

Spiritual Gifts and the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

I. Review of the essentials on the Holy Spirit.

A. He is God.

1. Subordinate to but equal.

B. He is a person.

1. You can lie to Him—Acts 5:3
2. You can grieve Him—Ephesians 4:30
3. He has a will—1 Cor. 12:11
4. He has a personality.

C. He is personal.

1. He is an active helper.
2. His main agenda is transformation.
3. He empowers us to be victorious over sin.
4. He communicates with us.
5. He produces spiritual fruit in us.
6. He gives us special gifts.

II. The distinctions of the spiritual fruits and the gifts of the Spirit.

A. Fruits of the Spirit are Christ-like character traits produced in a believer's life.

B. Spiritual gifts are special abilities or empowerments given by the Holy Spirit.

III. 1st Corinthians 12:1-11

A. Paul does not want us to be ignorant about the gifts of the Holy Spirit (V.1).

1. Paul uses the same phrase six times in his writings addressing three main subjects.: The most contentious and divisive topics among Christians.
 - a. The Christian and Israel.
 - b. The end times and the second coming.

- c. The gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - B. Two mistakes the Church makes regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. An overemphasis of the gifts.
 - 2. An underemphasis of the gifts—or no emphasis at all!
 - C. No offense to Christ while in the Spirit (V.3).
 - 1. Under the Spirit, Jesus will never “be accursed”.
 - 2. Only through the Holy Spirit can one say Jesus is Lord (and mean it).
 - D. The nature of the spiritual gifts.
 - 1. Spiritual gifts are not natural talents.
 - 2. Spiritual gifts can be misused and abused.
 - 3. Spiritual gifts are not evidence of spiritual maturity and growth.
 - 4. Spiritual gifts are not given to you because you asked for them.
 - 5. Spiritual gifts are not acquired abilities or talents which a person is able to learn or produce.
 - 6. Spiritual gifts are a result of God’s grace.
 - 7. Spiritual gifts are God given “abilities” to edify the body of Christ—the church.
 - E. A variety of gifts (Vs. 7-10).
 - 1. Every Christian is given at least one spiritual gift (V.7).
 - 2. There are many different gifts—partial list (Vs. 8-10).
 - 3. The same gift can be administered differently (V.6).
 - F. Our responsibility with our spiritual gifts (V.11).
 - 1. We are not responsible for the outcome of the gift.
 - 2. We are responsible for being faithful in using our gift(s).
- IV. How do I know my spiritual gift?
- A. Walk in the Spirit.

Spiritual Gifts and the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

This morning will conclude this series on the Holy Spirit...not that we have exhausted all that there is in the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit...we could easily spend a year or two and still not cover all the Bible says regarding the Holy Spirit.

If you've been with us for these last couple months, I hope you've gained an intense interest in the Holy Spirit and will on your own keep searching more Biblical truth of this essential person of the godhead.

My goal was not to deliver to you high philosophical doctrine of the Holy Spirit but rather a more practical presentation that will help each one of us to live a life that glorifies God... only possible through the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

I think it would be beneficial for us to spend a little time to recap some of the main points we've covered...the Holy Spirit is not just some add on to our lives... some optional helper to get through life... He is essential for living the Christian life... He is essential to us before salvation, for salvation and life after salvation...

Most Christians forget about the Holy Spirit... many think He is just a spiritual force, a power... or even a feeling...a mystical experience... so let us not forget three things at a minimum...

1. He is God!

Stop and let that sink in...He is ever bit God as God the Father and God the Son... He is subordinate to the other two but He is completely equal to them... He possesses all their attributes... all their knowledge and power.

How casual we are as we are in God's presence... how undeserving we are of His love and grace... if we would stop and realize we are in the presence of GOD!... if we really understood this... what a difference... The Holy Spirit is GOD!

2. He is a person!

Some get confused or perplexed when we say the Holy Spirit, or God for that matter is a person...In the Biblical sense... a "person" is not defined as a human being...

The Holy Spirit is considered a person because Scripture consistently attributes to Him the attributes, actions, and relationships of a conscious, willful, and divine being — not an impersonal force — and He is the third Person of the one God in the Trinity.

