

# **THE SON'S PROMISE THE FATHER'S GIFT**

**12 Studies about the  
Person and Work of the  
HOLY SPIRIT**



by Keith S. Andrews

# **THE SON'S PROMISE, THE FATHER'S GIFT**

## **12 Studies about the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

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# Lesson I

## The Holy Spirit

*"Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matt. 12:32)*

### The PERSON of the Holy Spirit

The Scripture is full of references to the Holy Spirit. Who is the Holy Spirit? He is known by many names; "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of the LORD," "Spirit of Christ," "the Spirit of truth," etc. He is considered to be part of the Holy Trinity along with the Father and Son. Our creeds speak of Him. What are the three primary statements of belief in the Apostle's creed? \_\_\_\_\_

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Chapter II, section 3 of the Westminster Confession of Faith makes this statement:

"In the unity of the godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; the Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."

- **The works of the Holy Spirit are God's works.**
- **The presence of the Holy Spirit is the presence of God.**
- **When we praise God we praise the Spirit along with the Father and the Son.**

What do we learn from this statement? \_\_\_\_\_

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While it is a bit difficult for us to understand, we must accept the fact that, while the Father, Son and Holy Spirit differ personally, they do not differ essentially; all persons of the Trinity are God! There is a tendency on the part of Christians to think of the Holy Spirit as a "divine influence" or as a manifestation of the "power of God" rather than as God Himself. We must take care that we do not think of the Holy Spirit in a secondary way--His works are the works of God, His presence is the presence of God and when we praise God we praise the Spirit along with the Father and Son.

Write and consider the opening and ending phrases of the Doxology:

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## The Holy SPIRIT

Read Jn. 4:24 and 2 Cor. 3:17-18. What does the word "spirit" mean to you?

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[NOTE: the KJV use of the word "ghost" is based on an ancient Anglo-Saxon use of the word that meant "breath" or "spirit." It probably has an origin parallel to the German *Geist*, a word with the same meaning. In no case should the modern occult connotation of "ghost" be applied to the Spirit of God!]

The very word "spirit" implies immateriality, a lack of tangible substance. The word "spirit" in both Greek (*pneuma*) and Hebrew (*ruach*) also means "breath" or "wind." The idea is that of something which is real, has a tangible effect, but is itself not perceivable. Read Jn. 3:8. What is Jesus' point in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

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The word "spirit" also implies unrestricted movement. While the spirit of a man is restricted by man's physical frame, the Spirit of God is not so limited. The Spirit of God transcends His creation in every way--he is not bound by times, places or things. Read 2 Chr. 6:18, Isa. 57:15. How do you understand the omnipresence of God? \_\_\_\_\_

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## The HOLY Spirit

The word "holy" is multifaceted in meaning. That which is holy is set apart from all else. This "otherness" is the primary meaning of the term. Nothing common or ordinary can ever be rightly be called "holy." God's Spirit is holy because He is unique, He is completely apart from any other thing which we might call a "spirit."

**All that the Holy Spirit does is a perfect manifestation of the righteous will of God.**

Holiness also implies purity and righteousness. The Holy Spirit is pure in His being and in His actions. All that He does is a perfect manifestation of the righteous will of God. Read 1 Cor. 2:10b-11. What the Holy Spirit does, he does to carry out divine purposes.

Holiness also includes majesty and glory. Read 2 Cor. 3:18, 1 Pet. 4:14. How do the glory of God and the Spirit of God relate? \_\_\_\_\_

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It is the Holy Spirit who communicates the majesty and glory of God to man.

## **THE Holy Spirit**

The definite article speaks of the singleness of the Holy Spirit. There is one and only one Holy Spirit. This is Paul's point when he contends in his letter to the Ephesians that there is "one Spirit" (Eph. 4:3-6). He is referring, of course, to the Holy Spirit. All other spirits which would represent themselves as holy are false. Read 1 Jn. 4:1. Why do we need to "test the spirits?" \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Many modern religious people have taken up the Greek gnostic idea that everything spiritual (unseen) is good and everything material (seen) is evil. Why is this idea unbiblical? Consider Eph. 6:12. \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) Why is it important for Christians to know and understand that God is Spirit?
- 2) Why is it important for Christians to know and understand that God's Spirit is holy?
- 3) If the Holy Spirit is God, is He equal to God the Father? Why or why not? Is He equal to God the Son? Why or why not?
- 4) Is it right or wrong for Christians to honor or even worship the Holy Spirit?

# Lesson 2

## The Character of the Holy Spirit

*"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Cor. 3:17)*

### **BIBLICAL TITLES FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The most common designations for the Holy Spirit in Scripture are "the Spirit of God," or "the Spirit of the LORD." The name, Holy Spirit, is not found in the Old Testament, although the Spirit of God is described in these exact terms. (See Ps. 51:11; Isa. 63:10-11). Holy Spirit, as a title or name, is the most common New Testament designation for the Spirit of God, occurring 90 times.

As we discovered in lesson 1, much can be learned about the Holy Spirit by simply considering His name. We can learn more, however, by observing the many descriptive titles given to the Holy Spirit. Consult each of the following passages and record the descriptive title found in each:

- Jn. 16:13 \_\_\_\_\_
- Rom. 8:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_
- Rom. 8:15-16 \_\_\_\_\_
- Rom. 1:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_
- Acts 16:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_
- Rom. 8:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Pet. 4:14 \_\_\_\_\_
- Heb. 9:14 \_\_\_\_\_

### **BIBLICAL SYMBOLS FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit is also presented in Scripture through the use of symbols. Perhaps it is the intangible nature of the Holy Spirit that makes these symbolic representations of Him particularly helpful.

#### **THE BREATH OF GOD**

In both biblical languages, Hebrew and Greek, the words for "spirit," "wind" and "breath" are the same (i.e., *ruach* in Hebrew and *pneuma* in Greek). Only the context in which the word is used can lead us to a proper understanding of the passage. As symbols, these words have vivid descriptive qualities. The wind is

used to depict movement and power--the evidence of activity that is unseen. Breath depicts the presence of life--it is the evidence of animation.

There are two passages where the identification of wind and Spirit is very close. Read Jn. 3:8. Where does the "wind" blow? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ How does one know that the wind is actually there? \_\_\_\_\_  
How is this applied to the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Acts 2:1-2. What sound is described here? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ What was the source? \_\_\_\_\_  
Notice that it is not the Spirit who is described here, but the effects of His presence.

There are, similarly, passages where the identification of breath and Spirit is very close. Read 2 Tim. 3:16-17. How do you understand "God-breathed"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Consider Gen. 2:7 and Jn. 20:21-22. What is the result of the breath of God in the Genesis passage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ What is the result of the breath of Christ in Jn. 20? \_\_\_\_\_ What conclusions might be drawn from comparing these passages? \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE FIRE OF GOD**

The Holy Spirit of God is also compared to a fire. Fire is often used in Scripture to indicate the Lord's presence. Consider the following examples and record in each case how fire revealed the presence of God:

- Ex. 3:2-6 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ex. 13:21 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ex. 19:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_
- Deut. 4:36 \_\_\_\_\_
- Heb. 12:29 \_\_\_\_\_

Consider also the evidence of God's presence with the Tabernacle and the Temple. Read Nu. 9:15-16. What was the significance of the cloud and fire? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read 2 Chr. 7:1-4. How did God respond to Solomon's prayer of dedication? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19. What serves

as the "temple for God's name" under the new covenant? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Return to Acts 2:1-4. Is there any parallel between the events on the day of Pentecost and on the days of dedication of the Tabernacle and the Temple? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Matt. 3:11. John baptizes with water. What does he claim will be the medium of Jesus' baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **THE *LIVING WATER***

Read Jn. 7:38-39. What does Jesus say will happen to those who believe in Him? (vs. 38) \_\_\_\_\_ This metaphor is explained in vs. 39. What is being illustrated by the phrase "streams of living water"? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Jn. 4:10. Surely it is the same gift of God, namely the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, of which Jesus alludes in this passage when He speaks of "living water."

