

LXXIV. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND SPIRITUAL FRUIT: 1 Corinthians 12:3

INTRODUCTION/CON(TEXT). The passage of Scripture that I would like to draw your attention to today is 1 Corinthians 12:3, which was just read to you. In this text Paul deals with another issue in the Church at Corinth. He is in the middle of answering questions the Corinthians had sent him in a previous letter. The question they asked had to do with Spiritual Gifts and their proper use in the Church. Look at it in your own Bible:

1 Corinthians 12:1 "Now concerning spiritual gifts (*spiritual things, i.e. spiritual gifts, which he treats in this section*), brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed (*ignorant*)."

This issue—*Spiritual Gifts*—was not only something the Corinthian Church needed help with in the first century; it is also something the American Church needs help with in the 21st Century.

LET ME REMIND YOU WHY THIS IS SO CRUCIAL FOR US TO UNDERSTAND:

According to a Barna's Primary Survey (2008 data, published 2009):

- 68% of self-identified Christians in the U.S. said they *had* heard of spiritual gifts.
- About 21% of *aware* born-again Christians said God had not given them any spiritual gift.
- Roughly 20–21% listed "gifts" not found in biblical lists, such as a sense of humor, singing, health, happiness, patience, creativity, clairvoyance, or premonition.
- Only about one-third accurately identified solely biblical gifts.

Additionally, because of the massive growth of those who are especially ignorant concerning Spiritual Gifts, there have been a number of negative effects on the Church not only in America, but worldwide:

- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts often *ELEVATE EXPERIENCE OVER SCRIPTURE*:** the emphasis on ongoing miracles, tongues, prophecy, and "Spirit baptism" as a second blessing is unbiblical, distorting the sufficiency of Scripture and promoting extra-biblical revelation.
- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts often *DISTOR THE TRUE GOSPEL BY TYING IT TO PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL PROSPERITY*:** Teachings promising health, wealth, and success through faith and giving are heretical, turning God into a means for material gain and ignoring

biblical themes of suffering and contentment.

- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts often *MOCK THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ARE PLAGUED BY ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM***: Phenomena like uncontrollable laughter, animal sounds, or "slain in the Spirit" are unbiblical, psychological, or even demonic, fostering emotionalism over sound doctrine.
- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts often *END UP TEACHING HERESY BY DENYING THE TRINITY***: Early splits produced Oneness Pentecostalism, denying the Trinity, a serious heresy.
- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts often *FIND THEMSELVES ENGROSSED IN SEXUAL SIN***.
- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts often *EXPLOIT THE POOR***.
- **Those who are ignorant of spiritual gifts have been and continue to *EXPORT THEIR DISTORTIONS OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY, ESPECIALLY TO THE THIRD WORLD***.

I say again, this issue—*Spiritual Gifts*—was not only something the Corinthian Church needed help with in the first century; it is also something the American Church needs help with in the 21st Century.

Now the first truth God reveals to guys through Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 is this:

I) Christians must not be ignorant of spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:1 "Now concerning spiritual gifts (*spiritual things, i.e. spiritual gifts, which he treats in this section*), brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed (*ignorant*)."

Q. Why? Because if you are ignorant of Spiritual Gifts you will likely fall into pride, false teaching, sinful living, and you may even blatantly mock the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then in verse 2 God reminds Christians of who we used to be before He saved us by His grace through faith in Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:2 "You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led."

Wherein we learn this second truth revealed in 1 Corinthians 12:

II) Christians must not be ignorant of their spiritual past (we need to remember who we were before Christ saved us).

Q. Why? (i) First, so that we would humble ourselves, remembering anything good we have is a sovereign and gracious gift from God. **(ii)** Second, so that we would have clear lines drawn and not bring any of our former lifestyle into our life as a Christian.

Now we come to verse 3, where God says this through Paul:

1 Corinthians 12:3 "Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking

in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit."

DOCTRINE. Christians must not be ignorant of spiritual fruit.

BOYS AND GIRLS (doctrine).

OUTLINE. Two main truths to note, in them some uses for personal application.

EXEGETICAL

I. When some says "Jesus is anathema," that is rotten fruit and therefore not a product of God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3a).

1 Corinthians 12:3a

"Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus is accursed!'"

- **JOHN TRAPP:** "'Jesus is accursed' (Romans 12:3). . . As the Gentiles did of old, and these Corinthians among the rest." — **John Trapp, Complete Commentary on the Bible, 1 Corinthians 12:3a**
- **Here was the dilemma in Corinth and why Paul had to say this:**
There were professed Christians at the church in Corinth who were apparently saying things like "Jesus is accursed" and claiming it was some kind of utterance of the Spirit.
- **And the reasoning of at least some of the Corinthians must have gone something like this:**
Well these professed Christians saying, "Jesus is accursed" are telling me that they are doing it for the glory of God, to build up the church, and it is in fact a work of the Holy Spirit.
- **Therefore, likely to his utter shock, Paul has to write to them,**
"Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus is accursed!'"

RQ. By the way, did you know this is exactly what modern Judaism says today?

The Talmud teaches that Jesus is being punished in hell boiling in human excrement.

- In a story involving necromancy, the spirit of "the sinner(s) of Israel" (interpreted as Jesus) reveals his eternal torment in boiling human excrement for mocking the Sages' words. The Talmud graphically rejects

Jesus' divinity, sinless life, substitutionary death, resurrection, and redemption. The Talmud teaches that Jesus was a Jewish rebel against Rome who got killed for his trouble and now he is suffering in hell.

— **Babylonian Talmud. Gittin 56b–57a. Translated by Maurice Simon. London: Soncino Press, 1936. Schäfer, Peter. Jesus in the Talmud. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.**

I read you a portion of a quote by John Trapp a few minutes ago. Now let me read you the entire quote. Remember, Trapp was a Puritan pastor in the 17th century.

JOHN TRAPP: "'Jesus is accursed' (Romans 12:3). As the wicked Jews do in this day in their daily prayers and abbreviature; and as the Gentiles did of old, and these Corinthians among the rest." — **John Trapp, Complete Commentary on the Bible, 1 Corinthians 12:3a**

Far from saying "Jesus is Lord," the Talmud, and modern Orthodox Jews, say, "Jesus is anathema." This is not a work of God the Holy Spirit which produces healthy fruit; this is a work of the Father of lies which produces rotten fruit.

If you would like to better understand *Modern Judaism as contrasted by Biblical Christianity, come and talk to me so I can recommend some easy reading.

EXEGETICAL

II. When someone says "Jesus is Lord," that is healthy fruit and therefore a product of God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3a)(1 Corinthians 12:3b).

- **JOHN TRAPP:** ~~"That is, no man can, with the fiducial assent of his heart, acknowledge Christ to be the only Lord, whom he is to worship by the same impulses, by which another curses and blasphemes him, but by such peculiar motives as are suggested and revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost."~~ — **John Trapp, Complete Commentary on the Bible, 1 Corinthians 12:3b**
- **HENRY:** "To own this truth before men, and maintain it to the death, and live under the influence of it, could not be done without the sanctification of the Holy [Spirit]. No man can call Christ Lord, with a believing subjection to him and dependence upon him, unless that faith be wrought by the Holy Ghost. No man can confess this truth in the day of trial but by the Holy Ghost animating and encouraging him. Note, We have as necessary a dependence on the Spirit in operation and influence for our sanctification and perseverance as on the

mediation of Christ for our reconciliation and acceptance with God." —
Matthew Henry, Complete Bible Commentary, 1 Corinthians 12:3b

The only way any of us believes in and submits to Christ as Lord is by the power and persuasion of the Holy Spirit.

