

The Holy Spirit & Spiritual Gifts

By Eric Rolon
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This talk is an introduction to the Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts. We will be addressing each of the Spiritual gifts individually in much greater detail in future talks as part of a comprehensive series. As a general overview today, we'll seek to answer questions concerning the Holy Spirit. We'll also be answering questions on the Spiritual gifts that relate to their origin, their purpose, and their application. As a bonus, we'll also touch on the Fruits of the Spirit. Enjoy.

Who or what is the Holy Spirit? – The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity or Triune God. For those who don't know, the Trinity is comprised of God the Father (Jehovah), God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is God, and more to the point He is the empowering Spirit of God (the Shekinah Glory). The Shekinah works in and through the hearts of men to carry out the will of God the Father by going where he sends them and doing what He leads them to do.

What are Spiritual Gifts? – They are the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the triune God, for the “common good” of believers and the world.

How are Spiritual gifts acquired? - They are gifts given by grace to everyone at The Holy Spirit/God's discretion, and are to be desired. Being that they are given by grace, the acquisition of Spiritual gifts is not based on our worthiness or personal abilities but on God's sovereign choice and the callings He has placed on our lives (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

Why are Spiritual gifts given? - The express purpose they are given is for the edification of the church, the glorification of God in everything, and as signs to unbelievers of the majesty of God (1 Corinthians 14:20-25, 1 Peter 4:10-11).

What is the goal in using our Spiritual gifts? – The goal is to build up the Church, and garner new believers to the Body of Christ. When each part of the Church body is working properly and using their spiritual gifts in accordance with the scriptures, they make the Church/Body of Christ grow in size and strength so that it builds itself up in love. This action thereby extends the grace and favor of God into the surrounding regions. (Ephesians 4:1-16, Psalm 84:5-7).

List of Spiritual Gifts by Category

Modified from list composed by Dr. Larry Gilbert

(Red gifts added by me and verified Biblically)

Key Passages: Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4:1-11, Exodus 28:3; 31:1-5; 37, 1 Samuel 16:14-23

1 Miraculous Gifts

- Apostle: a delegate; specially, an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11)

- **Tongues:** the ability to speak in different languages or dialects used by a particular people distinct from that of other nations (Acts 2:1-13; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 30)
- **Interpretation:** the ability to interpret the languages and dialects spoken by those with the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30)
- **Miracles:** “an event in the external world brought about by the immediate agency or the simple volition of God, operating without the use of means capable of being discerned by the senses, and designed to authenticate the divine commission of a religious teacher and the truth of his message.” – Easton’s Bible Dictionary (John 2:18; Mat 12:38; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28)
- **Healing:** to cure, deliver (from sickness, defect, malady, or demon), heal, remedy a physical condition (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28)

2 Enabling Gifts

- **Faith:** trust; conviction of the truth of anything, belief; of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things (1 Corinthians 12:9)
- **Discernment:** the ability to decipher between spirits; intuitive God-given ability to know what is right or acceptable. “perception, not only by the senses but also by the intellect;... of moral discernment, the understanding of ethical matters, as is plain from what is added in Philipians 1:10.” - Thayer's Greek Lexicon (1 Corinthians 12:10)
- **Wisdom:** using or acting on knowledge well or effectively; knowing and acting in a manner that is acceptable to God (1 Corinthians 12:8)
- **Knowledge:** “the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association” – Webster’s Dictionary (1 Corinthians 12:8)
- **Creativity/Craftsmanship/workmanship:** work, occupation; ability to work creatively and precisely with various artistic mediums (Exodus 28:3; 31:1-5; 37)

3 Team Gifts – Split into two categories: Speaking & Ministering

Speaking Gifts

- **Evangelism:** passionately leading others to God and the saving knowledge of Christ (Ephesians 4:11)
- **Prophecy:** to speak or sing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit in prediction or interpretation of the will of God (Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28)
- **Teaching:** to make clear and understandable the word of God and its truth with accuracy (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
- **Exhortation:** motivating others to action, application, and purpose (Romans 12:8)
- **Shepherding:** overseeing, training, feeding, coaching/leading, equipping/preparing (Ephesians 4:11) ***Fits both categories depending on its application***