Certainly flowing living water is an apt symbol for the Holy Spirit because water serves to both refresh and purify. Without water life is impossible! We can hardly think of the gift of the Holy Spirit without also thinking of the water of baptism which, at least in part, serves as a sign of His work in the life of the believer.

Read the following passages and record what each says about living water:

Jer. 2:13, 17:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Zech. 14:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. 7:17 \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE *OIL OF GOD***

In Ex. 30:25-30 we read that Moses was instructed to have a special oil formulated. This was to be used to anoint the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, and all of the furnishings, utensils and articles that were to be used in worship of God. The pouring of (anointing with) this oil was a sign that these things had been consecrated and set apart by God for His use. The promise of God, given through the prophet Joel and repeated by Peter on the day of Pentecost, is that in the last days God will pour out, not oil, but His own Spirit upon all flesh. (See Joel 2:28-29 and Acts 2:17-18; consider also Isa. 44:3; Ezk. 39:29). What does the pouring of God's Spirit signify? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Jn. 2:20, 27. What is John saying about true believers? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ This passage does not specifically connect the "anointing from God" with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

It does, however, indicate that knowledge of the truth depends upon this anointing. What does Jesus promise in Jn. 14:26? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **OTHER SYMBOLS**

Perhaps the most common symbol for the Holy Spirit in the modern church is the dove. This comes, of course, from those passages of Scripture that describe the events of Jesus' baptism. Read and compare Matt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10; Lk. 3:22 and Jn. 1:32-34. What do each have in common as they describe the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

What detail does the passage in John add? \_\_\_\_\_

Although the exact meaning of the comparison is unclear, it is generally agreed that, in the symbolism of the dove, we see the gentleness and harmlessness of the Holy Spirit (compare Matt. 10:16). He is to be welcomed and not feared.

The Holy Spirit is also depicted as God's seal upon His people. (See 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14). The symbolism of the seal is of both ownership and protection. We know, because of the indwelling Spirit, that we belong to Christ and that God will be faithful to complete the "good work" that He has begun in us (Php. 1:6)

## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) Why are there so many symbols used with reference to the Holy Spirit?
- 2) In what ways is the Holy Spirit like the wind?
- 3) In what ways is the work of the Holy Spirit like a fire?
- 4) How does water or oil serve to represent the works of the Holy Spirit?
- 5) How does the Holy Spirit seal God's people?

# Lesson 3

## The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

*"Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Gen. 1:2)*

### THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

The personhood of the Holy Spirit is not as clearly defined in the Old Testament as in the New; nevertheless, we can see Him clearly at work from the very beginning. In Gen. 1:2 we find the first reference to the Holy Spirit, as He is active in the work of creation. Gen. 2:7 might also depict the Holy Spirit as the source of human life (compare Jn. 20:22). The presence of the Spirit of God is seen throughout the Old Testament as He enables men to speak for God and to perform mighty works for God. One might consider that these works of the Holy Spirit continue into the New Testament and into the present day activities of the church.

### THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

A prophet is one who speaks for God. Prophecy, then, is the word of God revealed and proclaimed by men. The Scripture provides its own definition of the function of the prophet in Deut. 18:18 where God says, ". . . I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him." Read 2 Pet. 1:21. What is the source of the prophetic message? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ It is clear that no man can speak for God unless God Himself provides the words. This is the impact of the common Old Testament phrase, "thus saith the Lord," which occurs 134 times in the writings of the major and minor prophets. Read Ezk. 2:1-5. How is Ezekiel enabled to speak God's word to the people? \_\_\_\_\_ What is God's reason for sending Ezekiel to them? (Consider also Ez. 3:17) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Neh. 9:30. God causes His word to be proclaimed. Does this mean that it will always be received as the Word of God by those who hear it? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Jer. 14:14-15; Mic. 3:7-8. Does everyone who claims to be a prophet actually have a word from God? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What does Micah say about himself? \_\_\_\_\_

The fact that God gave His divine message to men to proclaim, and that He accomplished this through His Spirit, is attested outside of the books of the prophets themselves. Read 2 Sam. 23:1-2. What does King David say about himself in this passage? (Consider also Ps. 1 Sam. 16:13; 51:10-11) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The work of the Holy Spirit in speaking through the prophets of old is also attested in the New Testament. Record what each of the following passages have to say about the Spirit and prophecy, take note of who is speaking in each case:

Mk. 12:36 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1:15-16 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 28:25-26 \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE SPIRIT OF ENABLEMENT**

**LEADERSHIP** - The Holy Spirit not only enabled men of God to proclaim God's Word with authority, He also enabled them to perform mighty works and to lead God's people. Read Num. 11:16-17, 24-25. How is the Holy Spirit involved in preparing men for leadership? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Num. 27:18-19 and Deut. 34:9. What made Joshua a fit leader for the people of God? \_\_\_\_\_

Read the following verses concerning King Saul: 1 Sam. 10:1, 5-7; 11:6; 16:14. How did God set Saul apart to be king over His people? (10:6) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How did God remove the kingly anointing from Saul? (16:14) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Does God still set men apart and enable them to serve Him and His people? If so, does the Holy Spirit play a role in their ministry? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_

**MIGHTY WORKS** - It was the Holy Spirit who enabled the men of God to accomplish the tasks that God had called them to. An old saying teaches that "where God guides, God provides." That provision often comes through the enabling work of the Holy Spirit. Read each of the following passages and record the person involved, the task to which they were called and the involvement of the Holy Spirit:

Ex. 31:1-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Jud. 3:8-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Jud. 14:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Jud. 15:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Zech. 4:6. Zerubbabel had been given the task of rebuilding the Temple of God in Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity. The Temple was in total ruins-- there was nothing left but rubble, and that had lain in a pile for years! What is God's word to Zerubbabel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ How might this truth be applied to the work of the church today? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) Do you think that the "Great Commission" can be fulfilled without the enabling of the Holy Spirit? Why or why not?
- 2) Are there differences in way that the Holy Spirit enables the proclamation of God's Word today and in the past? Explain your answer.
- 3) What kind of "mighty works" is God doing today? How are His people involved in these works?

# Lesson 4

## The Holy Spirit and The New Birth

*"That which is born of the flesh is flesh;  
and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6)*

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "BORN AGAIN"?

Chapter 10, section 2 of the Westminster Confession of Faith makes this statement concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in revealing God and drawing men unto Him:

The effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

Read the following passages and comment upon the work of the Holy Spirit in calling men to God:

Gen. 6:3

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Isa. 63:9-10

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Ezk. 11:19-20

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Acts 7:51

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Read Jn. 3:2-3. What does Jesus say is required if one is to be able to "see the kingdom of God"? \_\_\_\_\_ Read vv. 6-8. What gives birth to flesh? \_\_\_\_\_ What gives birth to spirit? \_\_\_\_\_ It is clear, from what Jesus says in vs. 8, that being "born again" and being "born of the Spirit" are the same thing. One's spiritual life, like his physical life, begins with birth. Consider Jn. 1:12-13. Being a child of God requires spiritual birth in addition to the physical. Note that spiritual birth is not due in any way to the action or decision of man --it is God's work!