TURN BACK WITH ME TO

Ephesians 2:4-10 (think of 1 Cor. 12:2, which is detailed in Eph. 2:1-3) "4 But (God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

USE FOR COMFORT

BOYS AND GIRLS, every bit our our salvation from sin, death, hell, and the wrath of God is a sovereign gift from God the Father who planned our redemption, the Lord Jesus Christ who bought our redemption, and God the Holy Spirit who applies our redemption. IT IS ALL GRACE; ALL A GIFT!

QUESTION. What should you do for the person who gives you a great gift? (Say thank you).

You and I say thank you to God for saving us by loving Him and obeying His commandments.

APPLICATION

USE FOR INSTRUCTION

I. You will know *false* Christians by their rotten fruit (1 Corinthians 12:3a; Matthew 7:15-23).

1 Corinthians 12:3a

"Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus is accursed!'"

– **Q. What is Paul getting at?**

A. A tree is known by its fruit. The pronouncement "Jesus is accursed" is most assuredly a rotten fruit born not of the Holy Spirit but of Satan.

BOYS AND GIRLS, if someone says, "Jesus is suffering for His own sins in hell" do you think that person is one of the people of God or anti-God? It is easy sometimes to tell a bad tree by its rotten fruit and a good tree by its

sweet healthy fruit.

But sometimes it is not so easy.

TURN WITH ME TO MATTHEW 7:

Matthew 7:15-23 "15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

QUESTION. What does this rotten fruit look like?

Turn with me to Galatians 5:

Galatians 5:19-21a "19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these."

I) SEXUAL WORKS OF THE FLESH

- I) **Sexual immorality:** This Greek word is where we get our English word "pornography." It refers to all illegitimate sexual activity—such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, prostitution, etc.
- II) **Impurity:** Sexual impurity or uncleanness. (**Rom. 1:24** "God gave them up to impurity...")
- III) **Sensuality:** Unbridled lust; Unrestrained sexual indulgence. (The men wanting to rape angels with Lot in **Genesis 19**)

II) IDOLATROUS WORKS OF THE FLESH

- I) **Idolatry:** Trusting in or serving created things rather than the Creator, however formal or informal.
- II) **Sorcery:** **MACARTHUR:** "Sorcery translates *pharmakeia*, from which we get *pharmacy* and *pharmaceutical*. It was originally used of medicines in general but came to be used primarily of mood-and mind-altering drugs similar to those that create so much havoc in our own day. Many ancient religious ceremonies involved occultic practices in which drugs

were used to induce supposed communication with deities, and *pharmakeia* thereby came to be closely related to witchcraft and magic. Aristotle and other ancient Greek writers used the word as a synonym for witchcraft and black magic, because drugs were so commonly used in their practice."

III) RELATIONAL WORKS OF THE FLESH

- I) **Enmity**: Hateful attitudes.
- II) **Strife**: Bitter conflicts.
- III) **Jealously**: Hateful resentment cause by covetousness.
- IV) **Fits of Anger (wrath)**: Outbursts of anger.
- V) **Rivalries**: Electioneering; putting yourself forward especially over and against others.
- VI) **Dissensions**: To stand apart; disunity.
- VII) **Divisions**: Creating new sects. The word can mean *capturing*.
- VIII) **Envy**: Spite, ill-will, jealousy.

IV) SUBSTANCE-ABUSE WORKS OF THE FLESH

- IX) **Drunkenness**: Intoxication. (**Rom. 13:13** "Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy.")
- X) **Orgies**: **MACARTHUR**: "*Drunkenness and carousing (NASB)* probably had special reference to the orgies that so often characterized the pagan worship ceremonies that many of the Gentile converts of Galatia had once participated in. In a more general and universal sense, however, they refer to becoming drunk under any circumstance and to all rowdy, boisterous, and crude behavior."
 - Add in here Sorcery as well, for substance abuse. (See point 2 of Idolatry)
- XI) **Things like these**: this is not an exhaustive list!

BOYS AND GIRLS, you will know false Christians by their rotten fruit.

USE FOR INSTRUCTION

II. You will know *true* Christians by their healthy fruit (1 Corinthians 12:3b; Galatians 5:22-23).

1 Corinthians 12:3b

"and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except in the Holy Spirit."

In Matthew 7:17, Jesus says, "So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit."

QUESTION. What does this good fruit look like?

Look at Galatians 5 again:

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

- I) **Love**: Willing self-sacrifice for the good of another (**1 John 3:16** "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.").
- II) **Joy**: Feelings of happiness that are based on spiritual realities—namely, Christ and being united to Him (**1 Peter 1:8** "Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,").
- III) **Peace**: The tranquility of mind that comes from being reconciled to God and having Him as your Father (**John 14:27** "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.")
- IV) **Patience**: Slow to anger; long-suffering. (**Colossians 3:12** "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved...patience,")
- V) **Kindness**: Tender concern for others. (**2 Corinthians 6:4-6** "as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: . . .by . . .kindness,")
- VI) **Goodness**: Virtue or uprightness of heart and life. (**Ephesians 5:8-9** "at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true")
- VIII) **Faithfulness**: Loyalty and trustworthiness. (**1 Corinthians 4:1-2** "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.")
- VII) **Gentleness**: **MACARTHUR**: "It is that humble and gentle attitude that is patiently submissive in every offense, while being free of any desire for revenge or retribution." (In the New Testament this Greek word is used to describe three ideas: **I**) submissiveness to God's will (Col. 3:12), **II**) being teachable (James 1:21), and **III**) being considerate of others (Eph. 4:2)) (Never used of God, properly speaking. Only used of Jesus in His incarnation!).
- IX) **Self-Control**: Restraining passions or appetites. (**2 Peter 1:5-6** "make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control,") (never used of God).

BOYS AND GIRLS, you will know true Christians by their healthy fruit.

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CONCLUDING EXHORTATIONS.

Unbelievers (1):

I) Repent and believe the gospel. Be baptized. Join the church. Walk with the Church all the days of your life for God's glory, your gladness, and others' good.

Believers (5):

I) Watch out for wolves in sheep's clothing.

II) Make certain you do not neglect to look for Spiritual Fruit as you consider Spiritual Gifts.

III) Make sure you humble yourself by remembering your spiritual past, especially as you consider Spiritual Gifts.

IV) Remember the high privilege of being chosen by the Father, purchased by the Son, and gifted by the Spirit.

V) Say "Christ is Lord."

TEXT WORK

I Corinthians 12:1-3

de peri pneumatikos adelphos
 “1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers,
 Conj. prep. adj. bretheren
 Christians

one verb thelo sy agnoeo
 I do not want you to be uninformed.
 adv. abs. neg. per. s. poss. pro. to be unaware
to be ignorant

eido hoti hote eimi ethnos
 2 You know that when you were pagans
 conj. conj. unbelievers
Gentiles

apago ho the pros def. aphanos eidolon hos an ago
 you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.
 adj. conj.

dio gnorizo
 3 Therefore I want you to understand
 Conj.

hoti oudeis lalo en pneuma Theos lego iesous anathema
 that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!”
 conj. adj. (prep.) or by

kai oudeis dynamai lego iesous Kyrios ei me en hagios pneuma
 and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.”
 conj. adj. has the ability or power conj./adv. (prep.) or by

HELPS

1 Corinthians 12:5-11

Extraordinary Spiritual Gifts / John Owen

The Works of John Owen. 453-474. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.

[BX9315.O94 W67 1965](#)

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1 Corinthians 12:11

Ministerial Endowments the Work of the Spirit / John Owen

The Works of John Owen. 441-451. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1965.

[BX9315.O94 W67 1965](#)

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Spiritual Gifts Essential to a Visible Church-State / John Owen

The Gospel Standard 123, no.1464 (Dec 1957): 353-361.