Ministering – Support Gifts – “Ministers are not kings but “king-makers.” These people are happy to work behind the scenes supporting the ones who have the speaking gifts.” – Dr. Larry Gilbert

- **Serving:** providing practical help both physically and spiritually (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
- **Mercy Showing:** showing compassion or forgiveness, as well as empathizing with and comforting those in need (Romans 12:8)
- **Giving:** releasing material resources and or funds to further the work of the Church (Romans 12:8)

- Administration: organizing, administering, promoting, leading (Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
- Music: playing an instrument, singing, or running a soundboard - often to elevate mood, in procession, and praise God (1 Samuel 16:14-23)
- Shepherding: overseeing, training, feeding, coaching/leading, equipping/preparing (Ephesians 4:11)

NOTE – Everyone, including unbelievers, have one or more spiritual gifts (Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:14-21, Romans 12:3). More gifts can be acquired at the behest of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:27-31). Even though we all possess them, we are able to grow in our Spiritual gifts and they are able to be used to the fullest when we have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:42-47).

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? – The baptism of the Holy Spirit may be defined as that work whereby the Spirit of God comes to dwell within the heart of a believer – placing the believer into union with Christ (his death and resurrection) – and into union with other believers in the body of Christ at the moment of salvation. – modified from gotquestions.org

What are the fruits of the Spirit? – The Fruits of the Spirit are: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. These are the characteristics that Christians are to exhibit in all walks of life that are in keeping with the code of conduct that God-fearing individuals are to adhere to. They are produced when we are walking in step with God and acting with the wisdom He has given us.

Now that we've laid the foundation, let's unpack each of these questions and themes a bit more thoroughly.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, also referred to as the Holy Ghost or Spirit of God, is the primary vehicle that God uses to display His power to and through man, and make his will known. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit was visitational in nature, and moved according to the will of God the Father to inspire, embolden, work miracles, fight battles, and impart wisdom and knowledge. The first appearance of the Holy Spirit in the Bible is in the second verse of Genesis at the creation.

Genesis 1:1-2 **The Creation of the World** “**1** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. **2** The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

You may be wondering: “If the Holy Spirit was on Earth in the beginning with Jehovah, then why in John 14, did Jesus make such a big deal about how the Father was sending the Holy Spirit to his disciples?” That's a fair question that bears some merit, as it seems to indicate that the Holy Spirit did not in fact reside in, upon, or among us. Answering this question requires some background, so please bear with me as we sidetrack a bit to get all these dominoes lined up.

Earlier I mentioned that the Holy Spirit was visitational. The reason I make that distinction, is because under the Old Testament covenants that God forged with Noah in Genesis 9, Abraham in Genesis 12 & 15, Moses and Israel in Exodus 19 & 24, and David in 2 Samuel 7, the Holy Spirit was selective with who He resided in and spoke to, conditional with His ministering, and temporary. People also did not have bold 24/7 access to the throne of God and His forgiveness like we do now. They required someone to make intercession and atonement for sins on their behalf in the form of the Levitical priests. The Levites, of the tribe of Levi, were consecrated as the priests to all of Israel in Exodus 29, and were ministers to God in his tabernacle – The Tent of Meeting. Aaron, the brother of Moses, and his sons were the firsts priests of Israel. Additionally in the Old Testament, if someone not filled with and lead directly by the Holy Spirit (like the prophets & apostles) even wanted to inquire of God and seek His guidance, they had to do so by going through the priesthood.