There has been some controversy among those who profess Christ as to the validity of the "born again" experience. Some say that it is necessary for salvation. Others consider it to be nothing more than emotionalism. That of which the Bible speaks is far more than emotionalism. First, it does not come from within man and cannot be produced by emotional manipulation; it is a work of God. Second, if it

is real, it is unmistakable, because it changes the man completely and forever. Read Eph. 2:1-2, 4-5. What is the state of the unregenerate person (i.e., the person who is not born of the Spirit)? \_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit's works are not identified by an emotional response, although such a response is possible; His works are known by the fruit that they produce. (See Jn. 3:8, Gal. 5:22-23).

You might wonder, "have I really been born of the Spirit? Read 1 Jn. 5:1. What is the test to determine who has and who has not been "born of God"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Record what each of the following passages says about those who are "born of God":

- 1 Jn. 3:9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Jn. 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Jn. 5:4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Jn. 5:18 \_\_\_\_\_

## **A NEW CREATION**

### **Illumination of the mind**

Illumination in the process by which the Holy Spirit enables an individual to accept and understand the truth of Scripture. It involves an "unveiling" of the mind and an opening of the heart to make them receptive to the Word of God. Read 1 Cor. 2:14. How does the natural mind respond to these truths? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What did Jesus promise his disciples regarding the coming Holy Spirit in Jn. 16:13-15? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Can anyone truly understand who Jesus is apart from the Spirit's illumination? Why? (Consider 1 Cor. 12:3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Sometimes the Holy Spirit works with the believer directly as he reads and studies God's Word and meditates upon its meaning and application. Other times, He works through believers who have been given the gift of teaching (Rom. 12:6-7). Read 1 Cor. 2:9-13 (also 1 Cor. 11:1). How do those who teach come by their understanding of God and His way \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Change of the will**

The inclination of fallen man is to serve self and not to serve God. He has become a law unto himself; he does what is "right in his own eyes." Read Prov.

26:12; 1 Cor. 3:18-19. How is the world's wisdom described? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ If man is to ever become a law keeper, he must  
have a change of heart and will. This is a significant element in God's promise of a  
new covenant. Read Jer. 31:33 and Ez. 36:25-27. How does God say that He will  
accomplish this conversion? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read Titus 3:3-7 and 1 Jn. 3:24. How is this work  
accomplished in the life of a believer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Renewing the nature**

Read 2 Cor. 5:17 and Gal. 6:15. The result of the Holy Spirit's regenerating  
work is dramatic and comprehensive. The one who is "born again" becomes a  
different person. Nothing will ever --in fact, nothing can ever-- be the same for he  
has been called from the darkness into the light; he has been brought from death to  
life! Read Ps. 51:10. What does the psalmist desire from God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write what each of the following says about those who may enter the  
kingdom of God:

1 Cor. 15:50 \_\_\_\_\_  
Gal. 5:19-21 \_\_\_\_\_  
Eph. 5:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Read Jn. 3:5-6. How is one's nature changed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **THE GIFT OF REPENTANCE**

In a way one might say that the message of the New Testament is a message  
of repentance. Who preached this message?

Matt. 3:2 \_\_\_\_\_ Matt. 4:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
Mk. 6:12 \_\_\_\_\_ Acts 2:38 \_\_\_\_\_  
Acts 26:20 \_\_\_\_\_

What is repentance? (Consider 2 Cor. 7:10). \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

True repentance is not simply the result of a  
person being made aware of the "error of his ways" and deciding to do better.

What is the source of repentance that leads to salvation? (Acts 11:15-18) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Questions to ponder

- 1) In your own words explain what it means to be "born again."
- 2) What is "illumination." Is this a necessary work of the Holy Spirit? Why?
- 3) Does the Holy Spirit change the believer's mind or heart or both? Explain your answer.

# Lesson 5

## The Holy Spirit in the Ministry of Jesus

*"As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove." (Mk. 1:10)*

### THE SPIRIT'S ROLE IN THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

Read Matt. 1:18-21; Lk. 1:28-35. How did the conception of the baby in Mary's womb occur? \_\_\_\_\_ How was this information conveyed to Joseph? (Matt. 1:20) \_\_\_\_\_ How was this information conveyed to Mary? (Lk. 1:28) \_\_\_\_\_ The reason for this unusual means of conception is clearly expressed in Lk. 1: 32, 35; Matt. 1:21, 23. How do you understand the necessity for such a virginal conception through the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit was also active in an unusual way in the birth of John (the baptist). Read Lk. 1:11-15. What made John special? \_\_\_\_\_ Keeping this in mind, read Lk. 1:39-44. What was the reaction of the child in Elizabeth's womb when Mary, now pregnant with Jesus, came to her home? (vs. 41,44) \_\_\_\_\_ Notice that Elizabeth already seems to know who Jesus is. How did she come by this spiritual understanding? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Lk. 2:25-32. The Holy Spirit is mentioned in vs. 25, 26 and 27. What is He doing in each case? \_\_\_\_\_ What was the promise that God had made to Simeon? \_\_\_\_\_ How did he know that that promise had now been fulfilled? \_\_\_\_\_

### JESUS' BAPTISM

Read and compare the accounts of Jesus' baptism in the synoptic gospels: Matt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21-22. What are the common elements in the three accounts? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Jn. 1:29-34. What evidence does John give to support his testimony that Jesus is the Son of God? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ John gives further testimony concerning Jesus in Jn. 3:31-36. What does he say about the Spirit in vs. 34? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What occurred immediately after Jesus' baptism? (See Matt. 4:1; Mk. 1:12-13; Lk. 4:1-2; Heb. 4:14-15) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Why did Jesus go into the wilderness where he was tempted by Satan? \_\_\_\_\_

From the passages we have just studied we can learn these facts about the Holy Spirit's activity in the life of Jesus:

1) Jesus' spiritual anointing was permanent. We read in John's account of Jesus baptism, *"I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him"* (Jn. 1:32).

2) Jesus' spiritual anointing was unlimited. *"The one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit"* (Jn. 3:34)

3) Jesus was filled with the Spirit and allowed the Spirit to lead Him.

*"Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert . . ."* (Lk. 4:1).

## **JESUS THE MESSIAH**

We should remember that Jesus is the "Christ," the "Messiah." He is God's Anointed One. What does it mean to say that Jesus is anointed? (Consider Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1) \_\_\_\_\_

Carefully read and consider Lk. 4:14-21. We can see from this passage that Jesus and His ministry were widely known and respected by the people. What does vs. 14 tell us about His powerful ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ We read in vs. 17 that, when given the scroll of Isaiah, Jesus searched for and read a particular passage. Why do you think that Jesus quoted this portion of the Scripture? \_\_\_\_\_

Read the following passages and comment on how the Holy Spirit is involved in Jesus' life and ministry in each:

Lk. 10:21 \_\_\_\_\_

Matt. 12:28, 31-32 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 10:37-38 \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33 and Acts 1:4-5. What is the common element in all of these passages? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who was John talking about when he said "he" will baptize with the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_  
What does Jesus call this baptism in Acts 1:4? \_\_\_\_\_

Read and consider Jn. 7:37-39. Jesus speaks here concerning "streams of living water." What, according to vs. 39, is represented by this living water? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who is to serve as a conduit for this living water? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Acts 2:38-39. What does Peter say is promised to those who repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus for forgiveness of sins? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is that promise only for those who were present on that day, or for all believers? (consider vs. 39) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) How would you respond to someone who claimed that Jesus was "spirit filled?"
- 2) Jesus was certainly not baptized for remission of sin. What do you think the symbolism of his baptism might be?
- 3) Is the Holy Spirit or His work represented in our baptism? Explain your answer.