People are human beings... that's why we don't call the Trinity three people... they are three "persons"... some Bible evidence of His personhood:

- **You can lie to Him**—Acts 5:3 **But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the proceeds of the land?"**

Energy forces don't care if you lie... only persons do

- **You can grieve Him**—Grieve = deep sorrow, distress, or emotional pain...Grieving the Holy Spirit occurs when believers act, speak, or think in ways that oppose His will, causing sorrow to the Spirit who is a personal, divine being.
Eph. 4:30 **Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** You can only grieve feeling, emotional persons.

- **He has a will**—1 Cor. 12:11 **But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.**

- **He has a personality**....He is God... He is a person.... And He is...

3. He is personal

This is what we've been focusing on the most...The Holy Spirit is a gift to the believer... the sanctified in Christ... at the moment of salvation, the believer receives the Holy Spirit... the Holy Spirit takes up residency in the believer...but He doesn't just take up room.

- **He is an active helper**—he comes alongside the believer to help in the daily walk with Christ... He guides, He empowers, He convicts, He intercedes.
- **His main agenda is transformation**—We come to Christ as a creature of the *world* and the Holy Spirit transforms us into a life that pleases God—Christlikeness.
- **He empowers us to be victorious over sin**—It is sin that gets in our way of a life pleasing to God... by our yielding to the Holy Spirit... setting our mind on God rather than the things of this world... the Holy Spirit will transform us from being an instrument of unrighteousness.... To an instrument of righteousness... something we cannot do ourselves.
- **The Holy Spirit communicates with us**... mainly through Scripture...
- **He produces spiritual fruit in us**... we can't produce fruit, so we don't... But the Holy Spirit... through our yielding hearts... our "abiding in Christ"... remember that?... our choosing to "dwell" in and with Christ... it's our choice... It is His work....and as we will see this morning
- **He gives us special gifts**

The Holy Spirit is God... He is a person... He is personal

The rest of this morning I want to talk some about the gifts of the Holy Spirit... This will be comparatively brief... If you want more on the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit... you can go to our web site and go to the sermons page.

Scroll down and find the series on 1st Corinthians... we went through the Book of 1st Corinthians back in 2023... scroll down through the series to 1s Corinthians chapter's 12,13,14... a mini series within a series on the gifts of the Holy Spirit...

The apostle Paul spends three chapters just on the gifts of the Holy Spirit... in fact... the only place Spiritual gifts are specifically dealt with are in Paul's writings except for one mention in 1 Peter 4)... you will find seven sermons taking you through those three chapters.

But this morning... some brief but I think important thoughts about the gifts of the Spirit... So turn to 1st Corinthians 12... the first eleven verses.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Last week I mentioned there is a difference between the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit... let me give it to you up front:

Fruits of the Spirit reflect who you are in Christ, while spiritual gifts reflect what God empowers you to do for others for Jesus Christ.

Fruits of the Spirit are character traits produced in a believer's life as the Holy Spirit works inwardly to transform attitudes, responses, and moral character. They include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)

And are evidence of spiritual maturity and Christlikeness. Fruit is cultivated over time **through abiding in Christ**, discipline, and sanctification, and it manifests consistently across different situations.

Spiritual gifts, on the other hand, are special abilities or empowerments given by the Holy Spirit to believers for the purpose of serving others in and for Christ and building up the church and for the glorification of God.....they include the list we just read in 1st Corinthians 12... **teaching, prophecy, healing, leadership, encouragement...**

Verse 1 Paul says to the Corinthian church **concerning spiritual gifts brothers I don't want you to be ignorant...** It's interesting that this term **I don't want you to be ignorant...** some of your translations say **I do not want you to be unaware or uninformed...**

Paul uses this phrase six times in his letters making up three main subjects that Paul does not want the church to be ignorant of...

Christian and Israel...the end times and the second coming...and here **spiritual gifts**. These are three of the most contentious divisive topics in the Church in all of history... it shouldn't be that way but it is...

It's as if Paul doesn't want Satan to sidetrack you into arguing over the end time, how we view Israel and Spiritual gifts...sewing controversy and division within the church... which is exactly what has happened! so Paul doesn't want us to be ignorant about this.

There are basically two major mistakes churches and denominations make regarding the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts... **1. An overemphasis on the Holy Spirit and the Spiritual gifts...** where they view the whole of the Christian life as seeking, obtaining and using spiritual gifts...The basis of their worship services is to stir up the Holy Spirit... to bring in miraculous signs and wonders.