Exodus 33:7-11 **The Tent of Meeting** “7 Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. **And everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp.** 8 Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. 9 When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud (that concealed the Lord) would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the Lord would speak with Moses. 10 And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door. 11 **Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.”**

The priests ministering at the tent of meeting had physical tools at their disposal that were used in discerning the will of God, receiving His direction in a matter, and judging His people. Chief among these tools was a “breastpiece of judgement” that was worn on top of the ephod - the priestly garments. The breastpiece housed the Urim and Thummim. The Urim and Thummim are believed to have been cut stones of some kind that served as an oracle of the Lord (Exodus 28, Leviticus 8). Lots were also cast in decision making (Joshua 7:10-26, 18; Proverbs 16:33, 18:18). Although it’s uncertain, it is possible that when lots were cast, the lots were actually the Urim and Thummim, as Proverbs 16:33 points out that “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.”

Stringent laws were laid out for Israel in chapters 1-7 of the book of Leviticus that detailed just how they were to go about making sacrifice to God. These chapters cover laws for: Burnt Offerings, Grain Offerings, Sin Offerings, and Guilt Offerings. By law the Levitical priests were always involved in the atonement process, as the people were to bring their fine and unblemished sacrifices to them at the tent of meeting. After the person making sacrifices brought what was needed and made their contribution in the sacrificial ceremony, the priests would step in and take over carrying out the rest of the ceremony. This included pouring out the drink offerings before the Lord, collecting the blood of the sacrificial animals that the person making atonement had slain to then be splashed against the sides of the altar, and burning the grain offerings and the slain animals as a pleasing aroma to the Lord. When the ceremony was over, the person making sacrifices for their sins was absolved.

Now we all know that no one remains sinless for long, and so these sacrifices had to be routinely made. And because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), blood was required to cover a person’s and his family’s sin – hence the death of the innocent spotless male animal that was slain in place of the atoning person as a sacrifice. For this reason Jesus Christ, who was innocent and spotless, gave His life as the final sacrificial lamb of God, doing away with the need for all future sacrifices. His death purchased forgiveness for every sin past, present, and future for those who believe in Him and receive His salvation. It’s also why John the Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Spirit, upon seeing Jesus coming toward him to be baptized in John 1:29 said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Upon his death by crucifixion at the hands of those He came to save, Jesus forged a new covenant between God and man. This covenant grants every person, Jews and Gentiles, the individual freedom to confess our sins directly to God, enter His presence without the need of a Levitical priest, and go to God with our whole hearts whenever we want. Jesus’ death also paved the way for the coming Holy Spirit.

The New Covenant I just referenced, was prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah around 600 years before the birth of Jesus.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 The New Covenant “**31** “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, **32** not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. **33** For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **34** And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.””

During the Passover, upon the eve of His atoning death, Jesus spoke of the new covenant to His disciples at the last supper in Luke chapter 22. This was also when Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper. Partaking in the Lord’s Supper is referred to in the Christian Church as receiving communion. In the Catholic Church, this ceremony commemorating the Last Supper is also known as the Eucharist.

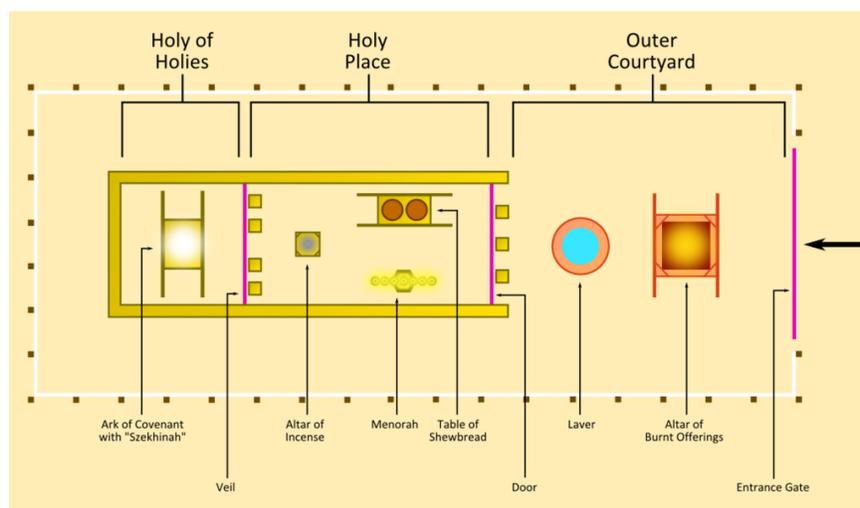
Luke 22:14-23 Institution of the Lord's Supper “**14** And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. **15** And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. **16** For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” **17** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. **18** For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” **19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. **21** But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. **22** For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to

that man by whom he is betrayed!” **23** And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.”