# Lesson 6

## The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life

*"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." (Gal. 5:25)*

### **SPIRITUALLY SEALED**

#### **GOD'S SEAL OF OWNERSHIP**

One of God's primary covenant promises is that we will be His people and He will be our God. It is God's intent to create for Himself a "peculiar" (i.e., particular and special) people which will be different from any other people. Read 1 Pet. 2:9. How is this group of people described? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read 2 Cor. 1:21-22 and Eph. 1:13-14. Considering these passages together, what is God's "seal of ownership"? \_\_\_\_\_ The idea expressed here is that God has marked his people with His own identifying mark. In the same way that an earthly king might place his royal seal upon a document to authenticate it, God has placed His Spirit on and in us to identify us as His own. According to Eph. 1:14, what is guaranteed to the believer? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Consider Rom. 8:15-16. How does God confirm to the believer that he does, in fact, belong to Him? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **GOD'S SEAL OF PROTECTION**

The Holy Spirit is at work in the life of the believer, not just to identify him as Christ's, but also to protect and sustain him. In his letter to the believers in Philippi Paul expressed his joy because he knew that God would enable them to persevere. He wrote these confirming and encouraging words: "he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Php. 1:6). Read Eph. 4:30 and Jude 1:24-25. For what day have believers been sealed? \_\_\_\_\_

Many believers have wondered, if the Holy Spirit is at work in their lives to protect and sustain them, are they still able to somehow fall away from God's saving grace. In other words, can a believer ever have assurance of his salvation? The Larger Catechism answers the question this way:

"True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God, and his decree and covenant to give them perseverance, their inseparable union with Christ, his continual intercession for them, *and the Spirit and seed of God abiding in them*, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but *are kept by the power of God* through faith unto salvation." (Q. 79, emphasis added).

This does not mean that a Christian will never face trials or adversity. It does mean that God, who is present in the person of the Holy Spirit, will provide the means to overcome those difficulties and enable the believer to remain faithful. Read the following passages and note how tribulation, faith, and the overcoming power of God work together in the Christian life:

John 16:33 \_\_\_\_\_  
Acts 14:21-23 \_\_\_\_\_  
Rom. 8:38-39 \_\_\_\_\_  
1 Jn. 5:4-5 \_\_\_\_\_

## **SPIRITUALLY DIRECTED**

### **WALKING BY THE SPIRIT**

God promised long ago that He would effect a change in His people by placing His own Spirit within them. Read Jer. 31:31-33; Ezk. 11:19-20, 36:26-27. How will the fulfillment of this promise of a new covenant make the people of God different? \_\_\_\_\_

Read the following New Testament passages and note in each how the Holy Spirit enables law keeping:

Gal. 5:16-18 \_\_\_\_\_  
Rom. 8:5-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
Jude 1:20-21 \_\_\_\_\_

In the passages above, the "flesh" or the "sinful nature" is said to oppose the Spirit of God? What is meant by "flesh" in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is called the *parakletos*. This Greek word means "a helper, counselor, or advocate; one who is called along side to render aid." It is clear that, apart from the Spirit's help, we would be both unable and unwilling to do what God desires and requires of us. Read Jn. 15:5. What does Jesus say in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION

The Shorter Catechism (in Q. 35) defines "sanctification" in this way: "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness."

In short, the Holy Spirit is always working in the believer's life to make him, in experience, what God has declared him to be in Christ. It is growth in (not toward) holiness. Read Rom. 8:1. What is the position of the believer? \_\_\_\_\_ Does this mean that the believer is sinless? \_\_\_\_\_ (Consider 1 Jn. 1:8-10). Any righteousness we have comes to us from and through Christ. Sanctification is the process by which we learn to "walk according to the Spirit" and not yield to the desires of the sinful nature (Gal. 5:16).

## POWERFULLY ENABLED

We know that the body of Christ (i.e., the church) is made up of people who have various functions, but who belong to and depend upon one another. Read 1 Cor. 12:18. What does this passage tell us about the way that body is put together? \_\_\_\_\_ The church could hardly be called Christ's body if it were nothing more than an organization of men, each doing "his own thing" in his own strength and ability. Read 1 Cor. 12:4-7. Who is the source of "gifts," "service," and "working?" \_\_\_\_\_ What is the purpose of these Spiritual manifestations? (vs. 7) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Rom. 12:4-6a and 1 Pet. 4:10. By studying these passages of Scripture, two things become clear:

- 1) All believers have been given gifts which are manifestations of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- 2) The exercise of these gifts is essential to the proper functioning and the effective ministry of the church.

Read Acts 1:4-5, 8. What would the disciples have lacked if they had refused to follow Jesus' command? \_\_\_\_\_

It is very important to notice that Jesus promises the power to be his witnesses. This is a clear statement of the purpose of Spiritual gifts!

The word which the English Bible translates "gifts" might be more clearly understood as "gifts of grace" or simply "graces" (from the Greek *charis*). We understand that grace is totally unrelated to merit. It must be understood, then, that Spiritual gifts (*charismata*) are also unrelated to merit. The gifting of God must

never be allowed to become a source of pride. Such gifts are manifestation of God's Spirit at work and represent His will and power. Read Matt. 5:16, 1 Pet. 2:12, 4:11. Where should glory be directed? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) The Scripture refers to the Holy Spirit as God "seal." What two ways can we think about being sealed by the Holy Spirit?
- 2) What is the primary area of conflict in the Christian life?
- 3) What is "sanctification" and how does it relate to question 2?
- 4) What are "spiritual gifts?" Are they important to the ministry of the church? Why or why not?

# Lesson 7

## The Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy & Peace

*"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit" (Jn. 15:8)*

### FRUIT AND FRUITFULNESS

Read Gal. 5:22-23. Here we see Paul's delineation of the Spirit's fruit. It is important, as we begin to think about the "fruit of the Spirit," that we recognize that this fruit is the product -- the natural result -- of the Holy Spirit's presence and activity in the believer's life. It is as natural for the Spirit to produce this fruit as it is for the apple tree to produce apples or for the pear tree to produce pears.

Read Jn. 15:1-5. What is the requirement for the production of spiritual fruit? (vs. 5) \_\_\_\_\_ How does the Father increase production of fruit? (vs. 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
What is the result of unfruitfulness? \_\_\_\_\_  
Read Jn. 15:8. What does fruitfulness demonstrate? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who does it glorify? \_\_\_\_\_

By reading Jn. 15:16 we can see three things:

- 1) Christ has chosen us, we did not choose Him.
- 2) Christ has appointed us to go and be fruitful.
- 3) The fruit produced by godly living has eternal significance.

