaking in tongues
and _____ God.

Tongues edifies.

When you edify yourself, you are building up spiritual strength within yourself. It is miraculous! You can't see it happening, but it does. Some have called praying in tongues their spiritual generator. Tongues provides a spiritual stamina that comes only from God.

I Corinthians 14:4
He who speaks in a tongue
_____ himself,

Tongues brings gladness in singing.

Paul wrote, “. . . I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.”

Tongues is a source of intercessory prayer.

Intercessory prayer is one of the greatest spiritual undertakings. This is a different level of prayer.

Rom 8:26
In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with _____ that _____ cannot express.

Speaking and ministering to the Lord in tongues is somewhat like a storehouse of goodness.

Through tongues, God can bring into your life and enrichment and a spiritual blessing you have never known before as you realize and experience a new closeness to God.

I Corinthians 12:7
Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the _____
_____.

The Interpretation of Tongues

When a person gives a message in an unknown tongue, no one understands what is being said. Therefore, the companion gift of the interpretation of tongues is necessary. This reveals the presence of God in that place. God has brought to those people a very special message, calling for action.

The person who operates in the gift of tongues should also seek the gift of interpretation.

I Corinthians 14:13

For this reason anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may _____ what he says.

When these two gifts function together, it is equal to prophecy, which according to I Corinthians 14:4, edifies the church. Tongues and interpretation is the functioning of a miracle which can easily be observed by the unbeliever, causing consternation when it is witnessed, just as on the day of Pentecost when the Church was born.

The interpretation of tongues is not a translation.

If one person gives a message in tongues, and two different people have the interpretation, each interpretation will be different. The essence of the message, the root of it will be similar, but the phrasing of it will be different because it is not a word-for-word translation. A translation is an exact rendering from one language to another in precise grammatical terms; an interpretation reveals what God wants us to know. This explains how a message in tongues may be long while the interpretation is short.

The interpretation of tongues is not an operation of the human mind.

It is the functioning of the Holy Spirit through the mind. The interpreter does not understand the language or the tongue that he is interpreting. His mental faculties are not a part of the message, so he has no thought in his mind as to what the Spirit is going to say.

The interpretation of tongues requires a measure of faith.

The interpreter normally receives only one or two words at a time instead of the whole message at once. By faith, he must give those words, and by giving those words, God gives him the next words. As he speaks, the message will continue to come a few words at a time until he is finished.



Rules of Operation.

Tongues and interpretation are regulated by the Scriptures. If believers try to operate the gifts outside the bounds of the Word of God, great trouble can arise from it. It is always best to keep ourselves within the boundaries that the Scriptures have placed around us.

In I Corinthians 13:18-19, the apostle Paul points out how meaningless it is to speak out in a corporate meeting in a tongue that is not interpreted. In this chapter, he is teaching the rationale of performing the gifts of the Spirit as God wants them performed.

The Guidelines of the Word of God

In I Corinthians 14, the Apostle Paul gives very specific guidelines as to how the spiritual gifts should be used in a corporate meeting or service. Let's read that portion of scripture:

I Corinthians 14:26-33

If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. ²⁸ If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God. ²⁹ Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. ³⁰ And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. ³¹ For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged. ³² The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. ³³ For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

In any service, there should be a maximum of three messages given forth in an unknown tongue with an interpretation each time. There should be order – one at a time. We should not be shouting out, speaking over one another. This would only bring confusion.

Even with Prophecy, he teaches that only two or three prophets should speak, and the others should “weigh carefully” what is spoken. Again, only one person should be speaking at a time. The purpose is to instruct and encourage the body.

In verse 32, Paul teaches that when we are operating in spiritual gifts, we have control over the situation. We are not controlled by an extraneous power. According to the Bible, the Holy Spirit is a true gentleman. He will never force a person to do anything. He offers the opportunity; whether or not we take it is our choice. When a person says, “I’m uncontrollable,” or, “I couldn’t help myself.” that is an indication that he or she is not under the power of the Holy Spirit.

And in verse 33, we see that God is not a God of disorder. He wants there to be order, not confusion.

In the King James version, verse 33 is stated like this, “*For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*”

At Hope Christian Fellowship, we do not want to take liberties with the Word of God, but to be guided by it. We encourage all to be used in spiritual gifts, but under submission to the leadership of the church as they seek to submit to the Scriptures. We believe this will bring the greatest blessing.

Prophecy in the Book of Acts & the Old Testament



The Book of Acts

It is good to note that the book of Acts has a *transitional* quality to it. It begins with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit being poured out upon the believers in Jerusalem, and it is filled with what happened as a result. Some of the things that happened in the book of Acts would not be considered the norm for the unfolding church age.

Many unique things happened in this book, just as unique things can happen now. Nevertheless, it is useful to study the book of Acts for cases of prophecy.

In the case of **Ananias and Sapphira** (Acts 5:3-10), the text does not reveal how the truth about this couple came to Peter. He may have had prior evidence of their lie from witnesses, or by obtaining the bill of sale. But even if Peter did have supernatural insight, he still gave the accused the opportunity to confirm or deny the accusation — “Tell me, is this the price you got for the land?” (Acts 5:8) Even Peter, an apostle of the Lamb, did not presume to execute judgment solely upon his word. God himself struck them down, not man.

Paul’s vision of Christ (Acts 9:3-6).

Acts 9:3-6

As he [Paul] neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” ⁵ “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. ⁶ “Now _____ and _____ into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

This vision does not qualify as a prophecy because it came directly from the Lord to Paul. It did not come through another human being. God spoke directly to Paul, corrected him, and told him what to do next.

Ananias’s vision about Paul (Acts 9:1-16). This vision was directive (vs 11-12), and predictive (vs 15-16). It was received by Ananias was essentially a confirmation of what God Himself had already revealed to Paul. No one other than Ananias was expected to act upon it.

An Angel appears to Cornelius (Acts 10:3-8).

This case is similar to Ananias’s vision in several ways. The vision was directive (vs 5), but not strictly prophetic since Cornelius received it directly, not through another person. This case is unique in that the vision came to an *unbeliever*. No Christian of today would expect that we should expect the visions and prophecies of unbelievers to carry any weight!

Peter’s vision of the Sheet (Acts 10:9-16). Again, this revelation was given directly to Peter, not through an intermediary, so it is not a true prophecy. Nothing in this case is comparable to the gift of prophecy for Christians today. However, this revelation should encourage us that we, too, can hear directly from God in a profound and life-changing way. The key to this was that Paul was up on the rooftop praying. He was already seeking God, and God answered. Hallelujah!

Agabus predicts a famine (Acts 11:27-30). Here is the first instance in the book of Acts of a message from a recognized prophet. Agabus *predicted* that a famine would come over the Roman world. This is truly prophetic and truly predictive, there is nothing directive about this word. Agabus said nothing about what should be done about it, but left it to the discretion of the disciples.

The Book of Acts

The sending of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1-3). This is a directive prophecy (vs 2b) apparently given by one of the recognized prophets in Antioch (vs 1), and it was acted upon (vs 3). God was sending Paul and Barnabas out to new frontiers in fulfillment of the Great Commission. This was, in a sense, their *ordination* into the ministry – it was done with the laying on of hands, fasting and prayer.

Paul's rebuke of Elymas (Acts 13:9-11). Some might consider this as an exposing personal prophecy, but it is not. Elymas (aka Bar-Jesus) was widely known as a sorcerer and openly opposed the faith (vs 8). So Paul's words in verse 10 were not from a supernatural revelation. He was rendering a judgment based upon well-known facts. Verse 11 amounts to an apostolic pronouncement of a miracle along the lines of what Peter did with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 3.

Paul's vision about Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10). Again, this is received directly by Paul, not through another person, so it is not considered a prophecy. It was directive, but unique and instrumental to Paul's writing ministry to the Macedonian churches of Philippi and Thessalonica. The same can be said of **Paul's vision of the Lord in Corinth (Acts 18:9-11)**

Agabus's prophecy about Paul (Acts 21:10-14). Here we have a genuine predictive personal prophecy given by a recognized prophet. It concerns Paul's ministry and eventual travel to Rome, which was a part of his already-established mission. Agabus made a prediction, but he did not presume to give any direction or command to the apostle. This message led some people to beg Paul not to go to Jerusalem, but Paul knew better and went anyway.

Paul's visitation by an Angel (Acts 27:21-26). As Paul sailed for Rome, his ship became swept up in an intense storm. In the middle of the storm, an angel appeared and reassured Paula that he and his companions would be safe. Paul proceeded to share the experience with his shipmates, so it was a prophecy of sorts, and it came to pass.

Now that we have surveyed the cases of known revelation from the Book of Acts, we have discovered only four *bona fide* prophecies (Acts 11:27-30; 13:1-3; 21:10-14; 27:23-25). All were delivered by apostles or prophets. Three were predictive (Acts 11:27-30; 21:10-14; 27:23-25), and one was directive (Acts 11:27-30). None of these cases are inconsistent with the previous conclusions made about the contemporary gift of prophecy in the light of Biblical sufficiency. We must examine everything through the scriptures.

The Old Testament

Modern Christians often view the prophets of the Old Testament as “loose cannons” sanctioned by the Lord. They presume that the prophets operated independently of established authority and made pronouncements and predictions concerning “God’s true heart” without concern or reference to the Mosaic Law. With this viewpoint in mind, many Christians model the ministry of prophecy today after the Old Testament prophets. They assert that they are, “led by the Spirit” and that they “hear from God” and they tend to disregard the plain truth of Scripture. They will say, “I know I heard from the Lord,” and accuse you of “quenching the Spirit” if you do not take heed to what they say.

Everything about this representation is wrong. The prophets of the Old Testament were subject to established authority just like anyone else. They held doggedly to the Mosaic Law as grounds for commendation, rebuke, blessing, and cursing. In any case, the ministry of the Old Testament prophets hardly serves as the model for today’s gift of prophecy. First, Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Mosaic Law. Second, the Holy Spirit is now poured out upon those who receive him – not just a few.

One of the problems that people have concerning prophecy is that they perceive it to be a novel prediction. On the contrary, the Old Testament prophets were simply *law-enforcement officers of the covenant*. Their rebukes, curses, blessings, and even predictions were all in accord with Mosaic Law – especially the covenant sanctions of Deuteronomy 28.

Moses was the pre-eminent prophet of the Old Testament. All subsequent prophecy was to be judged by the standard of Mosaic Law.

Deuteronomy 18:22

If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD _____ . That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

All Old Testament prophets were bound by these inflexible standards. The morality, theology, punishments, and rewards proclaimed by the prophets were all in harmony with God’s law revealed to Moses.

“ . . . The law itself is given as the God-ordained means of prediction for a nation. The central purpose of Deuteronomy 27 through 31 is to provide the people of God with a true means of prediction. That means of prediction is the law. If men disobey the law, certain curses ensue; if they obey the law, blessings result.”

Rousas

John Rushdoony, in *The Institutes of Biblical Law*

The Old Testament

In the book of Isaiah, Isaiah first rejects pagan practices of prediction (Deut 18:9-13, Isa 8:19), and then asserts the necessity for any prophecy to comply with the law.

Isaiah 8:19-20

When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak _____ to this _____, they have no _____ of dawn.

If any prophet, including Isaiah, fails this test, “they have no light of dawn.” No prophet, even in the Old Testament, stood above God’s word previously revealed. So we all need to heed Paul’s warning:

I Corinthians 14:37-38

If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command. ³⁸ If he _____ this, he himself will be _____.

Those who are sure they have “heard from God” yet will not receive correction from the Bible need to listen to Jesus Christ’s warnings:

Matthew 7:15

"_____ for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

Matthew 7:22-23

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not _____ in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you _____!'

