

GO: The Pathway to Purpose: Spiritual Gifts and Service

God came to us in a body, and now sends us out as a body. We've been given gifts to use for His glory. Boldly declaring the good news to a world in need of salvation.

God in Christ

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

New Living Translation

11 Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too. 12 Are we commending ourselves to you again? No, we are giving you a reason to be proud of us,[a] so you can answer those who brag about having a spectacular ministry rather than having a sincere heart. 13 If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. 14 Either way, Christ's love controls us.[b] Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life.[c] 15 He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

16 So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never

sinned, to be the offering for our sin,[d] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Christ in Us

Colossians 1:26-27

New King James Version

26 the [a]mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. 27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: [b]which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Galatians 2:20

New Living Translation

20 My old self has been crucified with Christ.[a] It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Our Ashinement, A Glorious New Way!

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

New Living Translation

7 The old way,[a] with laws etched in stone, led to death, though it began with such glory that the people of Israel could not bear to look at Moses' face. For his face shone with the glory of God, even though the brightness was already fading away. 8 Shouldn't we expect far greater glory under the new way, now that the Holy Spirit is giving life? 9 If the old way, which brings condemnation, was glorious, how much more glorious is the new way, which makes us right with God! 10 In fact, that first glory was not glorious at all compared with the overwhelming glory of the new way. 11 So if the old way, which has been replaced, was glorious, how much more glorious is the new, which remains forever!

12 Since this new way gives us such confidence, we can be very bold. 13 We are not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so the people of Israel would not see the glory, even though it was destined to fade away. 14 But the people's minds were hardened, and to this day whenever the old covenant is being read, the same veil covers their minds so they cannot understand the truth. And this veil can be removed only by believing in Christ. 15 Yes, even today when they read Moses' writings, their hearts are covered with that veil, and they do not understand.

16 But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 **So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.**

2 Corinthians 4:1-7

New Living Translation

Treasure in Fragile Clay Jars

4 Therefore, since God in his mercy has given us this new way,[a] we never give up. 2 We reject all shameful deeds and underhanded methods. We don't try to trick anyone or distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know this.

3 If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing. 4 Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

5 You see, we don't go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure.[b] This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

Matthew 5:13-16

New Living Translation

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

14 “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Gifts to Serve

1 Corinthians 12:1-12

New Living Translation

Spiritual Gifts

12 Now, dear brothers and sisters,[a] regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us. I don’t want you to misunderstand this. 2 You know that when you were still pagans, you were led astray and swept along in worshiping speechless idols. 3 So I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus, and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. 5 There are different kinds of service, **but we serve the same Lord**. 6 God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. 8 To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice[b]; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge.[c] 9 The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. 10 He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages,[d] while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. 11 It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

One Body with Many Parts

12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

The Reasonable Service of Worship

Romans 12:1-13

New Living Translation

12 And so, dear brothers and sisters,[a] I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

(Our Reasonable Service) [b] 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

3 Because of the privilege and authority[c] God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.[d]

4 Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, 5 so

it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

6 In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. 7 If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. 8 If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

9 Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. 10 Love each other with genuine affection,[e] and take delight in honoring each other. 11 Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.[f] 12 Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. 13 When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Serving Christ Unaware

Matthew 25:31-46

New Living Translation

31 "But when the Son of Man[a] comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. 32 All the nations[b] will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left.

34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. 36 I was naked, and you

gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'

37 "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? 39 When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

40 "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters,[c] you were doing it to me!'

41 "Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons.[d] 42 For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. 43 I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

44 "Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?'

45 "And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.'

46 "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."