Read and consider Matt. 7:15-23. What is the warning of vs. 15? \_\_\_\_\_  
How are those who speak for God but who are not sent by God known? (vv. 18-20) \_\_\_\_\_  
Notice that vs. 18 speaks to the nature of the person. Can the fruit of the Spirit be produced in the life of a person who does not "walk according to the Spirit? Why or why not? (Consider Gal. 5:16, 25) \_\_\_\_\_

Read the following passages and record what each says about fruitfulness:

Ps. 1:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Prov. 11:30 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer. 17:7-8 \_\_\_\_\_

Matt. 21:43 \_\_\_\_\_

Lk. 6:44 \_\_\_\_\_

Col. 1:9-12 \_\_\_\_\_

## **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *LOVE***

The love spoken about in Gal. 5:22 is neither the love which natural man has for friends or family or possessions, nor is it the passionate lust that is so often referred to as "love" by ungodly men. This love is a manifestation of God's love; a love that is selfless and powerful. All true ministry and Christian service flows from this agape love, which the Holy Spirit alone produces in us. (See. Rom. 5:5). Read Gal. 5:6. How is faith expressed? \_\_\_\_\_

Read the following passages and notice the object of Christian love in each case:

Matt. 5:44 \_\_\_\_\_

Lk. 10:27 \_\_\_\_\_

Jn. 15:17 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Pet. 1:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Read 1 Cor. 13:1-8a. In vv. 1-2 Paul is comparing spiritual gifts and the fruit of the spirit here. Does he say that either is unnecessary? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the main point of this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In vs. 3 he compares love with sacrifice. What is the essential ingredient? \_\_\_\_\_ In vv. 4-8a Paul describes the way that godly love is manifested in the Christian's life. What does love always do? \_\_\_\_\_

What does love never do? \_\_\_\_\_

## **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS JOY**

Read Rom. 14:17. How does Paul describe the kingdom of God in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. John Rea observes that "joy is the opposite of pessimism." His point is that true joy flows from the sure knowledge that a gracious, faithful and Almighty God is in control. This doesn't mean, of course, that the Christian life is problem free. It does mean that, in the face of problems, the believer can have assurance of god's protection and care. Read 2 Cor. 7:4. Notice that Paul claims to have unbounded joy *in the midst* of troubles. Read James 12-4 and 1 Peter 1:3-7. How should we respond to

trials and problems in life? \_\_\_\_\_ Why should we take joy in  
tribulation? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Neh. 8:10. What is the source of the believer's strength? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read Rom. 15:13. What does Paul connect here with joy and  
peace? \_\_\_\_\_ Consider Php. 4:4. Rejoicing is  
an *expression* of one's joy. Read the following passages and comment on each:

Ps. 9:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Ps. 32:10-11 \_\_\_\_\_  
Ps. 96:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_  
Ps. 118:24 \_\_\_\_\_  
Hab. 3:17-19 \_\_\_\_\_

## **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *PEACE***

Read Jn. 14:27. When we hear the word "peace" we normally think of an  
absence of strife or a lack of conflict. In this passage, however, Jesus makes a  
distinction between the peace that the world gives and the peace that He gives.  
What do you think is the difference between the two? (Consider Rom. 5:1, 8:6;  
Col. 1:19-20). \_\_\_\_\_

Read each of the following passages about the peace of God and write a  
brief paraphrase of each:

Ps. 29:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
Acts 10:36 \_\_\_\_\_  
Php. 4:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_  
Col. 3:15 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) What does it mean to "bear much fruit?"
- 2) Why is it important for a Christian to be "fruitful?"
- 3) Do you think that it is possible to love your enemies? Consider Rom. 5:8-10.
- 4) In what ways might joy and circumstances be related? What circumstances normally bring you joy? Can one rejoice in the midst of adversity? Is it natural to do so?
- 5) Which is more important, internal peace or external peace? Can a person have one without the other?

# Lesson 8

## The Fruit of the Spirit: Patience, Kindness & Goodness

*"... every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful." (John 15:2)*

We must never forget that the fruit of the Spirit is the fruit that God Himself produces in us. It is God's character manifested in the lives on His people as they yield themselves to the direction of His Spirit. Man was created in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27). This image is a reflection of the divine character. Though the image is not entirely lost, it has been distorted and tarnished by sin. Natural man is not patient, he is not kind, and, looking from God's perspective, he is certainly not good. Read Rom. 8:29. What is God's stated purpose in electing some to salvation? \_\_\_\_\_

### THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *PATIENCE*

Read Gal. 5:22 in the NIV. Many versions (including the KJV) use the word "longsuffering" instead of patience. It is a less common word but, perhaps, carries a greater sense of the Scripture's true meaning. Obviously, the only way to develop longsuffering is by suffering for a long time. So it is with patience. If there is no trial, if there is no pressure, is there is nothing to irritate us, there is no possibility of -- or need for -- patience. The Spirit graciously gives believers the ability to face trial and temptation without losing faith in God's goodness. Patience is the characteristic of one who looks to God first and to circumstances second. Read Prov. 14:29, 15:18, and 16:32. What kind of person is contrasted with the patient man in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Neh. 9:30; Ps. 86:15; 1 Tim. 1:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:9, 15. How does God demonstrate His patience? \_\_\_\_\_

Read each of the following passages and note how patience should be manifested in our lives:

Eph. 4:2-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Col. 3:12-13 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Tim. 3:10-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Heb. 6:12-15 \_\_\_\_\_  
James 5:10-11 \_\_\_\_\_

**THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *KINDNESS***

Kindness is an action. A person may *be* kind, but that character trait will, of necessity, be demonstrated through *acts* of kindness. That God is kind is shown by His acts of kindness toward sinners. Read Rom. 2:4. Where does God's kindness lead the sinner? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Eph. 2:6-7. How, according to his passage, has God's kindness toward us been expressed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read Titus 3:4-7. To what did the kindness and love of God lead? \_\_\_\_\_

Kindness, according to 1 Cor. 13:4, is one positive facet of love. It is, in fact, love in action. It is the thoughtful response to the needs of others. We must remember that it is the Spirit which produces this fruit. Christian kindness is nothing less than a reflection of God's own perfect kindness which allows Him to look with compassion upon sinful man. Read Eph. 2:4-5. What was man's need? \_\_\_\_\_ What was God's compassionate response? \_\_\_\_\_

It is clear that kindness is an aspect of God's character. It is also clear that God's kindness should be reflected in our own character. Read Jer. 9:24. Notice that God says that He delights in kindness, justice and righteousness. Read Eph. 4:32 and 1 Thess. 5:15. What is the instruction of these verses? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *GOODNESS***

It is a little bit difficult for us to discuss the concept of goodness. Many today would say that goodness is a relative concept, nothing is good or bad in and of itself. Natural man does "what is good in his own eyes." Read Prov. 12:15, 14:12. What can we learn from these verses about man's ability to determine what is right? \_\_\_\_\_ God alone sets the standard of right and wrong. (Consider Deut. 6:18; Ps. 25:8-9). Whatever God desires is right.

Read each of the following passages and comment on each:

- Ps. 34:8 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ps. 100:5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Pet. 1:3 \_\_\_\_\_
- James 1:17 \_\_\_\_\_

Read Gal. 6:10. How then should the goodness of God be reflected in our lives? \_\_\_\_\_

## **Questions to Ponder**

- 1) What is the "image of God" and the "image of His Son"? In what ways do we bear His image? How is that image distorted?
- 2) Why do God's people need patience? How does He develop patience in us?
- 3) Is a kindly person known by their attitude or by their actions? Explain your answer. Give an example of a kindly person any how that person showed their kindness.
- 4) Is there such a thing a human goodness?
- 5) Do you think that it is possible for "good people" to do "good things" that are offensive to God?

# Lesson 9

## The Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control

*"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" (Matt. 25:21)*

### THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *FAITHFULNESS*

Read 1 Cor. 1:9, 10:13. What does it mean to you, in your personal walk with the Lord, that *He* is faithful? How does His faithfulness affect your life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Isa. 40:31. What is the promise of this verse? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The believer is faithful when he continues to trust God and to do as the Lord requires. The faithful servant is the one who has faith, which over and over again, manifests itself in godly living. Read Gal. 6:8-9. When the gardener or the farmer sows seed he expects, at some point, to reap a harvest. In this passage, Paul is encouraging believers to "sow to the Spirit." The resulting crop is "eternal life." The farmer must go about his business, even though he is still waiting the harvest. In this same way, the believer must continue to trust God even though the evidence of the coming harvest may be hard to see. What is the encouragement of vs. 9? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Matt. 24:45-51. What, according to vv. 45-46, does a faithful and wise servant do? \_\_\_\_\_ What leads the wicked servant to his wickedness? (vs. 48) \_\_\_\_\_

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### THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *GENTLENESS*

A look at the daily newspaper is all that it takes to convince us that there is a lack of gentleness in our world. Violence is the order of the day. Conflict is the

language of the hour. The fruit of the Spirit, however, is gentleness because the Spirit is gentle. He doesn't force and coerce; He urges and guides.

In a culture that esteems aggressive character it is difficult to understand the positive role of gentleness. Gentleness is, in fact, often equated to weakness or even cowardliness. True gentleness is neither. Let's explore the biblical meaning of the term.

Read Matt. 11:29. How does Jesus, the King of kings, describe Himself? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read Num. 12:3. Who is described here as a  
"meek" or "humble" man? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Eph. 4:1-2. How does Paul  
explain "living a life worthy of your calling?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The fruit of gentleness flows from the believer's assurance in God's sovereignty and His mighty power. The believer doesn't have to "make things happen." He needs to get out of the way so he can see what God is doing! It takes both courage and patience to "wait upon the Lord."

## **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS *SELF-CONTROL***

It would seem that "self-control" would be the ability to take charge of the affairs and events of our lives. It would also seem that the person with the most self control would be the person who has the most self-esteem, self-confidence and self-assertiveness. This is certainly the way that the *world* understands self-control. Are such character traits the fruit of the Spirit?

The world would say, "you must be self-assured, self-confident." What does the Word of God say? (Read Ps. 31:23-24; Isa. 40:30-31) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ The world teaches that the path to success and happiness is found in self-esteem. What does the Word of God say? (Read Php. 2:3-4 in several versions; Rom. 12:10b; Eph. 5:21) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The truth of the matter is that biblical self-control is not having the self *in* control, it is having the self *under* control; under the Spirit's control. Read Matt. 16:24-26. What does Jesus tell His disciples that they must deny? \_\_\_\_\_  
What do you think this means? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If we live to serve self, to satisfy the desires of our own nature, we can not please God. A life spent in the pursuit of worldly pleasures is a life wasted with regard to eternal things. Consider each of the following passages:

Jn. 6:63 \_\_\_\_\_

Rom. 8:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Gal. 5:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Gal. 6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

## Questions to ponder

- 1) In the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:15ff), what particular thing does the master consider the mark of faithful servanthood?
- 2) Read 1 Cor. 4:2. What is the "trust" that you have been given?
- 3) Consider Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jesus' disciples, Paul. Could any of them be considered self-assertive? Why or why not?
- 4) What is the difference between being in control and being under control?

# Lesson 10

## The Gifts of the Spirit: the Ability to Believe

*"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (1 Pet. 4:10)*

### WHY DO WE NEED SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Read Rom. 12:4-6a. How is the "body of Christ" described in this passage?

\_\_\_\_\_ This is a passage about diversity. We aren't all the same, we all have gifts but they are different, and we don't all have the same function.

We might think of the church as the Lord's "toolbox." There are many different things that need to be done in the building up of Christ's body. Not all of those things can be done with the same tools. The Lord, therefore, has put a variety of tools in His toolbox so that, whatever the need, the proper tool will be there to do the job.

What happens if tools are missing or broken or have become lost? Either the job will not be done, or it will be done less well. It is possible, of course, to drive nails with a screwdriver or to cut boards with a utility knife. The work goes much more smoothly and quickly, however, if the proper tool is used.

We must remember that kingdom building is divine work. While Christ has graciously chosen to use His people in this task, it is not a fleshly endeavor. Read Matt. 16:18. Who builds the church? \_\_\_\_\_ Read Acts 2:47. Who added to the church's number? \_\_\_\_\_ Consider Eph. 4:11-16. Notice that it is Christ who gifts the church (vs. 11), it is His body which is to be built (vs. 12), and that this is accomplished as each member does his part (vs. 16).

### WHAT IS FAITH?

Faith, in simple terms, is the ability or the willingness to believe. True faith, though must also include trust. Biblical faith might be defined as the ability to trust in the purpose, the power, and the faithfulness of God.

Biblical faith occurs on three levels. The first might be called *saving faith*. Saving faith is the ability to trust Christ alone for salvation. Read. Eph 2:8-9. We are saved by grace through \_\_\_\_\_. In other words, our trust in Christ is the sole means by which God's grace is applied to us. Apart from such faith, a person is not and cannot be saved. Read the following passages and record what each says about the necessity for faith / belief in Christ:

- Mk. 16:16 \_\_\_\_\_
- Jn. 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_
- Jn. 5:24 \_\_\_\_\_
- Acts 16:31 \_\_\_\_\_

The second level of faith might be called *walking faith*. This is the faith that enables a person to trust God from day to day for provision and direction. Read Lk. 12:22-31 and Php. 4:6-7. It is *natural* for people to worry about tomorrow. The future is uncertain. The *supernatural* thing is for a person to leave tomorrow in God's hands. After all, God knows the end from the beginning! How is "walking faith" described in Prov. 3:5-6? \_\_\_\_\_

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The third level of faith might be called *mountain-moving faith*. Read Matt. 17:15-20 and Lk. 17:6. What is Christ saying in these two passages about faith (or the disciples lack of it)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Mountain-moving faith is the ability to trust God for that which, to the natural eye, is impossible; for that which could never be overcome or accomplished by human effort. While we may at times be required to trust God for our grocery money or for our housing, it is not usually beyond our ability to imagine how God might provide such things. Most people, in fact, do not even acknowledge the hand of God in such provision. When a person is facing cancer or blindness, or when the enemy is storming the gates it is a little more difficult to envision how God could provide. In such times, mountain-moving faith is required. Read Matt. 9:27-30. Why did the blind men come to Jesus? Did they ask for restoration of their sight \_\_\_\_\_ We know from vv. 28-29 that they believed Jesus could and would heal their eyes. Scan through the preceding verses. Upon what might their faith have been based? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read Acts 14:8-10. What makes this case unusually difficult? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ What did Paul see in the man (vs. 9).  
\_\_\_\_\_

We might conclude from this that faith, whether saving faith, walking faith, or mountain-moving faith, provides the foundation for the other gifts of God. One who does not believe will not act and, therefore, is much less likely to be used of God.

### **IS ALL FAITH A GIFT?**

It is clear that the Lord gifts His people so that they will be able to do what they could never do without His gifts. Where does such faith come from. Do we decide to believe? Consider Eph. 2:8. What is the source of saving faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Cor. 12:9. What, according to this verse, is the source of faith? \_\_\_\_\_

The unbelieving person is dead with respect to spiritual things and is unable to receive (or believe!) the things of God. Until there is a spiritual quickening, therefore, there can be no faith at all as the Bible uses the term. (Read and consider Rom. 6:13; Eph. 2:4-5; Col. 2:13). This same principle applies to the ability to trust the other promises of God.

## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) The writer of Hebrews declares that without faith it is impossible to please God. Why is this so?
- 2) Can one have faith if he does not first have a knowledge of God's promises and of God's power and faithfulness? Explain your answer.
- 3) Is Biblical faith grounded on the promise of God or upon the will of man?

# Lesson II

## The Gifts of the Spirit: The Ability to Serve

*"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the . . . servant of all." (Mk. 9:35)*

### BEING, DOING, AND RECEIVING

John Newton was a crusty and worldly sea captain who sailed the seas in a vain attempt to store up for himself "treasures on earth." After barely surviving a tremendous storm at sea, John's heart was converted and he turned to Christ in faith. Though he served the Lord for many years as a pastor, John Newton is best known today for having written the song, "Amazing Grace." As he neared the end of his life he made one last observation: "My memory is nearly gone," he said, "but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior!" Like John Newton, all believers need to remember this one great truth: It is not in our strength that the power and glory of Christ is seen, but in our weakness. Read each of the following passages of Scripture and comment on how Christ's power and glory is manifested in the believer's life:

2 Cor. 12:9-10

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2 Cor. 13:4

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Eph. 6:10

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Php. 4:13

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In business an employee's value is determined by how much his natural gifts and talents will enable him to contribute to the company's "bottom line." The focus is on the person's talents and training. The believer's value (i.e., usefulness) within the body of Christ has very little to do with his natural gifts and talents. The work of redemption, conversion of the heart, and preparation for eternity in the presence of a Holy God is not natural work -- it is supernatural work and it requires supernatural power! If we think that we can serve Christ in the "strength of our own might" then we think wrongly. We are the tools, but He is the craftsman. We may be used in the process of building, but He is the architect. Our wisdom is foolish and unnecessary. Our power is weak ineffective. Our plans are shortsighted and incomplete. If we are to serve the kingdom of God, it must be in "the strength of the Lord and in His mighty power!"

## **SUPERNATURAL SERVICE**

The Christian is called to a life of service. He serves Christ by serving God's people, by serving his own family, by serving those for whom he works and those with whom he works, by serving as Christ's ambassador in the world in which he lives. Read Rom. 12:6-8. There are two spiritual gifts listed here which we are going to discuss in some detail in lesson 12 (prophecy and teaching). List the other five gifts that you find in this passage and the manner in which each is to be administered:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Read 1 Pet. 4:10-11. Does Peter add any gifts to the list that you found in Romans? \_\_\_\_\_ Notice that Peter instructs believers to, first, use the gifts that they have received; and second, to do it faithfully. What, according to vs. 11, will be the result? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Is God glorified in those things that we might do in our own strength and according to our own wisdom? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

## **MEANS OF GODLY SERVICE**

### **The Gift of Encouragement**

The person with the gift of encouragement is one who has the supernatural ability to communicate courage, to infuse hope where it was previously lacking. As we consider the import of this gift, we must first consider what "courage" is and why it is necessary for the Christian. Read Josh. 1:9. What is God's command to Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the basis for Joshua's courage? \_\_\_\_\_

The encourager enables others to keep on trusting and to keep on doing what God has called them to do. How is this accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is it important? \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Gift of Mercy**

The gift of mercy is seen in those who respond compassionately toward the needy and who are enabled by God to meet that need. All believers are called to show mercy (See Lk. 6:36), but not all have the spiritual gift of mercy. This gift

enables the servant to go beyond the physical needs of a person and minister to their emotional and spiritual needs as well. What kind of person needs to be shown mercy? \_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Pet. 1:3. How did God demonstrate His mercy? \_\_\_\_\_ Why is the gift of mercy important? \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Gift of Contributing / Giving**

This gift is manifested in the ability of some to give, freely and cheerfully, from that which the Lord has provided in order to meet the needs of the church's work on earth. Again, all believers are called to give, but not all have the spiritual gift of giving. The giver tends not to claim ownership of his material possessions but sees them as a means by which God blesses others. Though people with this gift may or may not be blessed with vast resources, they share the common trait of a freedom from the "love of money." (See Heb. 13:5). Read Matt. 13:22. What is the danger of worldly wealth? \_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Tim. 6:17-19. How does the giver benefit from the exercise of his gift? \_\_\_\_\_ Why is this gift important to the work of the church as a whole? \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Gift of Leadership**

The leader is that person who serves as a visionary and an example to God's people. The leader seeks, first and foremost, to follow God. It is as others follow him as he follows God that the spiritual gift of leadership is manifested. Read Heb. 13:7. What are believers instructed to do? \_\_\_\_\_ It is clear that a leader cannot act alone. A leader must be followed. While many people might desire to be leaders, they would do well to remember two things:

1) *Leadership follows vision.* It is useless to have followers if one doesn't know where he is going. Read Matt. 15:14. What kind of "vision" do you think that Jesus is talking about? \_\_\_\_\_

2) *Leadership leads to responsibility.* The leader is accountable to those he leads and to God. Consider Heb. 13:17. This passage is directed to the church as a whole. What is the primary instruction? \_\_\_\_\_ What does it say about leaders? \_\_\_\_\_ Why is this gift important to the work of the church? \_\_\_\_\_

# Questions to ponder

- 1) How is Christ glorified in our weakness?
- 2) Read Eph. 4:11-12. Who does "works of service" and what is the intended result?
- 3) In 1 Cor. 12:18 Paul is explaining how God has put the parts together to make a complete body. How important is each part? What happens if some parts are powerless or missing?

# Lesson 12

## The Gifts of the Spirit: The Ability to Proclaim

*"If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking  
the very words of God." (1 Pet. 4:11)*

### GIFTS AND MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT

Read 1 Cor. 12:1. When Paul says that he does not want believers to be ignorant about spiritual things he is saying that they need to be knowledgeable. Why do you think it is important for Christians to know about the presence and work of the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Cor. 12:7-11. Take particular note of the word "manifestations" in vs. 7. When something is manifested it is made visible, its presence is made known. In this case it, is the Holy Spirit, intangible and immaterial, whose presence is being made known. How do we know that He is working in us and through us? We know because of the things He does! Remember, we are aware of the wind because of its effects! (Jn. 3:8).

What, according to vv. 8-10, are the nine ways that the Holy Spirit make His presence known?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Although many contemporary Bible teachers consider these manifestations to be equivalent to spiritual gifts, this author prefers to put them into a separate category. Consider the definitions of spiritual gifts and manifestations of the Spirit in the appendix.

### THE NEED TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

Read Mk. 16:15-16 and Rom. 10:13-14. What are disciples called to do regarding the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_ What happens if the gospel is not shared with unbelievers? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the result of unbelief? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you

feel personally responsible for the spread of the good news? Why or why not?

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Many people refer to their pastor as "the preacher." The word "preach" means "to proclaim" or "to publish." When we speak of preaching the gospel, we are applying the activity of preaching specifically to the message of who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for sinners. While the pastor is certainly called to preach the good news, this calling is not exclusively his. All believers are so called. Is the pulpit the only venue for the preaching of the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, what other venues are practical and available? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **THE MEANS OF GODLY COMMUNICATION**

Prophecy and teaching are the primary means given for the authoritative proclamation of the gospel. Let's consider these two spiritual gifts independently.

### **The Gift of Prophecy**

A prophet is one who speaks God's Word directly to the people in their immediate historical situation. There are two aspects of prophecy, as the word is used in Scripture. The first aspect is that of *foretelling*. There have been times when God has chosen to reveal to His people things that are going to come to pass in their future. The prophets were his chosen means of such revelation. Read Isa. 42:9 and 44:7-8. Notice that in both cases God is promising to reveal future events. What is His purpose in doing this? \_\_\_\_\_

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While we can never rule out God's ability to reveal Himself in any means He may choose, it would seem that the foretelling aspect of the gift of prophecy was completed with the closing of the canon of Scripture. There is no need for further revelation of this sort. Those who might claim the gift of prophecy as a means of telling the future must be carefully examined.

The second aspect of prophecy is *forth telling*. This was the primary calling of the prophets of the Old Testament and it remains as the purpose of the prophetic gift today. Forth telling is simply, "speaking forth the Word of God." In the exercise of this gift, God's Word is not simply stated or read, but is proclaimed in such a way that it meets the need for *edification* (i.e., building up and strengthening), *exhortation* (encouraging), or *consolation* (comforting). Certainly all preaching should be prophetic in this sense, but the gift of prophecy is not

limited to the pastor or to the sanctuary. The Word of God can be powerfully and effectively applied by any believer in any situation.