Despite Jesus’ fervent prayers to God later that evening in the garden of Gethsemane concerning His eminent death (Luke 22:39-46), He yielded to God’s will and was crucified.

Luke 23:44-49 The Death of Jesus “**44** It was now about the sixth hour [noon], and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour [3 p.m.], **45** while the sun's light failed. **And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.** **46** Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last. **47** Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, “Certainly this man was innocent!” **48** And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. **49** And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.”

The key verse in that passage to take careful note of is verse 45. It points out that “the curtain of the temple was torn in two.” Many people overlook the significance of this phenomenon. The first temple, the tabernacle, was a two room tent kept within an outer courtyard. The tabernacle had an outer rectangular room known as the “Holy Place”, and an inner square room known as the “Most Holy Place” (Exodus 26). The Most Holy Place housed the ark of the testimony/covenant and the presence of Jehovah. The Most Holy Place has also come to be called the Holy of Holies throughout the years. However, Holy of Holies, though a popular title, doesn’t actually occur in the scriptures. The Most Holy Place, though a popular title, doesn’t actually occur in the scriptures. The aforementioned curtain or the “veil” is what separated the two rooms. This decoratively embroidered curtain is known in Hebrew as a פרכת parokhet, which means a “barrier” – an apt word being that the curtain was very thick (potentially 4” thick), completely opaque, and separated the rest of the World from direct contact with God the Father.



The only person allowed into the Holy of Holies was the High Priest, who originally was Aaron. Aaron couldn’t just go waltzing in there like he owned the place though. The priests had to maintain strict cleanliness while following very specific procedures and rules when it came to

ministering before and worshipping God. Not following these procedures and rules to the letter could result in death. In fact, God charged the first priests of the tabernacle in Leviticus 22:1-2 to “abstain from the holy things of the people of Israel, which they” dedicated to Him so as not to profane His holy name. Verses 3-8 are God’s direction to the priests to maintain their cleanliness in their ministrations. In addition, a very grim warning to really drive the point home is delivered in verse 9. Leviticus 22:9 “They shall therefore keep my charge, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby when they profane it: I am the Lord who sanctifies them.”

An event occurred at the tabernacle once a year on Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). On Yom Kippur the high priest would make atonement for the sins of himself, his house, and the entire nation of Israel in that order. This was the only day of the year that the high priest would pass through the heavy curtain entering into the holy of holies, and through the smoke of the censer come face to face with God. There was considerable preparation to be made before entering, and once inside there were ordered and measured tasks that were to be carried out – such as proper washing of the priests’ hands and feet in a ceremonial basin lest they die (Exodus 30:17-21). In fact the threat of death for the priest loomed heavily over the atonement ceremony as no one could look upon the face of God and live (Exodus 33:20). Hence the pillar of cloud that concealed the Lord when he spoke with Moses (Exodus 33:7-11), and the smoke of the censer that served to veil the face of the Lord in the holy of holies from the high priest. I imagine the high priest also cast his gaze downward out of reverence when communing with God.

Leviticus 16:11-13 “**11** “Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall kill the bull as a sin offering for himself. **12** And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, and he shall bring it inside the veil **13** and put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, **so that he does not die.**”

NOTE – The Mercy Seat was atop the Ark of the Covenant between the two golden cherubim that adorned its lid (Exodus 25:10-22), and was the exact location where the Lord would appear to the high priest while concealed within the haze of smoke from the censer (Leviticus 16:1-3).

Special garments were also worn by the high priest during the Day of Atonement ceremony that served multiple as well as practical functions.