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- **12:1-11** Wickliff, John, "Of Spiritual Gifts," *Writings of the Reverend and Learned John Wickliff*, vol. 1 in the set, *The British Reformers*, pp. 215-218.
- **12:6** Nettleton, Asahel, notes for a sermon, *Sermons*, pp. 466-467.
- **12:13** Boston, Thomas, "Of Union with Christ," *Commentary on the*

Shorter Catechism, i.544-556.

- Boston, Thomas, "How the Sacraments Become Effectual Means of Salvation," *Commentary on the Shorter Catechism*, ii.460-465.
 - **12:27-28** Baxter, Richard, "Christ, & Not the Pope, Universal Head of the Church," *The Morning Exercises*, v.672-689.
 - **12:28** Spurgeon, C.H., "Helps," #777, *MTP* 13.589-600.
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PURITAN QUOTES ON FRUIT

Matthew Henry (1662–1714)

- "Nothing so much prevents men from entering the strait gate, and becoming true followers of Christ, as the carnal, soothing, flattering doctrines of those who oppose the truth. They may be known by the drift and effects of their doctrines. ... Here is a good rule to go by in this caution; we must prove all things (1 Th. 5:21), try the spirits (1 Jn. 4:1), and here we have a touchstone; ye shall know them by their fruits, 16-20." — Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 5, Matthew–John (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, n.d.), 107–108 (on Matthew 7:15–20).
- "By their fruits ye shall know them. ... The drift and effects of their ministry will show what they are. ... If men pretend to inspiration, and are either conscious or manifestly guilty of gross enormities, it is a great sign that they are deceivers." — *Ibid.*, 108.

John Trapp (1601–1669)

- In commenting on Matthew 7:16–20, Trapp notes the natural analogy: "Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles. ... A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ... The tree is known by its fruit, so is the man by his works and words." (Paraphrased from his exposition, emphasizing doctrine and life as fruit.) — John Trapp, *A Commentary or Exposition upon the Four Evangelists* (London: Printed by R. White for Thomas Sawbridge, 1656), 113–114 (on Matthew 7; modern reprint: *Trapp's Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 1 [Eureka, CA: Tanski Publications, 1997], 145–147).

Thomas Manton (1620–1677)

- "A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. ... The heart is the tree, and actions are the fruits; and as the tree is, so will the fruit be." (In sermons touching on sanctification and

discernment.) — Thomas Manton, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, vol. 2 (London: James Nisbet, 1871; repr., Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 345 (from sermons on related texts; cf. his exposition of heart-fruit in James and Matthew parallels).

- On false profession: "Many will say, Lord, Lord; but if the tree be corrupt, the fruit will be corrupt; profession without fruit is but leaves." — Ibid., vol. 10, 278 (sermons on Matthew 7 and parallels).

Thomas Brooks (1608–1680)

- "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ... The best way to know the nature of the tree is by the fruits it bears; so the best way to know the state of the heart is by the fruits of the life." — Thomas Manton [sic—attributed in collections, but Brooks echoes]: Thomas Brooks, *The Complete Works of Thomas Brooks*, vol. 1, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices* (London: Printed by G. Dawson for John Rothwell, 1662; repr., Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 142–143 (analogous use in discussing evidences).
- "By their fruits ye shall know them; a good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit, nor a bad tree good fruit. ... Hypocrites may make a great profession, but they bring forth no good fruit unto holiness." — Thomas Brooks, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, vol. 3, *Heaven on Earth* (1654; repr., Banner of Truth, 1980), 456 (on assurance and fruit).

Other Puritan Voices (from Collected Works)

- **Richard Sibbes** (1577–1635): "The tree is known by its fruits; so a gracious heart by its gracious actions and affections." (From his works on sanctification.) — Richard Sibbes, *The Works of Richard Sibbes*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 89.
- **John Owen** (1616–1683): In discussing evidences of regeneration, Owen notes: "Good fruit cannot proceed from a corrupt tree; where the root is gracious, the fruit will be answerable." — John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 3, *The Nature and Causes of Apostasy from the Gospel* (repr., Banner of Truth, 1968), 212.
- **John Flavel** (1627–1691): "Ye shall know them by their fruits; for a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit. ... The profession may be fair, but if the life be wicked, the tree is bad." — John Flavel, *The Works of John Flavel*, vol. 2 (repr., Banner of Truth, 1968), 567 (from sermons on discernment).

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Foundational Understanding of Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12:1)

1. The sermon cites statistics showing that many self-identified Christians are unfamiliar with spiritual gifts or misunderstand them. Why does Paul say he does **not** want believers to be "uninformed" or "ignorant" about spiritual gifts (v. 1)? What dangers arise from ignorance in this area, according to the sermon?
2. The sermon argues that the principles in 1 Corinthians 12–14 apply directly to believers today, not just the first-century Corinthians. Do you agree? Why or why not? How might ignorance of spiritual gifts lead to pride, false teaching, or sinful living in our modern context?

Remembering Our Spiritual Past (1 Cor. 12:2)

3. Paul reminds the Corinthians that they were once "pagans" led astray to "mute idols." Why does the sermon emphasize that Christians must **not** be ignorant of their spiritual past? How does remembering who we were before Christ promote humility when considering spiritual gifts?
4. The sermon warns against bringing former pagan ways into Christian life and calling them the work of the Holy Spirit. Can you think of modern examples where people might confuse old sinful patterns (e.g., certain practices or attitudes) with spiritual activity? How can remembering our past help draw clear lines?

Discerning Spiritual Fruit – The Test in Verse 3 (1 Cor. 12:3)

5. Paul states that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says "Jesus is accursed" (anathema), and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit. What does "Jesus is accursed" mean in the Corinthian context, according to the sermon? Why is this "rotten fruit" and evidence against the Holy Spirit's work?
6. The sermon connects "Jesus is accursed" to historical and modern examples (e.g., certain Talmudic teachings in Judaism). How does this illustrate the sermon's point about rotten fruit? Does this change how you view interfaith dialogue or claims of shared spiritual ground between Christianity and other religions?
7. In contrast, what does it mean to truly say "Jesus is Lord" (not just mouthing the words, but from the heart)? How does the sermon use Ephesians 2:1-10 to explain this as evidence of the Holy Spirit's healthy fruit? What does this say about salvation being entirely a gift of grace?
8. The sermon uses analogies (e.g., rotten vs. sweet fruit on trees, boys and girls picking fruit) to teach discernment. How can we apply this test today

when someone claims spiritual insight, prophecy, or a "word from God" but produces questionable fruit?

Broader Application: Recognizing True and False Christians (Matthew 7 and Galatians 5)

9. The sermon warns of "wolves in sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15-23) and says we recognize them by their fruits, not appearance or profession. Even if someone says "Lord, Lord," what does Jesus say about those who practice lawlessness? How does this connect to 1 Corinthians 12:3?
10. Compare the "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19-21) with the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23). Which categories of rotten fruit (e.g., relational ones like strife, jealousy, divisions) are hardest to spot in people who seem "spiritual" or claim to speak for God? Why?
11. The sermon notes that true gentleness is not merely "being nice" but involves submissiveness to God's will, teachability, and consideration of others—even when confronting error (as Paul did). How does this redefine modern misunderstandings of gentleness? Can you think of biblical examples where confronting false teaching was an act of healthy fruit?

Personal and Practical Application

12. The sermon exhorts believers to humble themselves by remembering their past, use gifts to build up the church, and say "thank you" to God daily by loving Him and keeping His commandments. How can remembering Ephesians 2 (salvation as 100% grace) fuel gratitude and obedience in your life?
 13. For unbelievers: The sermon ends with a call to turn to Christ alone for salvation. If someone is still "led astray" by idols or self, what does the gospel offer them based on this passage?
 14. Personal reflection: Do you see evidence of the Holy Spirit's healthy fruit (love, joy, peace, etc.) in your life, or areas of rotten fruit that need repentance? How might you seek the Spirit's work more intentionally as you consider spiritual gifts?
 15. The sermon cautions against learning about spiritual gifts from those who produce rotten fruit (e.g., certain charismatic figures). How should this affect the sources we trust for teaching on gifts, the Spirit, or Christian living?
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SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Brothers and sisters in Christ, friends, visitors, the passage of scripture that is before us in 1 Corinthians 12:3 is dealing with spiritual gifts. This is the context that we find ourselves in this letter. Verse three may not seem like it is dealing with spiritual gifts as we just zoom in on it, but that is what the whole of chapters 12-4 is actually about. This was a question that they had sent to Paul the apostle. They had asked him about spiritual gifts. And so he is responding to that now in a letter that he wrote to this church in Corinth in the first century. Look at verse one again and let me remind you. He says, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed." So spiritual gifts, that is what he is writing about. And he does not want them to be uninformed or ignorant. I do not want you to be ignorant of the truth. And so let me remind you why this is crucial not only for the first century church in Corinth, but why this whole section is crucial for you and I to understand today. This is not something far removed that we can look back and just try to say, well, they were dealing with something really differently in the first century. And we have got to try to understand it and then really pull it forward in our day and see how we can apply the principles like no you can just take it from them and put it right here on us and say wow this we need to learn exactly what they needed to learn. Let me just remind you or maybe teach you for the first time why this is such a big deal. 68% of self-identified Christians in the United States have never even heard of spiritual gifts. 68% who profess the name of Christ have never even heard of spiritual gifts. 21% of those who had heard of spiritual gifts said that God had not given them any spiritual gift which contradicts scripture. The Holy Spirit has given a gift to every believer. Everyone who is truly in Christ has been given a spiritual at least one spiritual gift. And roughly 20% of people who were surveyed listed gifts like spiritual gifts that are not found in the Bible. So they just think, well, I am gifted in this way. This is a spiritual gift. God, the Holy Spirit has given me. But then they list things like humor, singing, health, happiness, patience, creativity, clairvoyance, or even premonition. The last two being more akin to like demonic stuff than anything to do with God, the Holy Spirit. that is 20% of those who professed to have received gifts. They listed gifts that are not even in the scripture. Only about one-third of the people surveyed in this study accurately identified spiritual gifts that are actually spiritual gifts as revealed by God in the scriptures. So there are many professed Christians today in our world who are the opposite of what Paul says we should be in 1 Corinthians 12:1 says you must not be ignorant. I do not want you to be ignorant. And many Christians in our day are exactly that. And maybe you are one of them. Maybe you are one of them where you do not really know. You do not know what your spiritual gifts are. Or you do not maybe you think a certain thing is a spiritual gift that is actually not. Or maybe you just do not think about it at all. Some overemphasize it. Some underemphasize

it. Some distort it. Some use it for their own pride. But we really need to understand spiritual gifts in our day. And that is exactly what we have got before us in 1 Corinthians chapters 12-4. Now, let me remind you exactly of what he said in verse one. This is the first truth we learn. And remember, these first three verses in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 are like the foundational things that Paul wants you and I to understand before he even starts talking about spiritual gifts. First just got to lay some foundational truths that we can properly understand and then it is as if he is like, okay, if you get those things in order, then we can start building on that foundation. So the first truth is what I have already said to you even now that Christians must not be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. that is what he says in verse one. Concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. I do not want you to be ignorant. Why? Why is it such a big deal? Well, if you are ignorant concerning spiritual gifts, you will likely fall into pride or you will fall into false teaching. Whether you are doing the false teaching or you are listening to those who are doing the false teaching or you will fall into sinful living and say things like, "Well, God, the Holy Spirit is at work in my life, but you are walking in darkness." Or you may even blatantly mock the Lord Jesus Christ if you are ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. Verse three shows that there were those who were claiming to be filled by the spirit, a work of the spirit, and they are saying things like, "Jesus is in hell." Like, what? So, there is one example of uh blatantly mocking the Lord Jesus Christ because you are ignorant about spiritual gifts. Or if you are ignorant about spiritual gifts, you may hear other people blatantly mock the Lord Jesus Christ and you do not actually stand up for Christ and say that is wrong. do not talk about the Lord like that. do not do that and say it is the Holy Spirit. that is wrong. As you and I should when things like that happen. So we must not be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. that is the first truth in verse one. Now look at verse two. And this is the one that we looked at last Lord's day. But let me remind you, God reminds Christians of who we used to be before he saved us by his grace through faith in Christ. Verse two, you know that when you were pagans, that is identity. You were led astray. that is activity. Sinful behavior to mute idols. that is idolatry. However, you were led. Basically just saying you were all idolators before God saved you for Christ's sake. And this is the truth that we learn. These are like the foundational things you have got to learn before we can even consider spiritual gifts. The second one is Christians must not be ignorant of their spiritual past. Before we even talk about spiritual gifts, he is saying, "Remember who you used to be. You used to be pagans. You were led astray after mute idols." Unless any of you raise your hand and say, "I was not." He says, "However you were led, you were led astray by mute idols. You were pagans. All of you were before God saved you." Why do we need to constantly remember who we were before Christ saved us? not be ignorant of our spiritual past. Well, first of all, so that we would humble ourselves. We would humble ourselves remembering anything we good, anything we have that is good is a gift of God's sovereign grace. So, anything we have that is good is a gift of God's grace. This is who I used to be. Without God's grace, I was a pagan, led astray after mute idols, however I was led. Now that God

has saved me, he is given me spiritual gifts, at least one. And so I cannot be prideful about it because all I have is a gift. So why does he want you and I to remember who we used to be before God saved us so that we would sufficiently humble ourselves and never be prideful about the spiritual gift God has given us that we are to use for the good of the church. But also, I think he wants us in verse two to remember who we used to be so that we would have clear lines drawn in the church and in our own personal lives to make sure that we do not bring any of our former sinful pagan led astray lifestyle into our Christian life or into the life of the church and then somehow say this is a work of God the Holy Spirit. There has to be a clear line drawn. This is who you used to be. You used to be led astray after mute idols. Now you are not anymore. So why are you still saying things like Jesus is a cursed that you used to say when you were an unbeliever, but now you are saying it, but you are just saying, "Oh, it is the work of God, the Holy Spirit. that is why I am saying it." Like, no, no, no. There has to be a clear line drawn between your former identity and your former activity and now that you are a Christian. So we need to we cannot be ignorant of our spiritual past. We cannot be ignorant about spiritual gifts in general. And now we come to verse three. Look at verse three in your Bible in 1 Corinthians 12. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the spirit of God that is God the Holy Spirit ever says Jesus is accursed. This is a that word accursed is the word anathema in Greek and it is actually a word that is still we even say it even normal English speakers like me and like you we still say that word and the Roman Catholic Church uses that word in their catechisms and in their councils. it is a it is one of those words that a lot of people actually know the Greek word because it is just so popularized. anathema. Let him I mean Paul says he uses that word twice in Galatians 1. He says if anyone preaches a different gospel not that there is another gospel let him be anathema. Then he says it again. I say to you as I said before if anyone preaches a different gospel than I have preached to you even if I come or an angel from heaven let him be anathema. What is anathema? Jesus is anathema. Let him be anathema. What does that mean? it is basically saying let this person go to hell. Let him be anathema is like saying banish that person to hell to suffer under the just wrath of God. that is what he means in Galatians 1. Let him be anathema. So what does it mean when people in the Corinthian church were under the guise of God the Holy Spirit is doing this? I am speaking by the spirit of God and they are saying Jesus is anathema. What does that mean? they are saying "Jesus is suffering in hell under the judgment of God." "Jesus is accursed." "Jesus is wicked." "Jesus is evil." that is what they are saying by "Jesus is anathema." they are not saying something like the Apostles Creed says that I believe Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate and then went to hell for three days and came... No, no, no. that is not what they are saying. they are saying Jesus is in hell right now because he is wicked and he is suffering for sin, for his sin. that is what they were saying in Corinth. And so people were like, "Uh, red flag goes up. that is weird. that is not right." And then the person would say, "it is an utterance of the spirit. it is my spiritual gift that I am using. I am, you know, I have the spiritual gift of prophecy." And they apparently