An overemphasis can lead to plain heresy... there are churches... very large churches today that practice "*holy drunkenness*"... where worshippers get so "filled" with the Holy Spirit they become "drunk"

This is true... there actually is a church in California that provides taxi service after their evening "*spirit filled worship service*" to their "drunk" parishioners....seriously!...of course this is a great witness to the taxi-drivers isn't it?

There are churches that practice "*holy laughter*"... "*holy Dog Barking*"...as gifts of the Holy Spirit.... On and on.... These are all heretical practices NOT gifts of the Holy Spirit...something vital to know is that the primary **mission of the Holy Spirit is NOT to promote the Holy Spirit... or even spiritual gifts.**

So if you are in a church that emphasizes the Holy Spirit and gifts of the Spirit at the cost of not focusing on God the Father and Jesus the Son... if the primary focus is the Holy Spirit... you're in the wrong church... John 16:1... this is Jesus speaking:

13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take from Mine and will disclose it to you.

So... be cautious of an over emphasis of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts...But the other mistake is the other extreme...**2. An underemphasis {or even no acknowledgement} of the work of the Holy Spirit and the ignorance and absence of Spiritual Gifts....**

Some churches avoid talking about them out of ignorance... but also

There is an extreme view that **all** the gifts of the Spirit have all ceased... they had a distinct purpose during the days of the apostles but are no longer needed now that we have the Bible so

We have churches that seem to be six inches off the ground when they meet together through overemphasizing... and.... Others six feet under ground ignoring or denying the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts in the church...pretty much dead.

How are we to look at and embrace the work of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts?...let's go through some of this.

Read verse 2

Paul reminds the church that when they were pagans...[Temple of Aphrodite, Appolos] they dealt in the spiritual things of the pagan idols... in that Greco-Roman culture it was believed that certain individuals were actually able to converse with the "gods".

In the pagan temple... *The Oracle of Delphi* most famous pagan **prophetic** institution in Greece....they often practiced and spoke in what they called "tongues"... utterances that no one could understand... they actually called it the practice of "ecstasy"...

This helps explain why the apostle Paul spends so much time on the gift of "tongues" in chapter 14. [I know many of you are wanting me to talk on tongues and the "sign gifts"... but I'm going to disappoint you]

What Paul is telling them is that pagan spirituality leads to confusion... where the true Holy Spirit lead spirituality leads to clarity... it's purpose is not to confuse but to make clearer the manifestations of Jesus Christ....["the Holy Spirit is not a God of confusion"]

Read verse 3

This is a very important verse... there was a rumor in the Corinthian Church... you see this clearer in chapter 14 that it was possible to actually offend Jesus Christ through speaking of tongues...

1 Cor. 14:14 says **For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful...** in other words... "I don't know what I'm saying"... and it is possible I am saying something bad about Jesus...**Jesus is accursed.**

So Paul is telling them *if you are Spirit controlled... Jesus will never be accursed...* what's more important though... at least to all of us... is that **no one can say *Jesus is Lord* except by the Holy Spirit.**

This is vital!... the **ONLY** reason you can say "**Jesus Christ is Lord**"... is because the Holy Spirit has made Jesus real in your life... the Holy Spirit is active and vital in your salvation... you can't come to Christ on your own effort... your own intelligence... it is all the work of the Holy Spirit.

REMEMBER THE MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS:

- To reveal Jesus Christ as Lord

- To enable us to claim Jesus Christ as Lord
- To give us fruit of the Spirit as evidence of Jesus being Lord in my life.

The mission and work of the Holy Spirit is very specific and deliberate...anything else that is not a part of His mission is a manifestation OUTSIDE of the Spirit.... the Holy Spirit is all about illuminating the Lordship of Jesus Christ..... **to bring believers in unity in the body of Jesus Christ....**

So the gifts... they are to enable us for these purposes.

Read verse 4

The body of Christ... you and me... the church is made up of many parts... each part has a gift... there are many gifts... gifts of all varieties... but there is only ONE BODY... and all the gifts... all the parts **are to be unified in that one body.**

UNITY DOES NOT MEAN THERE IS NO DIVERSITY...think of the church as an orchestra...all the members of an orchestra have mastered a different instrument...Now what happened in the Corinthian church... and is what Paul is addressing... when they all got together to play they each tried to outperform each other...argued which instrument is best... they showed up to show off?... **that's diversity with disunity...**

An orchestra is only an orchestra when it is **unified in their diversity**... that is a picture of spiritual gifts in the church...