Exodus 28:31-35 “**31** “You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. **32** It shall have an opening for the head in the middle of it, with a woven binding around the opening, like the opening in a garment, so that it may not tear. **33** On its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, around its hem, with bells of gold between them, **34** a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, around the hem of the robe. **35** And it shall be on Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the Holy Place before the Lord, and when he comes out, so that he does not die.”

The bells served additional purposes beyond simply being an ornate adornment. As long as the bells, which could be heard beyond the thick curtain jingled, the attending priests knew

that the high priest was still alive. And if they heard the bells crash to the ground followed by complete and prolonged silence coupled with the non-emergence of the high priest from within the Holy of Holies, then could they could assume the high priest had been slain under glory of God – The Shekinah.

It's been a long circulated tradition in Christian and Jewish circles that when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, he had a cord or length of rope tied around one of his ankles. This was done so that just in case he was struck dead before God for failing in his ministrations or preparation, the other attending priests could retrieve his body without going into the most holy place and being struck dead themselves. This is a plausible possibility that is the very definition of foresight. However, according to Dr. W. E. Nunnally, a professor of Hebrew and early Judaism, this tradition is an unsubstantiated legend that was started during the Middle Ages. And no writing in the Bible, the Apocrypha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, the Pseudepigrapha, the Talmud, Mishna, or any other Jewish source exists that corroborates this Medieval legend. Now back to the torn curtain – I promise I will land this plane.

The curtain of the temple tearing at Jesus' death (Matthew 27:45-56, Mark 15:33-41, Luke 23:44-49) signified that man no longer needed to come to God by proxy, and was given the yet unfathomable privilege to come before God himself without the aid of anyone else. The barrier between Man and God was destroyed, and Man could now atone directly to God wherever he was and do so without having to sacrifice any animal ever again. Also instead of having to make sacrifices again and again to cover future sins, one only need confess their sins to God once and come to salvation through belief in Jesus Christ. Jesus, our coming king, now serves as our final high priest. He also doesn't serve as a high priest who is without firsthand knowledge of the human condition. Given that Jesus lived as fully God and fully man, facing the same trials, tribulations, and temptations that we face, He operates from a place of intimate understanding that allows Him to intercede for us with precision due to Him knowing exactly what it was and is to be human.

Hebrews 14:14-16 **Jesus the Great High Priest** “**14** Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. **16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

With the veil of God's earthly brick and mortar temple rent in twain making it obsolete and the resurrected Christ serving as our high priest, our bodies upon receiving salvation and simultaneous baptism of the Holy Spirit, become a new temple/tabernacle and our hearts the holy of holies where the Holy Spirit (The Shekinah Glory) takes up permanent residence and places us into instant and eternal communion with our Heavenly Father. This is also a huge reason why God placed such importance on abstaining from sexual delinquency.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 “**18** Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

The Foretelling & The Receiving

Now that the bedrock has been laid and the importance of the Holy Spirit has been established with regard to our direct communion with God, we're gonna shift gears and get down to discussing the power that we have received from the Holy Spirit and that is cultivated in us by Him. The promise of the impartation of God's Spirit to everyone was first prophesied by the prophet Joel in the Old Testament.

The Lord Will Pour Out His Spirit

Joel 2:28-32 "**28** "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. **29** Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

30 "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. **31** The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. **32** And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls."

The first half of this prophecy concerns the Holy Spirit and the power he would imbue mankind with, and the second half details the great and awesome/terrible day of the LORD to eventually follow years later, that will culminate in the destruction of the Earth and collection of the church to God the Father. Jesus knew this prophecy and spoke directly to his disciples about the coming Holy Spirit (a.k.a. the Helper). We see Jesus first do this before His crucifixion in John 14:15-31, and then just before His ascension into heaven following His death and triumphant resurrection in Acts 1:1-11.

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit (First Promise)

John 14:15-31 "**15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper [*Advocate*, or *Counselor*], to be with you forever, **17** even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be [or *is*] in you.

18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. **21** Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." **22** Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" **23** Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. **24** Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. **28** You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. **29** And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. **30** I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, **31** but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.”