accepted it or wrote Paul about. they are like, "we have got this problem. I think it is a problem. This one guy has been saying Jesus is a curse. Jesus is anathema like during our worship services and saying it is God the Holy Spirit. What do we do about that? And so Paul is having to deal with that in verse three. But what should we really learn from verse three? Overall big picture doctrine. Verse one, you cannot be ignorant about spiritual gifts. Verse two, you cannot be ignorant about your spiritual past. Verse three, you cannot be ignorant about spiritual fruit. that is what he is teaching us in verse three. You cannot turn off your brain because someone says this is the God, the Holy Spirit is producing this, but the fruit you are seeing is rotten. And you say, "But they said Jesus." they are talking about Jesus. they are saying God the Holy Spirit is doing this. So what are we to make of it? it is like, well, if the fruit is bad, then you cannot turn your brain off to that just because they say it is God the Holy Spirit who is doing it. it is obvious that they are lying. they are not speaking in the spirit of God. So that is the doctrine that you and I should understand from verse three. it is their specific context of what is happening. But the thing that Paul is teaching before we even get into listing spiritual gifts is you cannot be ignorant of spiritual fruit, especially when you are talking about spiritual gifts. Those go together. they are not separated. And those of you who grew up in the charismatic or the charismaniac movement or those of you who have studied into those movements, you know, you know that is exactly right. We cannot turn our brains off to the fruit that is coming out of people just because they say it is God. The Holy Spirit is doing something. Like when the fruit is bad, it shows that the tree is bad. And that is really what Paul's getting at. I just want you to understand that no one speaking in the spirit of God produces this kind of rotten fruit and says Jesus is in hell.

And no one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit. See getting that? Before we even talk about spiritual gifts, you must not be ignorant. do not turn your brain off to spiritual fruit. Boys and girls, look up here at me. What Paul is teaching us, what God is teaching us through Paul in First Corinthians 12:3 is that you and I need to be aware. We need to watch out for what comes out of people, what they say, what they do. If someone says or does evil things, but they say, "God's the one who told me to do that." Something like that. What should you think? Someone does an evil thing. And but and then you say, "Hey, that is wrong." And they say, "No, no, no, no. God, God did that through me." Yeah, but you just punched me in the face. or you just stole something from me or you said Jesus is in hell. Kids, imagine someone comes up to you and says, "Jesus is not in heaven ascended to the right hand of the father, but Jesus is suffering for his own sins in hell." Imagine someone said that to you. What would you think? Would you think they are telling you the truth or they are lying? they are lying. But what if they say, "No, no, no, no. God told me to say that to you." Should then you go, "Oh, well, I guess it is true." Or should you say, "I do not care who you said told you. you are lying and God did not tell you to say that." that is what you should say, right? it is like, "No, Jesus is not in hell. You cannot say that God told you to say that. I do not

believe you." You and I have to be aware of things like that. that there are people who say things or do things and say, "God is leading me to do this or God told me to say this, but the fruit is bad." And you just go, "No, no, no. If I pick that fruit off of a tree and I bite it and it tastes rotten, like you cannot convince me that is a good tree." If the fruit is rotten, imagine that, boys and girls. You see a tree and it looks beautiful. It looks delicious. it is got fruit hanging from it. And I tell you, imagine I told you that is a great healthy tree. Go pick off some fruit and eat it. It looks okay. So you walk up to it, pick something off. But then when you bite it, it is like the worst taste you could ever imagine. Not just cuz you do not like the fruit, but because it is rotten. What if I said, "Yeah, but that is a really healthy good tree. Should you believe me?" like it really does not seem like it is a good tree. It looks like it, but the fruit growing from it is rotten, so it is not a good tree. There are some trees that are more simple looking and they do not look as magnificent or beautiful, but you walk up to it and pluck off the fruit and taste it and you and it is sweet like nothing you have ever tasted. Someone says, "that is a rotten tree. Look at it. It does not look as good as this beautiful one over here. Look how terrible that tree is. But if you go up to that normal looking tree and the fruit is sweet, is it a good tree or a rotten tree? it is a good tree. that is how we have to view people, adults. that is how we have to think, especially when examining spiritual gifts. You cannot turn your brain off to spiritual fruit. So I want to note two main truths to you from this text and then we will try to make some application. First just what we have to understand what is going on here. When someone says Jesus is anathema that is rotten fruit and therefore not a product of God the Holy Spirit. When someone says Jesus is anathema, that is rotten fruit and therefore not a product of God the Holy Spirit. Look again at the beginning of verse three. Therefore, I want you to understand that no one speaking in the spirit of God ever says Jesus is a cursed or Jesus is anathema. John Trap, the great Puritan commentator of the 17th century, said this phrase, "Jesus is a cursed is something that the Gentiles used to say and these Corinthians probably used to say before they were converted." We say, "No, Jesus is a curse. I do not want anything to do with him." Because before they were Christians, they would say, "This is a rival God to our pagan gods that they actually believed in, to the Roman gods that they submitted to or the Greek gods that they submitted to." And so they would say, "No, no, no. We do not believe in Jesus. Jesus is a cursed." And so they used to say that and then there were apparently those who were still saying things like that, but saying it was God, the Holy Spirit. By the way, did you know that this Jesus is a cursed is exactly what modern Judaism teaches today?

Did you know that this this phrase Jesus is a cursed or Jesus is in hell that was said in the Corinthian church that Paul has to write on probably thinking like I cannot believe I have to say this. Anybody saying that is not speaking in the spirit of God. that is exactly what modern Judaism teaches today. The Talmud, which is their book that they go to. They say they read the Old Testament, especially the law, but it is all filtered through the Talmud, which was produced by the Pharisees,

who were the biggest opponents of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Talmud explicitly teaches that Jesus is being punished in hell and even boiling in human excrement.

that is what modern Orthodox Jews believe today. that is what, for instance, that is what Ben Shapiro believes. Though we agree with him on a lot of, you know, conservative type issues. I am sure you might agree with him on a lot of stuff. They believe that. that is what the Talmud teaches. In a story involving necromancy, the spirit of the sinners of Israel, which is representing Jesus and the Talmud, reveals that Jesus is being eternally tormented in boiling human excrement for mocking the sages words. The Talmud graphically rejects Jesus divinity. It rejects Jesus sinless life. It rejects Jesus substitutionary death. It rejects his resurrection and overall the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The Talmud teaches that Jesus was a Jewish rebel against Rome who got killed for his trouble and is now suffering in hell.

Many people...I bring this up be not to try to go off course but because that is exactly what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians 12:3. And you remember I just read to you a quote by John Trap is a great Bible commentator from the 17th century—a Puritan Bible commentator. He understood what even in his day modern Jews believed he understood what the Talmud taught about the Lord Jesus Christ. So that is why in his commentary when he comes to this verse here is the entire thing that he says. I told you that he mentions the Gentiles used to but this is what trap says. "'Jesus is accursed' as the wicked Jews do in this day in their daily prayers and abbreviature."

They have not turned from sin to faith in Jesus Christ but have built up a false religion that is nothing like the religion of Moses or Abraham or David. It is a totally separate thing. It is a religion built up to reject Christ and in fact explicitly teaches the thing Paul has to warn about here in 1 Corinthians 12:3.

Far from saying Jesus is Lord, the Talmud and modern Orthodox Jews say "Jesus is anathema." that is functionally what they say. This is not a work of God the Holy Spirit which produces healthy fruit. This is a work of the father of lies which produces rotten fruit. No one speaking in the spirit of God ever says Jesus is anathema. That is rotten fruit not coming from God the Holy Spirit but coming from the influence of Satan and demons saying things like Jesus is in hell or Jesus is accursed. If you would like to better understand modern Judaism as contrasted with biblical Christianity, come and talk to me after and I would love to give you a couple of short books to check out and just see this is what the Talmud says and you need we need to properly understand it honestly because Christians are being lied to in our day and told that like Judaism and Christianity are like cousins kind of or we share a bunch of values. Like that is just not the case. When one says Jesus is Lord and the other says Jesus is a cursed like that does not have any fellowship. We need to properly understand that. But the truth again that he is saying in

general is when someone says Jesus is anathema that is rotten fruit and therefore not a product of God the Holy Spirit. But then look secondly and see that he gives the opposite as well. He contrasts this and says and no one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit. Now, he does not simply mean you cannot possibly get make your mouth say the words Jesus is Lord without God the Holy Spirit, you know, regenerating you and filling you and working through you. You could make an argument for that that sure you could make the argument that you cannot actually do anything period without the sustaining work of God. But that is not what he is getting at. it is not saying, you know, for instance, there is a very famous scene in a movie where Shia Labuff is playing a priest and he is looking at someone saying, "Say Christ is Lord. Say Christ is Lord. Christ is Lord." And as far as I understand, Shia Labeouf is still not a believer. And so Paul's not saying the only way he could have said those words acting in a movie. The only way you can say it is if God the Holy Spirit, you know, is not working in you and you are a true believer. he is not saying that. You can falsely say Christ is Lord. I think there is plenty of professed believers who have not actually been converted who say Christ is Lord. I think Christ makes that clear in Matthew 7 as well. There are many who say to me, "Lord, Lord," but they are not actually believers. So that is not what he is saying. he is saying no one can truly from the heart trust in and submit to Christ Jesus as Lord except by the Holy Spirit. That is a work of God the Holy Spirit. When a true believer is proclaiming Christ as Lord, that is evidence of healthy fruit. That is a product of God the Holy Spirit. So when someone says Jesus is Lord in that sense there that is healthy fruit and therefore a product of God the Holy Spirit. Listen to Matthew Henry on this. He says to own this truth that Jesus is Lord before other men and maintain it to death and live under the influence of it could not be done without the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. No man can call Christ Lord with a believing subjection to him and dependence upon him unless that faith be wrought by the Holy Ghost. No man can confess this truth in the day of trial but by the Holy Spirit animating and encouraging him. Note, we have as necessary a dependence on the spirit and operation and influence for our sanctification and perseverance as on the mediation of Christ for our reconciliation and acceptance with God. We need God the Holy Spirit. So, the only way any of us believes and submits to Christ Jesus as Lord is by the power and persuasion of God, the Holy Spirit. that is what he is getting at. Now, I want you to turn in your Bibles with me, just a few pages to the right, and go to Ephesians chapter 2.

1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, then Ephesians. Go to Ephesians chapter 2:4 and just wonder with me and think with me like this is how so if you think of 1 Corinthians 12:2 this is who you used to be and then you think of the last part of 1 Corinthians 12:3 by the Holy Spirit you now profess Christ as Lord it is the same kind of thing that Paul does in Ephesians 2 Ephesians 2 1-3 is who you used to be in your sin in Ephesians 2 4-10 is now because of the gracious work of God the Holy Spirit and applying the redemption purchased by Christ to you. This is what happens now. This is who you are now. So just as in 1 Corinthians 12, you used to

be pagans led astray by mute idols, but now Christians because of the work of God the Holy Spirit in your life, you now profess Jesus Christ as Lord. And it is true. You mean it. And so you can think of Ephesians 2:4-10 like an expansive commentary on 1 Corinthians 12:3. he is saying, "You now say Christ is Lord because the spirit is at work in you." What does the spirit do when he changes us from pagans to those who submit to Christ through faith? He says, "But God...but God," so if you think of 1 Corinthians 12:2, you were pagans led astray after mute idols. However you were led, that is the same kind of thing as he lays out in Ephesians 2 1-3. you are dead in trespasses and sins. you are by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind. But God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses. Now, here is the work of God, the Holy Spirit, applying the redemption that Christ purchased for you. If you are a Christian, this is what is happened to you. you were dead and God the Holy Spirit takes the redemption purchased by Christ and applied it to you without your permission. Just like someone is raised from the dead, you were dead and then he made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. that is why he says that at that part of verse 5 to he is like, "I was dead and then he resurrected me spiritually." he is saying, "Yes, that is exactly what I am saying. It was a total gift that you were saved. It was a gift that you received passively, not actively, and that God bestowed upon you. By grace, you have been saved." Verse six, look. And it is not even that, but also he is raised us up with him, Christ, and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. he is raised us to the position of Christ, not authoritatively, but we are fellows, joint heirs with Christ. he is our big brother. He represents us before God. So, we are seated with him even in the heavenly places. that is how secure your salvation is in Christ. believers, you are seated with him in the heavenly places. You cannot get touched. Your eternal destiny is secure if you are united to Christ by faith. he is raised us up and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So that verse seven, why does he do this? Why does he save us by grace? so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this which underlines the grace and the faith in the Greek and this is not your own doing. The grace is not your own doing. The faith by which you trusted in Christ was not your own doing. That is a gift as well. This is not your own doing. It is the gift of God. The grace is a gift. Even the faith is a gift by which we cling to Christ. This is not your own doing. It is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Think of that like a commentary to no one can say Christ is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. that is evidence of the Holy Spirit is influence. you have been saved. If you cling to Christ, then you have been saved by the grace, the 100% gift of God. Boys and girls, look up here at me. Every bit of our salvation from sin, death, hell, the wrath of God, being saved from that and into God's love, every bit of it is a gift. Grace, that is what the word grace means, a gift. Every bit of it is a gift. God does not do 99% of it and then you have to do 1%.

No, God does 100% of the saving. All of our salvation, every bit from beginning to end is a gift that God the Father gives us because he planned our redemption. God the Son gives it to us because he purchased our redemption. And God, the spirit gives it to us because he applies the redemption the father planned and the son purchased. Every bit of it is a gift. Our job, your job, what you need to think is I need to receive that gift by trusting in Christ. that is it. Trust in Christ alone for salvation as he is offered you offered to you in the gospel. It is all grace. It is all a gift. Boys and girls, what should you do to someone who gives you a great gift? what is the first thing you should do? Carson, say it louder. What did you say? "Say thank you." That is exactly right. What should you do, boys and girls? Look at me. What should you do when someone gives you a great gift? what is the first thing? Thank you. Yeah, say thank you. How can you and I possibly say thank you to God who saved us by grace? Is it enough to simply the gift of eternal salvation, the gift of eternal life that Christ bought for us on the cross? Is it enough boys and girls to just say thank you once? Someone gives you a gift like that. God gives us this gift of salvation in Christ. it is not enough to just say thank you. But we, you and I are to live every day saying thank you. And boys and girls, here is the simple thing. Someone gives you a gift like God has given us in Christ Jesus. it is our duty to say thank you. And the way you and I say thank you every day is by loving him and keeping his commandments. that is how you say thank you. that is how you glorify God. You love him and you keep his commandments. that is even what your catechism, the Boys and Girls Baptist Catechism says. How can I glorify God? By loving him and keeping his commandments. that is also how you say thank you to God for his great grace and salvation. Adults, are you an ingrate? Are you ungrateful for the free gift of salvation that God has bestowed upon you through Jesus Christ? I would hope all of you would say, "I do not want to be." Well, show your thankfulness. Show your gratefulness by loving him and keeping his commandments. that is how you say thank you every day. Now, there we have got the truths here. When someone says Jesus is Lord, that is healthy fruit coming from a product of God the Holy Spirit. When someone says Jesus is anathema, that is rotten fruit and therefore not a product of God the Holy Spirit. Now, how do we apply this more broadly? I have got just two uses for instruction. Two main things that you and I need to know. First, how we should apply this for instruction is you will know false Christians by their rotten fruit. that is what you need to learn. The specific rotten fruit was someone saying Jesus is in hell while professing to be a Christian. it is like, okay, they professed to be a believer but said this no rotten fruit. that is pretty easy. False Christians will be known by their rotten fruit. Boys and girls, someone comes up to you and says they are a Christian, but they say Jesus is not in heaven. he is suffering for his own sins in hell. Should you believe them that they are a Christian? Are they actually a Christian? it is like you cannot you cannot believe that and be a Christian. You think Jesus is dead? You think he is in hell suffering? No. Yeah, it is pretty easy adults that would be easy to spot rotten fruit, right? But a lot of times it is not so easy. This is tee-ball for us today in 1 Corinthians 12:3. it is why probably when you read that verse, it is like, is he

really saying that? Did he really have to say that? He did for the early church. But sometimes it is not so easy to spot rotten fruit. I want you to turn with me in your Bible to Matthew chapter 7. I want you to see the necessity of being on guard concerning those who profess to be Christians but produce rotten fruit that reveals they are not at all.

You need to have these categories. Matthew 7:15-23. You need to have these categories very clear in your mind or you are going to fall prey to false Christians who present themselves as one way like a beautiful tree but then the fruit is rotten. But you do not have enough discernment to say, "Yeah, the tree looks nice, but the fruit is rotten, so it must be a rotten tree." So many believers today just see the presentation like the Pharisees did. They wash the outside of the cup, but inside they were filthy. Christians today just see the outside of the cup or just see a tree that looks beautiful and the fruit is kind of rotten. It is like, well, but the tree looks great. It is like, but the fruit is rotten. And that is how you judge a tree, by the fruit, not by how it is presented. You need to know these things and have these things clear or you are going to be led astray by false teachers. You are going to be devoured by wolves and you are going to make shipwreck of your life or of other people's lives if you listen to false prophets or wolves or those who profess to be believers but are actually just false Christians producing rotten fruit. Matthew 7:15-23. This is toward the end of Christ's sermon on the mount right before he says "Build your house on the rock" and him finishing with that he says Matthew 7:15-23 "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Beware of false prophets. Pseudo prophetess is the word pseudo prophets, meaning they might look like prophets, act like prophets, talk like they are prophets, but they are fake. They are pseudo prophets. So, beware of false prophets who come to you in what clothing? Sheep's clothing. This means one of two things. And in this day, when Christ is in Palestine, he is teaching, he is in Galilee, he says, "Sheep's clothing." And that is a common phrase like watch out for wolves in sheep's clothing. Does it mean the wolf is pretending to be a sheep? That is the common understanding or this the typical understanding. Or does it actually mean how shepherds functioned in this day which was the shepherd wore sheep's wool as if to fit right in with the flock. It means one of two. It means the wolf is pretending to be a sheep or the wolf is pretending to be a shepherd. One of the two. So sometimes the wolf just pretends to be an innocent Christian and sometimes the wolf I think pretends to be the spiritual leader and guider, the one that everyone needs to listen to. Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. How do we recognize wolves? Those who want to lead astray Christ's flock after themselves or devour them, cause division with Christ's flock. Separate sheep out so they can pick them off. How do we recognize ravenous wolves? Verse 16, you will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? So every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does

not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

You spot wolves not by how they look, not by how they present themselves, not by what they profess. You spot wolves by what they actually work and do and produce. The question that could come up then is what if they profess to be Christians? What if they say, "I am doing this for your good." What if they say, "I am doing this for the church's good." Or what if they say, "I am doing this for the pastor's good." What if they say that "Jesus is Lord"? I am just trying to obey Jesus. What if they say that? Well, look at verse 21. Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my father who is in heaven. This is building off of the fruits. you will know them by their fruits. Even if they say Christ is Lord, Christ is Lord. They can say that. But if they do not act like that and the fruit that is coming from them is diseased, then it does not matter what their profession is. No, they are not doing the will of my father who is in heaven. And the will of Christ's father is that you would go and bear good fruit on that day. Verse 22, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, again, they call Jesus Lord. So, so help us understand Paul does not mean you cannot actually get the words Jesus is Lord out of your mouth unless you know God the Holy Spirit has saved you and sanctifying you. that is not what he means. Because on that day, the final day, the day of judgment, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.

You will know false Christians by their rotten fruit. In Corinth, it was Jesus's accursed. What Jesus warns of in Matthew 7 are wolves in sheep's clothing. And you will recognize them by their fruits. Even if they profess to be Christians and that everything they are doing is, you know, for the glory of God or for the good of other people. But if the fruit that is produced from that is rotten, you say that I am supposed to recognize you by your fruit, not your profession. Your fruit, not what you look like because you have sheep's clothing on. What does that rotten fruit actually look like? I mean, Jesus says in Matthew 7, you will know a tree by its fruit. Well, what does that bad or as he says in Matthew 7, diseased fruit look like? Turn with me back and go to Galatians.

I know I am having you turn more than normal, but I want you to go with me to Galatians chapter 5 19- 21 and just see this is a a list, a vice list. The these are called the works of the flesh. Another way you could think of it is diseased fruit. What does diseased fruit look like? That Christ says, "You will know them by their fruits."

Galatians 5:es 19 through first part of verse 21.

Now the works of the flesh are evident, meaning obvious. that is why Christ just says, "You will know them by their fruits." He does not even go into further detail there. But Paul does here in Galatians 5. The works of the flesh are evident. they are obvious. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. Not even an exhaustive list. things like these sexual immorality. He says first, this the Greek word from where we get our English word pornography, *Porneia*. it is just a junk drawer term that means any kind of sexual activity in the mind or through the hands, through the works of the body that is outside of the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. fill in the blank of whatever you want to outside of this within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman and that would be *Porneia*. that is what it means. that is an obvious work of the flesh. Impurity. Next he mentions that sexual impurity or uncleanness. you will know them by their fruit. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality. Sensuality means unbridled lust or unrestrained indulgences. Then we have idolatrous works of the flesh. Not only sexually immoral works of the flesh or diseased fruit. you will know them by their fruit. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality. Then he says idolatry, trusting in or serving created things rather than the creator, however formal or informal that idol is. He says sorcery next which is the Greek word *Pharmakeia* which is where we get our word pharmaceuticals and it is a word that has to do with worshiping demons but it became synonymous with the mind-altering drugs that people would use in order to worship those demons.

being out of your mind. Then he says relational works of the flesh. And it seems to me that the relational works of the flesh here that are mentioned, these are the ones that are hardest for Christians to identify in wolves because a wolf in sheep's clothing, let's say we have one. He comes in, but he is sleeping around. Like that is super easy. We just go, "Hey, no, you are lying. Impurity, sensuality, all that. he is an idolator or getting into sorcery. he is always high, something like that." it is like that is super easy. Like, no. And then the last one is drunkenness, orgies, things like these. it is like pretty easy to identify, right? like guys going to those parties or guy guys getting drunk all the time. Like that is easy rotten fruit to spot. But the relational works of the flesh are I would submit to you the ones that are harder to spot and that you need to watch out for especially because the other ones are just going to trigger so easily in your mind. The relational works of the flesh. First he says enmity. Look at look at Galatians 5 and see he says enmity. These are hateful attitudes towards others. Strife means bitter conflicts. Jealousy means hateful resentment caused by covetousness. Fits of anger. It just means outbursts of anger. Rivalries. That word rivalries actually it means electioneering. It means putting yourself forward especially over and against other people. that is what rivalries means. It's translated electioneering in some passages because that is what it means. It means you are putting yourself forward as the one that should be listened to or followed over and against other people. Rivalries. Then we have

dissensions. This is to stand apart from other people to be in dis-unity; to stand apart. Then next he says divisions. Divisions is creating new sects and it can mean capturing people. So dissensions and divisions are connected. Dissensions means I stand apart because sadly I am the only one who is willing to stand up for what is right or something like that. I am standing apart for the truth. Something like that. Separating from everyone else. that is dissensions. And then divisions is you have dissented. you are in dissension. So you are over here. And divisions is now I am going to try to get people to come over here with me. Try to get people to come over here with me. Capture them. it is the word we translated as. it is creating new sects. So dissensions is "I stand apart." I am alone wise. That kind of stuff. And then divisions is when you try to get people to come along with you. Then we have envy which is spite or just ill will or jealousy.

Then he finishes. what is rotten fruit? Well, drunkenness is one. This is intoxication with any kind of substance. It does not mean just wine as was most common in this day, but beer, liquor, any kind of substance, controlled substances as well. Drunkenness, being intoxicated, not being sober. Drunkenness, that is a that is rotten fruit. Then orgies or as it is translated some places carousing. They had special reference to those pagan worship ceremonies that many of the gentile converts had participated in the past and things like these. This is not an exhaustive list, but there is a list to cross reference with Christ saying you will know them by their fruits, by their rotten fruits. It'll make it evident. Boys and girls, you and I will know true Christians by their healthy fruit and we will know false Christians by their rotten fruit. Meaning, if what they do, what they produce is rottenness, disobedience to God, things that Paul says are works of the sinful flesh, that is pretty easy to identify.

And Christians, you identify them by their healthy fruit. Identify them by their healthy fruit. Look at verses 22 and 23. And this is the second use for instruction. You will know true Christians by their healthy fruit. Adults, you will know false Christians by the rotten fruit. You will know true Christians by their healthy fruit. This is the even this is the general principle that Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:3. The second part of it. No one could say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit. Jesus says in Matthew 7:17, "Every healthy tree bears good fruit." Every healthy tree bears good fruit.

So, what does the good fruit look like? Well, Galatians 5:22 and 23 shows us the fruit of the spirit. Look at it. Galatians 5:22 and 23. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Love is a healthy fruit. it is willing self-sacrifice for the good of another.

Joy is a healthy fruit. This is feelings of happiness that are based on spiritual

realities, namely Christ and being united to Christ. Joy that comes from being a Christian.

Peace is a healthy fruit, a fruit of the spirit. This peace is the tranquility of mind that comes from being reconciled to God, at peace with God, having him as your father.

Patience is another healthy fruit by which you can easily identify true Christians. Patience, being slow to anger, being long-suffering.

Kindness, this is a tender concern for other people. You actually care about others.

Goodness. This is virtue or uprightness of heart and life. Being virtuous. Faithfulness. This is not talking about faith in the promises, but faithfulness is loyalty and trustworthiness.

Gentleness, this is the most misunderstood fruit of the spirit of all of them in the New Testament. This word is used to describe three ideas. submissiveness to God's will, being teachable, and being considerate of other people. Is that what you thought when you read the word gentleness? It has to do with when things are raging around you, you can be calm and submitting to God's will even through the storms. This word is especially misunderstood and misapplied today because it is essentially gentleness means being nice. Like never saying something that is going to hurt someone else's feelings. that is a fruit of the spirit. Like nope, that ain't it. You think Paul had the spiritual gift of gentleness or the spiritual fruit rather of gentleness? I think so. But look at what he said in 1 Corinthians 12:3. Here is the Oklahoma translation. Any of you dummies saying Jesus is accursed, you are not Christians. that is not the Holy Spirit. Get out of here. No one saying Jesus is accursed is saying that by the spirit of God. No. That was not very gentle. If anyone preaches a different gospel, let him go to hell. or later in Galatians he said those who are preaching a different gospel to you I wish they would emasculate themselves adults stay with me on the metaphor he is saying those who teach that you must be circumcised and trust in Jesus to be a Christian I wish they would go all the way and just cut it all off that is what he means by I wish those who are upsetting you preaching this false gospel I wish they would imagine emasculate themselves, go all the way. Was that gentle under the modern understanding of the word gentle? Like, no. Was it gentle concerning this submissiveness to God's will, being teachable, and being considerate of others? Like, yeah, very considerate. But gentle does not mean the same thing that people today say it means. it is never used of God. Properly speaking, this word is never used of God. It is used of Jesus in his incarnation, but not used of God proper. Why? Because God does not have to be submissive to his own will or teachable. So this word does not apply to God, but it is applied to Christ in his incarnation, in his role as a

mediator, as he submits to the will of the father. that is what gentleness, that word that is translated gentleness, that is what it means.

Then lastly, he says self-control. there is a fruit of the spirit. Restraining passions or appetites. that is what self-control is. that is a good fruit.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. You will know true Christians by the healthy fruit they produce. Not by what they look at like necessarily, but by the fruit that comes out. And so you will know false Christians not by just what they look like or what they profess or what they say, but by the fruit that they produce.

So now let me just close and give you a few exhortations, very short exhortations. First, unbelievers turn to Christ alone for salvation. You are pagans. You are led astray after mute idols. However you are led, you are in the path of the wrath of God. But Christ Jesus offers you eternal life, forgiveness of sins, 100% grace. Turn to him, rest in him, trust in him alone for salvation, and you will be saved. Come and tell us you need to be baptized. You need to join with the church. Walk with the church the rest of your life for God's glory and for other people's good.

Now believers, here are concluding exhortations for you.

First, watch out for wolves and sheep's clothing. Watch out for those who do something like what was happening here? Jesus is a cursed. Hey, that is not right. Uh, it was the Holy Spirit. Wait, wait. Watch out for things like that and watch out for wolves and sheep's clothing.

Second, make certain you do not neglect to look for spiritual fruit as you consider spiritual gifts. You should not learn about the spiritual gifts from those who produce rotten spiritual fruit. And those of you who know the charismaniac movement today, you go, "Well, that excludes learning from most of them, actually, most of the big names." Make sure you do not neglect to look for spiritual fruit as you consider spiritual gifts.

Third, make sure you humble yourself by remembering your spiritual past, who you used to be, especially as you consider spiritual gifts.

Fourth, remember the high privilege of being chosen by the Father, purchased by the Son, and gifted by God the Holy Spirit. Christians, you have been chosen by the Father, bought by the Son, and gifted by the Holy Spirit so that you would build up the body of Christ using that gift that the spirit has given you. Remember that high privilege.

And my fifth and concluding exhortation to you is "say Christ is Lord."

Let's pray. Our father, we ask you to help us understand that we must examine a tree by its fruit, not simply by profession or outward appearance, but help us to have the discernment to be able to look at something that may not be so simple as Jesus is a cursed versus Jesus's Lord, but help us to be able to see rotten fruit and healthy fruit and be able to discern between the two. To see true Christians and then to also see and expose false Christians who are producing rotten fruit and trying to lead your people astray. As we consider spiritual gifts, help us not to turn our eyes off to spiritual fruit in any way so that we can make sure that we are not ignorant concerning spiritual gifts. We want to use them for your glory, for others good. We thank you for your word. We ask you to save those who are not yet in Christ and sanctify those who are. Those who are sick, we ask that you heal them. Those who are suffering, that you comfort them, those who are straying from you, that you grant them repentance and correct them. and those who are striving forward, please strengthen them so that they continue to glorify and enjoy you. In Christ's name, we ask all these things. Amen.