It’s no accident that Jesus followed these cautions with “**Therefore** everyone who hears *these words of mine* and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” (Mat 7:25). Everything must be subordinate to the foundation of God’s written word.

Prophecy Today

By carefully circumscribing the limits of prophecy consistent with the sufficiency of Scripture, we have indirectly answered the cessationist’s greatest objection. It can no longer be argued that the gift of prophecy somehow competes with or denies biblical authority – it is bound by biblical authority! We have also dealt with many of the abuses of prophecy today.

The fact is, the most effective and exhilarating prophecies are those that are *recognizably* Scriptural. A Christian can have an immediate and spontaneous insight into the meaning of scripture and powerfully illustrate it or apply it to the present situation - whether personally or corporately. Such words are easily judged and/or embraced. Such words fulfill the prophetic directive to strengthen, encourage, and comfort (I Corinthians 14:3).

The Proper Use of Spiritual Gifts



Presuppositions

First Corinthians chapters 12 - 14 stand together as Paul's answer to the misuses of spiritual gifts that seemed to be prevalent in the Corinthian church. We can be grateful to those carnal Corinthians! Their errors caused Paul to write these instructions, and we are still guided by them today.

We would like to begin here by stating two basic presuppositions:

1) The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God.

II Timothy 3:16-17
All Scripture is _____ -
_____ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Since we believe this to be true, we also must accept that nothing beyond the Scripture is necessary or authoritative for the Christian. And we are not to add to the Lord's word.

Proverbs 30:5-6
"Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. ⁶
Do _____ to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

2) The supernatural gifts of the spirit have not ceased. (I Corinthians 13:10-12)

I Corinthians 13:39-40
Therefore, my brothers, be _____ to prophesy, and _____ forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ But everything should be done in a fitting and _____ way.

If Paul's intention had been for the gifts to stop, he would not have given further instruction on how to use them or to specifically command that they should not be forbidden. Paul's desire was clearly not to stop spiritual gifts, but to see that they were carried out in fitting and orderly manner.

The only time prophecy will cease is when we see Jesus face to face. (I Corinthians 13:12b) Indeed, at that point, the need for prophecy will be non-existent.

I Corinthians 1:7
Therefore you do _____ any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

Any verbal spiritual gift that states biblical truth in a straight-forward manner is to be accepted. This simply applies the same standards of judgment to prophecy as we apply to biblical preaching, teaching, and counseling. Prophecy might be more spontaneous in its insights into Scripture, but the end results are the same.

However, there are some aspects to the prophetic gifts that are somewhat more difficult to judge. These are:

- **directive prophecy**
- **predictive prophecy**
- **exposing prophecy**
- **& personal prophecy**

Directive Prophecy

When a person gives a prophecy, or a word of knowledge, or a word of wisdom that directs another person's actions, behavior, or decisions, we would call that "directive prophecy." Whether it is addressed to a group or an individual, directive prophecy says, "You should do this or that." If such a prophecy repeats what the Scripture demands, then it is valid because the Scripture is valid.

If a prophecy gives direction *beyond* what is demanded in Scripture, it is to be viewed as **neither necessary nor authoritative**. [This does not mean that it should not be considered at all. For example: if a prophecy tells you to pack your bags, you're going to be moving – this would be beyond what the Scripture would tell you. However, you may go in to work the next day and have your boss tell you that if you want to keep your job, you will have to move to another city. You can be comforted by the fact that God knew about this change ahead of time, and He wanted to let you know so that you wouldn't be concerned about the outcome. This would fulfill one of the purposes of prophecy, which is to give *comfort*.]

Directive words, by definition, assert the authority to command, and are to be judged invalid if they

instruct you to do something in violation of scripture. [For example: if a "prophecy" would direct you to be unfaithful to your spouse, you can reject it as being unscriptural.]

We must understand that there are no instances of directive prophecy in the New Testament. The prophet Agabus predicted a famine, but gave no command as to what to do about it. Later on, the same Agabus predicted that Paul would be bound and handed over to the Gentiles. Again, **he gave no command** or direction to Paul. The people pleaded with Paul not to go out of their affection for him, but the prophecy itself said nothing about whether Paul should or shouldn't go to Rome. Finally, in I Corinthians 14 verse 3, we see that the gift of prophecy is for strengthening, encouraging, and comforting. Nothing is said about commands and direction.

I Corinthians 14:3

But everyone who prophesies
_____ to men for their
strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

Predictive Prophecy

Predictive prophecy is a word that foretells events or actions that lie in the future.

We've already mentioned two examples of New Testament predictive prophesy, both involving Agabus. However, we must note several things.

- First, Agabus was apparently already recognized as a five-fold type of prophet. He wasn't simply a common Christian using the gift of prophecy to predict the future.
- Second, the fact of a prediction did not carry any authority or weight in terms of a response. It is up to the individual or group to decide what to do about the prediction.
- Third, as long as a predictive prophecy does not contradict the Scripture, or Biblical sufficiency (for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness), then we can adopt a "wait & see" approach. If the prediction comes true, we know it was from God ~ if it doesn't, it wasn't! There is no need to be afraid of people who err in this way, although their error may make us more wary when considering other prophetic words coming from them.

Deuteronomy 18:22

If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do _____ be _____ of him.

The Bible does not say to test the *prophet*, but to test the *prophecies* themselves.

I Thessalonians 5:19-22

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; ²⁰ do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹ _____ everything. Hold on to the good. ²² Avoid every kind of evil.

Those who are experienced, accurate, and proven in the prophetic gifts may be given more weight and more latitude. But no matter how accurate and proven a prophetic person is, his message still **must be tested**. We are all fallible and we must guard ourselves and each other against error.

“Exposing” Prophecy

What we are here naming an “exposing prophecy” occurs when a Christian receives a revelation that someone else is struggling with a particular sin or a specific ailment. Something of a personal nature is revealed for the purpose of repentance, healing, or whatever scriptural response is appropriate. The purpose and criteria for prophecy is that it *strengthens, encourages and comforts* the receiver. If it does not do these things, it should not be considered prophetic.

I Corinthians 14:3

But _____ who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

Exposing prophecies do not predict anything. They reveal present circumstances or attitudes. They are not directive because they offer no command or guidance other than what the Bible already requires. The revealing element of exposing prophecy concerns what we cannot see with our own eyes. These prophecies don’t have any more or any less authority than seeing a person sin with our own eyes. If you see apparent sinful behavior, it is your duty to rebuke it biblically. If you see someone sick, your natural response should be to pray for them. But your “diagnosis” is tentative until it is confirmed or denied by the “patient.” If the shoe fits, the receiver may respond. The prophecy is confirmed or denied by the recipient.

To assert or condemn a person of sin without having it confirmed or denied by the receiver (or by two or more witnesses), is unbiblical.

Proverbs 18:17

The first to present his case _____ right, till another comes forward and _____ him.

In any case, the *public use* of exposing words that name the alleged sinner violates Matthew 18:15-20, and it is sinful whether or not the accusations are true. Just because we have an insight or revelation from the Lord it does not justify us to have harsh, judgmental, condemning attitudes. Nor does it give us permission to circumvent the order of Christ in dealing with a person involved in sin.

Galatians 6:1

Brothers, if someone is _____ in a sin, you who are spiritual should _____ him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

When the Lord reveals something like this to us, and we find it to be true, shouldn’t we then pray for our brother or sister out of concern for their soul? Should we not mourn and cry out for their deliverance?

A person in possession of an exposing prophecy should *privately* ask the accused whether he is involved in a certain sin. This is often enough to draw out a confession and the prophecy has served its purpose. The prophetically inspired person could say, “I *think* the Lord showed me that you are struggling with stealing from your employer. *Is that true?*” No definite accusation is made in the name of the Lord, only an impression.

“Personal” Prophecy

If a prophetic word exposes with an air of judgment or condemnation, then we should question the **motives** of that prophet and consider what the heart of God is toward the person being exposed. Once again, remember that prophesy is a human report of a divine revelation. So what we *do* and the *attitudes we take* with the revelation that God gives us are very important and must be judged rightly.

Personal prophecies are words addressed to a particular individual or group rather than to the whole congregation. They are very popular in some charismatic circles, often appealing to the carnal sense of self-importance and desire for self-esteem of Christians. They may be directive, predictive, exposing, or very biblical in nature.

There is neither any precedent nor any prohibition in the New Testament for personal prophecy. But as in other types of prophecy, they must be dismissed if they contain extra-biblical commands. If they are predictive, they can not be embraced except with a “wait & see” approach—seeking confirmation. If they are exposing, then they should be received or rejected according to the person’s

actual situation and the appropriate Biblical response should be applied. The same standards apply whether they are spoken by a prophet, an elder, or a normal Christian.

Personal prophecies sometimes concern a person’s calling and are therefore predictive, perhaps even directive. Here, we need to take a “wait and see” approach – and test a person’s gifting and character before placing them in a position of authority over other people. If all of the personal prophecies given to past and present members of churches came true, we would be very, very top-heavy with pastors!

Many times, these supposed prophecies are given out of a desire to encourage (which is a good desire), but the prophecy itself is not from God. We can certainly find other ways to encourage one another without being so presumptuous that we would give a “word from the Lord” when it is not actually the Lord who has spoken it. It is better to be sure before speaking, or to say the words, “I’m not sure that this is from the Lord, but this is what I’m sensing . . .”

The Unique vs. the Normal



Differing Viewpoints

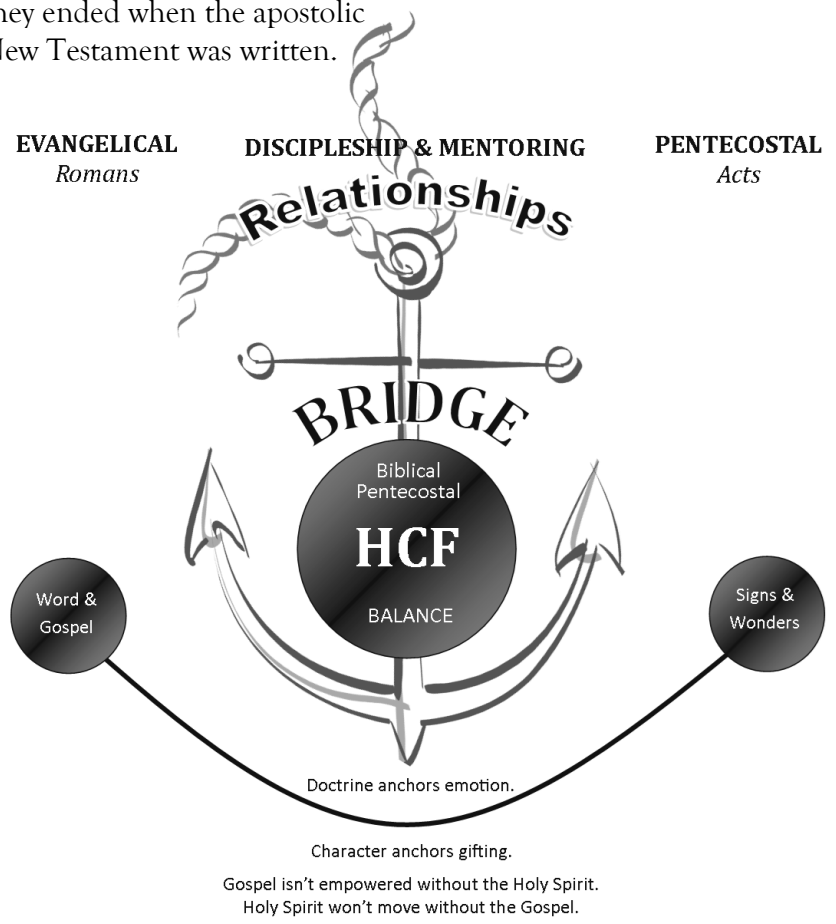
As we have discussed, spiritual gifts, come through the process of God using one person to bestow some special gift or blessing upon another person. The verbal gifts (prophecy, tongues and interpretation of tongues, word of knowledge, and word of wisdom) then, may be defined as a **human report of a divine revelation**. So, to be classified as a true “word from God,” a message must have God as its source and be delivered to other people.