The Promise of the Holy Spirit (Second Promise)

Acts 1:1-5 “**1** In the first book, O Theophilus, I (Luke) have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, **2** until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. **3** He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. **4** And while staying [or *eating*] with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; **5** for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with [or *in*] the Holy Spirit not many days from now.””

Following this was the ascension.

The Ascension

Acts 1:6-11 “**6** So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” **7** He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” **9** And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. **10** And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, **11** and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.””

The promise of the Holy Spirit was huge to the early believers. As up to this point the only people who operated in tandem with the Holy Spirit, were those in whom he had chosen to reside or rush upon and demonstrate his power through.

Some chosen people (just to name a few) were:

- Sampson (Judges 13, 14, 15)
- King Saul (1 Samuel 10, 11, 16, 19)
- King Saul’s messengers (1 Samuel 19)
- King David (1 Samuel 16)
- Azariah (2 Chronicles 15)
- John the Baptist (Luke 1)
- John the Baptist’s father Zechariah (Luke 1)
- Jesus Christ (Luke 4)

Jesus also told His disciples in John 14 that they would do greater works than him (i.e. miracles, signs, and wonders) on account of the indwelling presence of God.

John 14:8-14 “**8** Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? **10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. **11** Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. **13** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”

Bearing that passage and the prophesy of Joel in mind, the Disciples knew that a supernatural download of power was coming. And although they didn't know exactly when and in what shape or form that influx of power or the event surrounding it would look like, I think we can rightly assume that they figured that they would know it when they saw it. They may have also been a bit confused about how they would be baptized without Jesus being present, as John the Baptist, in Mark 1:4-8, foretold that Christ himself would be the one directly baptizing people with the Holy Spirit. In the meantime though, they did as instructed by Jesus in Acts 1:1-5, and stayed together in Jerusalem to wait for it.

The Day of Pentecost – The Fiftieth Day

Each year there were three major feasts that all of Israel had to observe, The Feast of Unleavened Bread (that followed Passover), the Feast of Weeks/Harvest, and the Feast of Booths (Leviticus 23; Exodus 23:14-17, 34:22-23; Deuteronomy 16:16). During the Feast of Weeks 50 days after the Passover and death of Jesus, the Holy Spirit was imparted to the Disciples and their fellow believers. Following Jesus' death and burial on Friday, if we allot two 24 hour days according to our Gregorian calendar, plus the 40 days that Jesus appeared to the Apostles ending with his ascension on the 40th day, then the Holy Spirit was poured out on all mankind 7 or 8 days after the ascension on the day of Pentecost – which means The Fiftieth Day. Acts 2 details the event.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1-13 “**1** When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. **6** And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. **7** And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are

not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? **9** Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, **11** both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” **12** And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” **13** But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.””

We have ignition. As God’s spirit, in an instant, was imparted to all the world, the believers who then spoke in other languages not their own had received the gift of tongues, which is after the Greek word *glōssa* – “the language or dialect used by a particular people distinct from that of other nations” (Strong's G1100). They had also received other spiritual gifts during this event as they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. It was understandably alarming to hearers of the commotion being that no one had ever witnessed anything like this before. People were gob smacked and in total awe. There were of course others who mocked, and that was when Ole’ Pedro stepped up to the plate and gave the crowd something to chew on. He launched into a spirit-filled sermon for the ages, and kicked the whole mic-drop moment off by quoting the prophet Joel.

Peter's Sermon at Pentecost Acts 2:17-41 “**14** But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. **15** For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day [9 a.m.]. **16** But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

17 ““And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; **18** even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. **19** And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; **20** the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. **21** And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.””

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— **23** this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. **24** God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. **25** For David says concerning him,

“I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; **26** therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. **27** For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. **28** You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’

29 “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. **30** Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that

God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, **31** he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. **32** This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. **33** Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. **34** For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, **35** until I make your enemies your footstool.””

“**36** Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” **38** And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” **40** And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” **41** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.””

And with that the Spirit-Filled Church was born. