



## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE BELIEVER

### *What the Holy Spirit Does for Us*

When we are called to make changes in our lives, it is human nature to ask, “What’s in it for me?” William Carey, often called the father of modern missions, was a shoe cobbler by trade before he went to India. He kept a map of India in his shop, stopping every so often to study and pray over it. Sometimes, because of his preaching ministry, his shoe business suffered. One day a friend admonished him for neglecting his business. “Neglecting my business?” said Carey, looking at him intently. “My business is to extend the kingdom of God. I only cobble shoes to pay expenses.”

Like Carey, the business of every believer should be to extend the kingdom of God. We know that workers in God’s harvest field should never approach His work with a ‘what’s in it for me’ attitude. Nevertheless, when the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us, we become blessed recipients of what the Holy Spirit does for us.

#### **The Holy Spirit Imparts Christ’s Life to Us**

**Read John 3:16 (ESV)** <sup>16</sup> *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

When we put our faith and trust in Jesus, the Son of God, we become recipients of eternal life. The human race is under a ‘death sentence’ – brought about by our sin. However, when the Spirit of God comes upon we are instantly free from sin and death.

**Read Romans 8:2 (ESV)** <sup>2</sup> *For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.*

The answer to the question, ‘What’s in it for me?’ concerning God’s great salvation, is EVERLASTING LIFE! But wait! There is even more ‘in it for us’! In the New Testament, we learn that the Body of Christ has access to the Gifts of the Spirit and Fruit of the Spirit.

The gifts of the Spirit can be described as demonstrations of God’s power. Power belongs to God, and these gifts show that God is in the midst of His people. The fruit of the Spirit can be described as God’s personality.

#### **Gifts of the Spirit – God’s Power in Us**

**Read 1 Corinthians 12:7-10 (ESV)** <sup>7</sup> *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* <sup>8</sup> *For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of **wisdom**, and to another the utterance of **knowledge** according to the same Spirit,* <sup>9</sup> *to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another gifts of **healing** by the one Spirit,* <sup>10</sup> *to another the working of **miracles**, to another*

*prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*

There are nine gifts of the Spirit mentioned in this passage. Throughout his writings, Paul referred to about 20 different gifts, including preaching, teaching and leadership. Some would say that by putting Paul’s list together we get a comprehensive list of spiritual gifts. This seems unlikely, since today we can recognize some gifts which Paul did not mention, such as the gifts of music, working with youth, and counseling. As we consider spiritual gifts, we must ask the question:

**What is the difference between a talent and a spiritual gift?**

The answer is simple: Natural talents reveal our human ability whereas spiritual gifts reveal Christ’s supernatural ability. The gifts of the Spirit are specific abilities given by God for the edification of the church. Just as a tree is known by its fruit, so spiritual fruit manifests the Holy Spirit’s work in God’s people through the refinement of our character. Rev. Jim Wallis of Strictly Gospel breaks it down this way.

#1	Talents Are Inherited / Gifts Are Received
#2	Talents Are Possessed by the Saved and Unsaved / Gifts Are Possessed by the Saved
#3	Talents Are Developed and Expected / Gifts Are Matured and Surprising
#4	Talents Can Be Used Selfishly / Gifts Are Used to Serve God’s Purposes

There are similarities and differences between talents and spiritual gifts. Both come from God. Both grow in effectiveness with use. Regardless of belief in Christ, people who have natural talents resulting from a combination of genetics, training and environment can develop those talents. Spiritual gifts, on the other hand are given to all believers by the Holy Spirit. **Romans 12:6 (ESV)** <sup>6</sup> *Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: ... in proportion to our faith;*

We don’t have to spend a lifetime seeking ‘our gift’. Just be sensitive to the Lord’s leading and He will open the door to what He wants you to do for Him. We should not look upon one ‘gift’ as being better than the other.

Warren Wiersbe writes, “I once ministered with two men who had opposite attitudes toward their gifts: the one man constantly belittled his gifts and would not use them, and the other man constantly boasted about gifts that he did not possess. Actually, both of them were guilty of pride, because both of them refused to acknowledge God’s grace and let Him have the glory.”

Whatever gift we have must be dedicated to God and used for His glory. **1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)** <sup>31</sup> *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

## Fruit of the Spirit – God’s Character in Us

**Read Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)** <sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* <sup>23</sup> *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

The fruit of the Spirit is the natural work of the Holy Spirit in us. The Spirit produces these character traits in us that are found in the character of Christ. The fruit of the Spirit comes about in our lives as the result of Christ's control—we can't obtain them by trying to get them without His help. If we want the fruit of the Spirit to grow in us, we must join our life to His.

**Read John 15:4-5 (ESV)** <sup>4</sup> *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.* <sup>5</sup> *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

Be careful to avoid getting tied up with doing ‘good works’ in the flesh. There is a difference between spiritual fruit and good works done under our ‘own steam’. Fruit comes spontaneously as a result of a healthy walk with Christ. We must be careful to avoid good works that are the result of our own thoughts and our own will. In the Christian walk, the fruit of the Spirit is the product of our inner life, the operation of God’s Spirit within us. Don’t get me wrong producing spiritual fruit will often still be ‘work’. Think about it – the first fruit listed is love. And if we are honest, there will be times when showing love to someone unlovely in our daily lives can only come from the Spirit’s power with us.

The Spirit produces living fruit. And this fruit has in it the seed for still producing more fruit! Love results in more love! Joy helps to produce more joy! We glorify Christ by bearing fruit. We do this through the power of the Holy Spirit within us.

## The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Believer

**Read John 4:14 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup> *but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*

This verse is part of the words spoken to the Samaritan woman that Jesus met at the well. The Samaritans were a mixed race, part Jew and part Gentile, that grew out of the Assyrian captivity of the ten northern tribes. Rejected by the Jews because they could not prove their genealogy, the Samaritans established their own temple and religious services. This only fanned the fires of prejudice. When His enemies wanted to call Jesus an insulting name, they called Him a Samaritan. (**John 8:48**)

Because they met at a well, Jesus made this an opportunity to talk to the woman about ‘living water’ and how He could provide it for her. Jesus spoke of living water on the last day of the feast.

**Read John 7:37-39 (ESV)** <sup>37</sup> *On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” <sup>39</sup> Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

Water is used throughout the scriptures – both Old and New Testaments as a symbol of spiritual cleansing. The source of our spiritual cleansing is through God’s Holy Spirit. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we are cleansed of our past and are born into a new life in Christ.

Even though we have received the Holy Spirit’s Power and we have drunk from the spring that holds the Living Water of Christ, our spirits still grow thirsty along the journey of life. We need to keep replenishing our supply of spiritual water so that we have the courage and the strength to face the tasks set before us. I have always loved the song, Fill My Cup Lord. It says in part:

Like the woman at the well I was seeking  
 For things that could not satisfy  
 And then I heard my Savior saying  
 “Draw from my well that never can run dry.”  
 Fill my cup, Lord. I lift it up, Lord.  
 Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.  
 Bread of Heaven, fill me till I want no more.  
 Fill my cup – fill it up and make me whole.

Let’s close with something that Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;  
 but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13*

Yes! Love is the most excellent way! Love is a gift and it is a fruit! Lord, fill our cup with love for you. Fill our cup with love for one another. AND fill our cup with love for those who desperately need to experience the love of Christ.