Let’s examine some two extreme viewpoints about Spiritual gifts and bring some balance to the them.

Evangelicals will say that the gifts are no longer for use today, that they ended when the apostolic era ended and the New Testament was written.

Pentecostals will give lip service to the belief that any “word from the Lord” must agree with the Bible. But there seems to be some confusion as to what “agree” means. Does it mean that prophecy should never contradict Scripture, but might go beyond it or add to it?

Adding to the Scripture seems to contradict the doctrine of sufficiency of Scripture. Should prophecy be limited to only what is expressly stated in Scripture? If that is true, then what purpose could prophecy hold today? It would be nothing more than reciting Biblical texts. These are questions well worth asking, so let’s turn the page and make some statements bringing further insight to these matters.



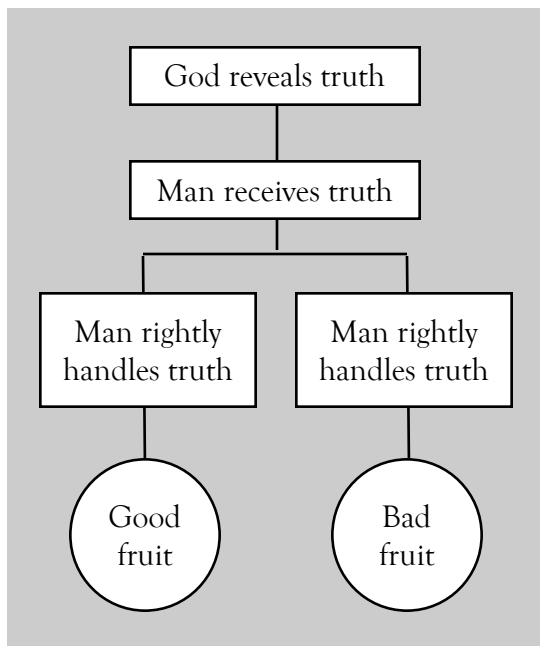
Imbalance leads to:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Charisphobia</u></p> <p>The fear that spiritual gifts lead to emotional excesses and church splits. Rejects Biblical teaching (claims less than the Bible teaches).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Legalistic</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Charismania</u></p> <p>Heavy emphasis on extraordinary gifts such as tongues, healing and miracles. Elevating some gifts as signs of spirituality. In this it claims <i>more</i> than the Bible teaches.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Excessive</p>
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The Unique vs. the Normal

Those of us who have been Christians for many years have heard both rumors and actual accounts of Holy Spirit outpourings and movements – The “Toronto Blessing”, the “Holy Laughter Movement,” the “Brownsville Revival” to name a few. Many questions have arisen because of the unusual occurrences that take place in these events. There are reports of great blessing, but there are also reports of division and strife. It is a distressing thing when churches split and when it happens we need to ask who or what is responsible.

Throughout Church history, we see a pattern. First – **God reveals truth.** This is the starting point and this is a good thing! Second – man gets hold of that truth. This is also a good thing! However, if a particular truth is carried to extremes or handled improperly it can produce bad fruit. Then a reaction comes from the body of Christ. It is judged either good or evil based upon the fruit it produces. However, this does not mean that the truth that God has revealed is wrong – it means that man, in his foolishness, has probably **mis-handled** the truth.



Sometimes, these movements do not deal with objective truths that can be accepted or rejected. But they are very subjective – dealing in emotion-

alism. There seems to arise a sort of “spiritual ecstasy.” Because emotions are so variable, it is dangerous to allow these movements to become the *centerpiece* of our fellowships. What we find ourselves dealing with is a lot of feelings, experiences, and subjective emotions, which are very difficult to evaluate. We have to turn to the Word of God, to the best of our ability, and stay as close to the Word of God as we possibly can.

We must not take what is the **unique** and **unusual** and try to make it the **normative** experience of the Christian.

The Noble Bereans – In the book of Acts, the Bereans were counted “of more noble character” because they didn’t just accept everything they heard. They checked out what they were being taught to see if it lined up with the Word of God. This is a wise way of dealing with any kind of teaching.

Acts 17:11

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they _____ the message with great eagerness and _____ the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Indeed, we are exhorted many times in the New Testament to test and examine what we are taught. This is our responsibility as believers. Otherwise, we can be easily led astray either emotionalism, false, or un-balanced teaching.

I Thessalonians 5:21

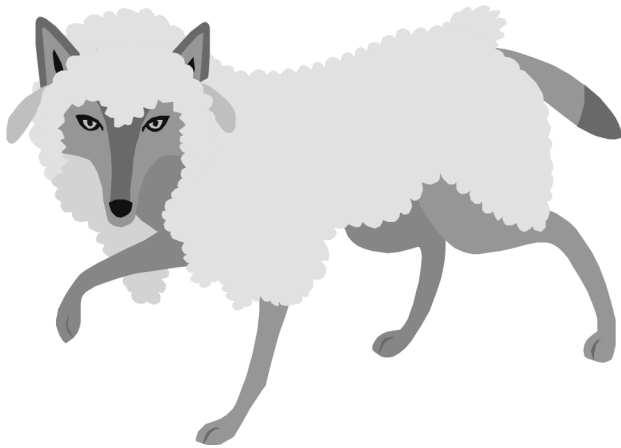
_____ and hold on to that which is good.