There is great diversity of gifts in the church and that is essential for the church as a body to operate like Christ...**CHRIST HAS ALL THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS**...all those listed in verses 8-10 and more...

Read verses 8-10

The greater the diversity of Spiritual gifts being used in unity... the fuller our picture of Jesus will be!... the greater understanding we will have about who He is... how He works... what He does... what He does in us.

The Nature of Spiritual Gifts

1. Spiritual gifts are not natural talents—You may be a good athlete... a football player... that is not what is meant by your spiritual gift... one's natural talents are given by God through your parents... genetics... Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit period....you are not born with them....this is where it gets interesting...

You can be a *talented* preacher...able to captivate an audience... even fill the seats in a large auditorium and NOT have the spiritual gift of preaching... you preach on your own strength and ability...your own talents... The results will be from your own strength and ability...

2. Spiritual gifts can be misused and abused ... this helps us understand how the “carnal” Corinthian church is using gifts... they had all the gifts... they were using their gifts... but they were “carnal”... fleshly...the most fleshly church in the Bible...

Gifts and fruit of the Spirit are different but they are closely related for us to walk in the Spirit...Galatians 5:22... **But the fruit of the Spirit** Paul’s talking about the deeds of the flesh... he’s comparing the deeds of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit...**the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**

Those are all “fruit” not “gifts”...fruit *naturally* is produced by the tree... it is not an effort by the tree... if you are an apple tree you don’t try to produce apples... they just come....hopefully..... if you are a Christian, abiding in Christ... fruit of the Spirit NATURALLY flows out from you.... Fruit is evidence you are a Christian as apples are evidence of the tree being an apple tree.

But the Corinthian church was in a famine when it came to bearing fruit...but they had the gifts of the Spirit...

The gifts of the Spirit are different than the fruit of the Spirit... one is being controlled by the Holy Spirit.... the other is something given to you by the Holy Spirit.... the goal is to have both going on!...they did not

You can see this in chapter 13... You could have the gift of tongues and not be walking in the Spirit... the gift of prophesy... the gift of knowledge... but they didn’t have love...A FRUIT!.. ... those gifts **are like a clanging gong**... they profit me nothing!

[Steve Lawson]-- :***My giftedness exceeded my godliness***”.... *I had great spiritual gifts... gifts given to me By the Holy Spirit to edify the church, to glorify God, to build up the church for Jesus Christ.... By I had no fruit...I set my heart and my mind on the flesh...I did not “abide” in Jesus Christ... “My ministry was too important!” ... and all my gifts were worthless....*

3. Spiritual gifts are not evidence of spiritual maturity and growth. ... so don’t think you are more spiritual than someone else because you exercise your spiritual gifts....in chapter 3 Paul calls the Corinthian church “carnal” or “fleshly”... **I can’t speak to you as spiritual men but as to fleshly men...**

But in chapter 1:7... **you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, eagerly awaiting the revelation of Jesus Christ...**they’re not lacking in any gift!... but they are living in the flesh!.. they had all the gifts..... but they lacked the fruit of the Spirit!... so spiritual gifts are not evidence of one being spiritually mature...fruits of the Spirit are.

In fact... one can end up DEEP in “spiritual pride” thinking they have become so “spiritual”

4. Spiritual gifts are not given to you because you asked for them.... even if you prayed for them!...by the way...I've heard people ask God for certain gifts... there are some gifts I have never heard of anyone asking God for... there is a gift of "giving"...

"Sacrifice"... "servanthood".. I've never heard anyone pray "*God please give me the gift of giving!*" I have heard people pray to God to "get"...**getting is NOT a spiritual gift!**

Look at verse 11 of chapter 12....

Read 12:11

HE WILLS!.... not our will's.... He distributes spiritual Gifts as HE wills.

5. Spiritual gifts are not acquired abilities or talents which a person is able to learn or produce....you can't go to spiritual gifts school... That's "self-effort"... you can't go to school to acquire a spiritual gift. [what about the gift of teaching/preaching (prophesying).]

You may have the ability to speak... to teach... but unless you have the Holy Spirit... and unless the Holy Spirit has gifted you...you do not have the spiritual gift of preaching.... You are preaching on your own ability.

By the way...You may not even know you have a gift, but God may use it through you anyway.