### **The Gift of Teaching**

The Lord has set apart certain individuals in whom He has invested the gift of teaching. Without proper instruction the body cannot grow. Read 2 Tim. 2:1-2. To what kind of men is the task of teaching to be entrusted? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Teaching God's people is a calling that is not to be entered into lightly. Read James 3:1. What warning is issued here? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ If the student is required to be a "doer of the word and not a hearer only," how much more does this apply to the teacher?

The teacher can never cease to be a learner. He must be one who loves the Word and desires to spend much time in prayerful study. He must also constantly seek direction and confirmation from the Spirit of Truth (Jn. 14:17). It is good for the teacher to remember that the same Spirit dwells within those you are teaching and often the teacher is taught by his students! (See. Rom. 1:11-12).

## **Questions to ponder**

- 1) Do the desires and inclinations of your own heart testify to the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? How?
- 2) Certainly not everyone who talks from a biblical text is operating in the spiritual gift of prophecy. What is the difference between a talented and persuasive speaker and one who preaches prophetically?
- 3) Do you think that training and study enable people to be more effective in ministry. How does this relate to spiritual gifting?

# Appendix

## GIFTS AND MANIFESTATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

### **The Gift of Serving / Ministry**

This gift is seen in the person who is able to selflessly and tirelessly tend to the temporal needs of God's people. This gift enables the person to both sense and find ways to meet those needs. Compassion and willingness are brought together in the individual who has this spiritual gift.

### **The Gift of *Encouraging / Exhortation***

The Holy Spirit Himself is called "the comforter." The gift of encouragement is seen in the person who, when directed by that comforting Spirit, is able to speak words of consolation and encouragement. Spiritual encouragement is not based upon flattery or false hope, but upon the power and faithful promises of God.

### **The Gift of *Contributing / Giving***

All believers are required to "bring the whole tithe into the storehouse . . . (Mal. 3:10). The gift of giving, however, is seen in that individual who consistently provides additional support for the work of the kingdom with no self-serving motive or agenda. The person who has this gift is a generous, cheerful, and often anonymous giver. This gift flows from an unshakable confidence in the providence of God.

### **The Gift of *Leadership***

The gift of leadership is seen in the person who is able to direct, manage, and rule the affairs of the church in a right and godly manner. This person has a strong sense of God's plan or vision and the ability to communicate it in such a way that others desire to follow.

A leader must, out of necessity, be a humble person. He receives authority only by first submitting himself to the lordship and leadership of Christ, "*who is the head over everything for the church*" (Eph. 1:22).

### **The Gift of *Mercy***

The gift of mercy is seen in the person who, through his actions, consistently demonstrates God's love. This gift enables one to love the unlovely and to extend a helping hand when there is no hope of a positive response. Tending the sick, helping the poor, spending time with the sorrowful, visiting the prisoner – these are the activities of the person with the gift of mercy.

### **The Gift of *Prophecy***

The gift of prophecy is seen in the person who, with divine prompting, illumination and authority, is able to speak God's Word (i.e., Scriptural truth) to God's people in such a way as to impact their present life situation. This gift is "forth telling" rather than "foretelling." Its content is always in perfect agreement with Scripture.

### **The Gift of *Teaching***

The gift of teaching is seen in the person who has the God given ability to communicate the truths of Scripture in such a way that others learn them and are able to apply them to their lives and to their ministries. Teaching is one of the means by which the Holy Spirit equips the saints.

The teacher, out of necessity, also has a deep interest in studying the Word of God. He is able to utilize available research materials and to discern and systematize biblical principles. The teacher is also endowed with the means to creatively communicate ideas.

### ***Word of Wisdom***

A "word of wisdom" is a supernatural understanding of how things should be done according to God's Word and divine plan. It is important for the body of Christ to make a distinction between that which seems wise by human standards, on one hand, and spiritual wisdom which proceeds from God, on the other. A "word of wisdom" neither adds to nor takes from the Scripture. It provides a more complete understanding of the application of biblical truth.

### ***Word of Knowledge***

A "word of knowledge" is not the normal accumulation of data through experience or study. It is spiritual enlightenment or illumination (Eph. 1:17-18). A more complete understanding of God's Word will always have the effect of building up the body of Christ, because all manifestations of the Spirit are for the common good.

"Word of knowledge" must not be confused with the secret or special knowledge that is often claimed by cults and sects. A "word of knowledge" will never contradict the teaching of Scripture. It is, after all, a manifestation of the Holy Spirit who is the very author of Scripture!

### ***Faith***

Faith, as it is spoken of in this context, is the supernatural ability to trust God, with extraordinary confidence, in a particular situation. Because of this, faith can be seen operating in the background of all of Christ's workings within His body. This could be considered "mountain-moving faith" if we understand the "mountain" to be that which cannot be overcome or accomplished by human effort.

Biblical faith is always grounded upon the promises, the power, and the faithfulness of God. It flows from a human will that is yielded to the will of God.

### ***Healings***

This is not to be thought of as a gift which gives one the ability to heal others. It is the healing itself – the ill person becoming well, the broken body becoming whole – which is the work of the Holy Spirit. The means by which a healing is accomplished may be ordinary or extraordinary. In either case, it is God who should receive the glory and praise. Any recovery, brought about by any means, is a manifestation of God's Spirit.

The anointing with oil or the laying on of hands have only symbolic significance in the process of healing; they represent the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

### ***Miracles***

The miraculous is that which is supernatural and extraordinary. In the most basic sense, everything that God does is miraculous because God transcends the natural and ordinary. It is often our expectation that determines which acts of God we think are miracles and which are not. Only those works of God that exceed our expectations are miracles in our eyes!

No one should ever think of himself as a "miracle-worker." It is not the ability to do supernatural things which is given to man; it is the overcoming event itself which reveals the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

### ***Discernment / Distinguishing between spirits***

The word "distinguish" means "to pierce through what is outward to reveal the inner reality." Warnings to carefully distinguish between that which is truly of God and that which is counterfeit are common in Scripture (1 Jn. 4:1, for example).

### ***Various tongues***

To many in the contemporary church, this is the most significant manifestation of the Spirit. It is interesting to note that Paul considers it to be the least desirable of the gifts for two important reasons (See 1 Cor. 14:1-12):

- 1) it does not edify the church as a whole.
- 2) it is a means to talk to God and not to communicate with men.

Nevertheless, it is a manifestation of the Spirit and the church is instructed not to forbid its use (1 Cor. 14:39).

"Tongues," as it is used in the New Testament, may refer to either human languages which are unknown to the speaker (Acts 2:6) or to communication of a completely different type (1 Cor. 13:1). In either case, it can not be understood to mean "nonsense." Though the meaning may be unknown to the speaker, a "tongue" is rational communication.

Consider that one's known human language is corrupted by both mundane use and cursing. This is not so with a heavenly language graciously provided by the Holy Spirit. The gift of tongues, it would seem, is the believer's means to perfected prayer and praise. Because tongues serve to edify the individual rather than the body as a whole, it has no real function within the assembled congregation. (Consider 1 Cor. 14:23-28).

### ***Interpretation of tongues***

Interpretation of tongues is the Spirit's means to bring meaning to an utterance in an unknown language. It should not be understood as a "translation" of the original, but an explanation of the "sense" of the original. The events described in Acts 2:4, 6 would seem to involve both tongues and interpretation of tongues. It should be noted that the problem in the Corinthian church was not their speaking in tongues but their failure to provide and interpretation.