I Corinthians 14:29

_____ what is said.

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

In Acts 20:28-30, leaders are warned very strongly that there will be “wolves” who try to come in and destroy the “flock.” It says that these wolves (some of whom could come from our own numbers) will distort the truth in an effort to get people to follow them. This is why it is so important to keep ourselves under the protection of good leadership, and to truly value and adhere to the things they teach us – as long as it lines up with the Word of God! God has placed these leaders in our lives as a protection for us. But if we choose to wander from the sheepfold and go our own way, we leave ourselves at the mercy of those wolves.



Acts 20:28-30

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. ⁹ I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰ Even from your own number men will arise and _____ the truth in order to _____ disciples after them. ³¹ So be on your guard!

Satan uses these wolves to draw people away from the flock. Do not be ignorant – be aware!

Matthew 7:15

"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in _____ clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious _____."

The Lord commended the Ephesian church for testing the false from the true, but He also corrected them for leaving their first love. When it comes to any form of adjusting, it is something that must be done carefully because we are not out to be legalistic, pharisaical and nasty, but we also must be honest.

Revelation 2:1-4

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands: ² I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have _____ those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. ³ You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. ⁴ Yet I hold this against you: You have _____ your first love."

Manifestations that take place in the church today must be carefully examined. Are these phenomenon part of the normal life of the church? One of the great Pentecostal authorities was an elder in the Azusa Mission, William J. Seymour. He stated during that great outpouring in 1907 that everything must be checked out with the Word. "We are measuring everything by the Word. Every experience must be measured up to the Bible. Some say that it is going too far, but if we have lived too close to the Word we will settle that with the Lord when we meet Him in the air."

Questions To Ask

There are two questions that we must ask about the manifestations that we may witness, such as being “slain in the Spirit,” holy laughter, shaking, trembling, and any other manifestation.

2 questions:

- Do incidents of it occur in the Scripture?
- If incidents of it do occur, are they the **normal** pattern for Christian experience?

Why should we ask these questions? Let’s look at some of the unusual things that happened in the Word of God.

Balaam and His Donkey. In the book of Numbers (chapter 22), we read the account of Balaam and his donkey. Balaam was a prophet, used by God, but he disobeyed the Lord. So the Lord used the donkey Balaam was riding on to rebuke him. That is the only time in the Bible that God ever did such a thing. Do we go around today searching for a donkey, tapping it on the shoulder and asking, “Hey brother, do you have a word from God for me today?” NO – that would be foolish! We recognize that a talking donkey is an extremely unique event. CAN God use an animal to speak to us if he so chooses? Yes! But we don’t go around *looking* for that to happen.

Miracles Performed by the Apostles. In the book of Acts, we read about the apostles performing many miraculous signs and wonders among the people, even to the point that people would bring their sick to lay in Peter’s path hoping that Peter’s shadow would touch them and they might be healed.

Suppose you heard that there was going to be a special seminar and it’s going to be called “The Shadow Ministry” seminar. Ministers are invited

so they can learn how to heal the people by a “shadow ministry.” Books and seminars would be written on the “shadow ministry.” Would that be a biblical approach?

We ask the first question – Do incidents of it occur in Scripture? The answer is, *yes*, Acts 5:15 records that people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Then we ask the second question – Is this the normal experience of Christian experience? The answer to that is **NO**. None of the other apostles were ever recorded as having a shadow ministry. The “healing by shadow” is unusual, not the norm.

Since a “shadow ministry” would be more spectacular, could you imagine the apostles saying, “we want to have a ‘shadow ministry’” lining up people so they could walk by them so their shadow could heal them? No, the normative procedure for the sick is not the “shadow ministry,” but to “call for the elders of the church and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14), or “. . . they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover” (Mark 16).

In the book of acts, we have Ananias and Sapphira who were slain by the Lord and died because they lied against the Holy Spirit. Do we expect people to be slain and killed today if they lie to the Holy Spirit? While God could choose to repeat that scenario, the more normal procedure would be to practice church discipline outlined in Matthew 18 and I Corinthians 5, dealing with sin in the life of a church member.

More Examples

Another example of the unusual is the day of Pentecost. We see wind, earthquake, fire, and tongues falling on the 120. Why do we not demand wind and fire, since it did happen once in the scripture? The reason why is because from that point on, it didn't happen regularly, in fact, it is never recorded as happening again, except the speaking in tongues. So the norm is being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. The wind and the fire were the unusual.

When it comes to "holy laughter," the Bible is full of scriptures dealing with joy, but it would be difficult to read mere laughter into joy. Joy is a Christian experience that is not rooted in subjective feelings for a moment, but in the objective reality that God has granted us salvation, redemption, and deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Joy is based upon a *relationship*.**

In all of the Bible there is no direct reference made that persons were uncontrollably laughing in a crowd of worshipers, with others also laughing and falling down, unable to stop laughing. There may be a sovereign move where that happens, but that is not the normative approach for the Christian experience. Those that are pushing a lot of these excesses are using Acts 2 as a condition for people to have holy laughter and uncontrollable emotional responses. But any clear examination of Acts 2 will find that there is no evidence that they all laid laughing on the floor, and then when the crowd came to see what had happened they assumed that they were drunk. That is not what the word of God says!

Why did some in the crowd think the 120 were drunk? Not because they were laughing, for Peter tells us straight, that the reason was, "*Now there were staying in Jerusalem God fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a*

crowd came together in bewilderment because each one heard them speak in their own language. Utterly amazed, they asked, are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our own language? We hear them declaring the wonderful works of God in our tongues." The sound that attracted the crowd is explicitly identified by Luke as other tongues, spoken by the 120.

Now there were three different reactions to this supernatural manifestation - amazement, perplexity, and those who made fun, saying they were drunk. Notice that only "some" thought they were drunk. The use of the word "some" suggests only a smaller part of the main body of people. We are left with the impression from Luke that most did not assume they were drunk, rather they were so amazed and perplexed that they asked, "What does this mean?" Others who were not looking seriously for answers immediately discounted their behavior by mocking them and attributing tongue-speaking to drunkenness.