6. Spiritual gifts are a result of God's grace.... We do NOTHING to deserve them. Paul affirms this in Romans 12:6...**but having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us:**

One commentator said...*Spiritual gifts are not a badge of spirituality but a mark of grace.*

7. Spiritual gifts are...God given "abilities" to edify the body of Christ—the church.

God enables each one of us to play a part of the building up of His church...

Read verse 7

The purpose of spiritual gifts is to promote "the common good" of the body of Christ, to build up the church (1 Corinthians 14:12), and to prepare us each for "works of service . . . **And He Himself gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up the body of Christ. 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**" (Ephesians 4:11–13).

So there is a variety of gifts... different gifts.... Then in verse 5

Read verse 5

A variety of ministries... a better word might be "administrations"... we have a variety of gifts... but they are not all for the same task... there are varieties of gifts for a variety of tasks....

I was listening to one of those handyman shows on the radio... *The Money Pit*... They were talking to a handyman who had the greatest variety of saws in his work shed... he had chain saws... a table saw... a coping saw... keyhole saw... a miter saw... the host of the show asked him “*which one is your best saw?*”

He answered... *It depends what you're trying to cut!... You don't use my beautiful coping saw to cut down a giant Sequoia tree!...you don't use a chainsaw to cut balsa wood!* The best saw is the saw made for the task..... that's how it is with the spiritual gifts... one gift isn't “better” than another one... there are a variety of gifts because there is a variety of tasks to be done in the body of Christ.

The same gift can be “administered” differently... you may have the gift of teaching... teaching children... but when it comes to adults... whoa!.... you may have the gift of teaching ...adults... but you are worthless when it comes to teaching children.

You may have the “gift of evangelism”... you can meet one on one all day long, sharing Christ.... But to stand up in a large crowd?.... no way!... Billy Graham was most effective in using his gift in stadiums with thousands of people..... **varieties of administrations for a variety of gifts.**

Read verse 6

My translation says **a variety of “workings”**...yours might say **a variety of effects**...or **a variety of activities**...we could also say *a variety of outcomes*...you have the same gift...administered in the same situation.... But the results are different.

Example... I preach this sermon to all of you this morning and the final results... whatever hopeful impact it might or might not have will be what it is.... If this afternoon I go down the street and deliver the same sermon at the *Lions Club* or *The Elks*... I'm pretty confident the “outcome” or the “working” of the sermon will be different that when I did the same thing here.

[We used to have two services Sunday mornings... same music, same sermon.... But the workings were different with each service.]...by the way... with spiritual gifts... the workings... the outcomes are not determined or controlled by me!...

We are not responsible for the outcomes.... the workings...the effects of our gifts! WE ARE ONLY RESPONSIBLE IN OUR FAITHFULNESS IN USING OUR GIFTS!...another BIG truth.

I am certain we have NO IDEA what success is when it comes to the kingdom of God... we usually measure success by numbers... by our effort... by “visible” results... we tend to make judgements based on what we see...

We can fill churches without the help of Holy Spirit... we can bring in lots of money if we “do things right”...there are thousands of books telling administrators of churches how to be a

“successful church”.... But the fact is... not one of us with all our talents and abilities can make ONE Christian!

Something not to miss in this passage...verses 4,5 and 6 reveal something else to us that is amazing... each member of the Trinity is present... Verse four... **the same Spirit**....Verse 5...**the same Lord**... and verse 6...**the same God**...

The “**spirituals**” or “**spiritual things**” (verse 1)... are the work of the Trinity... all unified working through love to build up the body of Jesus Christ.... the church....one final thought.

Each one of you...if you are a believer in Jesus Christ... If Jesus is your Lord and Savior... each one of you has a spiritual gift....again...verse 7

Read verse 7

Each one of you is given a spiritual gift...why?... mine says **for profit**... “**The profit of all**” (NKJV).... “**the common good**”...(NIV).

Quickly... *How do I know my spiritual gift?*... I’ve seen many “spiritual gift inventory” tests... I don’t know ... One said *ask yourself what you like to do*... I don’t know... I do know that if you are involved in a ministry and it is a complete joyless burden... that ministry is not your gift.

I think it all comes down to living in the Spirit... be submissive to God ... be obedient to God’s word... treasure His word... where your treasure is there’s where your heart will be also.... Have your heart placed in Jesus Christ...and I believe your gift or gifts will become apparent to you.