Nowhere does the text in Acts 2 suggest the appearance of laughter. It is speaking with other tongues that drew various reactions noted by Luke. *Utterly amazed, they asked, "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our own native tongues?"* (Acts 2:7-8). They are not described as laughing, but praising God in languages they had never learned, declaring the wonderful works of God.

People were not converted because they were drunk. They were converted because the supernatural power of God was manifested that caused them to believe that Jesus Christ was the Lord. ***Any true move of the Holy Spirit will result in evangelism.***

The Problem

The problem is, the **unusual** draws crowds, but the **normal** seems to lack that kind of charisma. So since churches are sometimes more interested in **filling their buildings** than **building the church**, we will often buy into extremes.

Obviously, there are examples from past revivals in church history where there were unusual manifestations such as laughter, falling, shaking, and trembling, and these things *have happened*. But we cannot assume that they should be the norm. The Bible teaches that the just will live by FAITH, not by emotional experiences. What if we *don't* experience these unusual things? Does that make the Gospel any less true? Of course not!

As people of the Holy Spirit, we live a very experiential Christianity. When we attend church, we expect to feel God's presence and rightly so. The Bible clearly teaches that Christ's presence fills not only our mind but our emotions as well.

However, our openness to experiences may also make us prey to novelties. That is why it is so important for us to be biblically based. The Holy Spirit flows within the river of scripture. The Spirit of God does not venture where the Word of God does not also go.

In our quest for experience there is often a severe shortage of solid, biblical-based preaching. When the preaching and biblical-based messages are absent, then novelty enters as a device for attracting people and crowds.

We often say that the way you *win* people is the way you have to *keep* them. If winning people is based upon the latest experience, then you will have to maintain an experience-kept person. Faith does not come by an experience. Faith comes by the Word of God. Christ must be central and

then that's all you will have to do to keep the people.

Romans 10:17

Consequently, _____ comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the _____ of _____.

We have heard and seen many winds of doctrine blow through the church. The Latter Rain Movement, the Discipleship Movement, the emphasis on demonology, the Faith movement, the Jesus People movement, the health and wealth gospel, the kingdom, and now the renewal and holy laughter, and it goes on and on. Truth was present in each move, but extremes brought reproach on the body of Christ.

We also have noticed that leaders who ride one wave of extreme also tend to ride the next wave. And when the old wave ebbs out, because there is not a biblical base, we are looking for yet another experience. Many times the motivation is financial. The Apostle Paul, at the very end of his ministry, was very heavy in heart and warned us all in II Timothy:

II Timothy 4:3-4

“For the time will come when men will not put up with _____ doctrine, instead to suit their own desires they will gather around them great numbers of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will _____ away from the _____ and turn aside to _____.”

The Solution

The Lord shows us how to stay on track, “You shall love the Lord God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself.” This kind of bedrock doctrinal position keeps us from chasing after every wind and whim of doctrine.

Ephesians 4:14

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and _____ here and there by every _____ of _____ and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

God’s desire is that we become mature – not remain infants. He wants us to be balanced and grounded in His word so that we won’t be tossed around by various and even false teachings.

It is clear as we study the Word of God that the “main things are the plain things.” This does not

mean that nothing unusual will ever happen to us, but that we are to recognize the difference between the unusual and the normal.

Acts 2:42

They _____ themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

These people in the book of Acts “devoted” themselves to the things that we might consider to be mundane. But great things were accomplished in the Kingdom of God as a result.

Actually, the “basics” are just as beautiful as the “wonderful” ~ we simply have a tendency to take the basics for granted. We should cultivate an attitude of gratitude for our salvation, for the ability to have a relationship with God.

The Outpouring of the Last Days



The Promise of an Outpouring

In the Bible, God promises a special outpouring that is to occur during the “last days” – or the time before the return of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:17-18

"In the _____, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will _____ out my _____ in those days, and they will prophesy.

Joel 2:28-29

'And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in _____.

During this outpouring, God’s people will experience signs, wonders, and spiritual gifts like they never have before. The glory of the Lord will be manifested on a scale that the world has not seen before.

Haggai 2:6-9

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.⁷ I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty.⁸ 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty.⁹ 'The glory of this _____ house will be greater than the glory of the _____ house,' says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty."

The Lord has been moving faithfully and purposefully over the last few centuries to restore truth and bring His church to a place of power and anointing.

The wise virgins in Christ’s parable (Matthew 25:1-13) made themselves ready by keeping their lamps full. We are living in the last days and the Holy Spirit is preparing the church for the coming of the Lord. The key to pleasing God and bearing fruit in these times is to keep our lamps full of the fresh oil of the Holy Spirit. The days ahead will be exciting and challenging. The early church demonstrated a supernatural empowerment to the world of its day. The end time church is being prepared by the Holy Spirit to do even greater works than these.

John 14:12

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do _____ things than these, because I am going to the Father.

We have tried to help to build understanding of the incredible work the Holy Spirit has been commissioned to accomplish in our lives. The rest is up to you. We pray that you will be inspired to pursue a greater relationship with the Lord through receiving the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Building this relationship will take time and determination to grow in sensitivity to His presence. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is often subtle and easy to miss. We must develop the habit of looking for Him, learning to know His influence, and yielding to His touch. As we grow in our relationship with the Holy Spirit, we grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

TEST

Discovering the Holy Spirit

Name: _____

Score: _____

2 points each

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the correct answer in each of the following multiple choice questions. THIS IS AN OPEN-BOOK TEST

- 1) The Bible says, "In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon _____.
 - a) Those who are perfected.
 - b) All flesh.
 - c) Those who attend church.
 - d) All virgins.
- 2) When it comes to spiritual gifts, God does not want us to be _____.
 - a) Ignorant
 - b) Used
 - c) Excited
 - d) Joyful
- 3) The Holy Spirit is:
 - a) The author of the scriptures
 - b) The interpreter of the scriptures
 - c) All of the above
- 4) We can offend the Holy Spirit by:
 - a) Having bad attitudes
 - b) Being in rebellion
 - c) Lying
 - d) All of the above
- 5) Being mature is:
 - a) Putting away childish things.
 - b) Overcoming temptation
 - c) Understanding Biblical truths
 - d) All of the above.
- 6) If you have a hard time receiving correction or teaching, you probably , , ,
 - a) Are immature
 - b) Are already wise enough.
 - c) Already know enough.
 - d) Need to teach others
- 7) Once we are born again, we become the temple of the Holy Spirit. We now belong to:
 - a) The World
 - b) Ourselves
 - c) Our Family
 - d) God
- 8) One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth so that the _____ of God can be developed and displayed in our lives.
 - a) Excellence
 - b) Gifts
 - c) Fruit
 - d) Prophecy
- 9) When the Holy Spirit comes inside of us, we receive a new _____.
 - a) Belief
 - b) Church
 - c) Custom
 - d) Nature
- 10) *Rhema* is a Greek word that means:
 - a) An astounding statement.
 - b) Specific utterance.
 - c) To leap out.
 - d) Frustrating statement.
- 11) God speaks to us in many ways, some of those ways are:
 - a) Through the leadership He has placed over us.
 - b) Through a scripture He plants in our minds.
 - c) Through feeling His burden about something.
 - d) All of the above & more.

- 12) When we think of spiritual fruit, the word fruit implies:
- Something that must be planted.
 - Something to be nurtured as it grows.
 - Something to be enjoyed by others.
 - All of the above.
- 13) The fruit of _____ is sadly lacking in our society. Graciousness has been replaced by rudeness.
- Kindness
 - Prosperity
 - Effort
 - Strength
- 14) The works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5 make it obvious that mankind in general does not want to:
- Use good manners
 - Eat right and exercise
 - Bridle his passion
 - Support his family
- 15) The purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is:
- To give us spiritual gifts
 - To help us grow spiritual fruit
 - To speak in tongues
 - To be empowered as witnesses.
- 16) The true meaning of the word "baptism" is:
- To be sprinkled with water.
 - To be immersed into something.
 - To be washed clean.
 - To be purified.
- 17) If we do not allow ourselves to be instructed, we will
- Continue in our old way of thinking.
 - Become Satanists.
 - Be safe from worldly influences.
 - Be useful in the Kingdom of God.
- 18) Knowledge is not something to
- Give away.
 - Take pride in.
 - Use for the glory of God.
 - Put our trust in.
- 19) _____ chooses your place in the body of Christ.
- Your pastor.
 - Your parents.
 - God.
 - Your talent.
- 20) The Gifts of the Spirit _____ contradict the Word of God.
- Always
 - Never
 - Sometimes
 - All of the above
- 21) The Five-fold ministry gifts are imparted to men:
- As the man desires.
 - As God chooses.
 - As the Pastor decides.
 - As the Elders vote.
- 22) The purpose of five-fold gifts is to:
- Equip the people for works of service.
 - To help the people of God to become mature.
 - To help us reach the unity of the faith.
 - All of the above.
- 23) The Spiritual gift(s) you receive is:
- Your choice.
 - God's choice.
 - Up to your Pastor.
 - Up to your parents.
- 24) The Bereans were counted "of more noble character" because they:
- Checked what they were learning with the Word of God.
 - Accepted without question the teaching of the Apostles.
 - Gave more money to the poor than anyone else.
 - All of the above.

INSTRUCTIONS: Remember, **this is an open-book test.** Circle the correct answer in the following true or false questions.

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--|-----|---|---|---|
| 25) | T | F | The Holy Spirit can be grieved by bitterness, anger, and evil speaking. | 36) | T | F | There are more spiritual gifts than the nine mentioned in I Corinthians 12. |
| 26) | T | F | It is spiritual error to think that we can earn our way into God's good graces through any other way but by accepting the sacrifice of Christ. | 37) | T | F | You can choose the place you fill in the Body of Christ. |
| 27) | T | F | The word "mature" means "being perfect." | 38) | T | F | You can go to school to learn how to speak in tongues. |
| 28) | T | F | Instead of being led by a set of laws, we should be led by the Spirit of God. | 39) | T | F | God is involved in confusion. |
| 29) | T | F | We are to forgive our friends & family, but we do not have to forgive our enemies. | 40) | T | F | The Corinthian church had a tendency to misuse the spiritual gifts. |
| 30) | T | F | We have the right to exercise unbridled sensual passion. | 41) | T | F | If the Lord reveals to us that someone is caught in sin, we should respond with judgment and condemnation. |
| 31) | T | F | The Bible teaches we are never to become angry. | 42) | T | F | The prophets of the Old Testament were subject to established authority, just as we should be today. |
| 32) | T | F | A faithful person is a reliable person. | 43) | T | F | Charisphobics fear that spiritual gifts lead to emotional excesses, therefore they reject the use of spiritual gifts. |
| 33) | T | F | We are to judge other people by what they eat or drink. | 44) | T | F | Charismaniacs elevate some gifts as signs of spirituality, claiming more than the Bible teaches. |
| 34) | T | F | The Baptism in the Holy Spirit was promised in the Old Testament. | 45) | T | F | It is dangerous to allow emotionalism to become the centerpiece of our fellowships. |
| 35) | T | F | Demonic or fleshly forces can imitate manifestations of the Spirit, which is why we need to "test" those manifestations. | | | | |

- 46) T F The Lord commended the Ephesian church for testing & discerning the false from the true, but He also corrected them for leaving their first love.
- 47) T F Joy is based upon relationship.
- 48) T F Churches are sometimes more interested in filling their buildings than in building the church.
- 49) T F We should chase after every “wind of doctrine.”
- 50) T F In Christ’s parable, the wise virgins made themselves ready by putting on their best clothes and perfume

When you have completed your test, tear it out of the book and turn it in to the office or to your Home Group Leader.

If you score 80% or above you will receive a certificate of achievement.

MASTERPIECES

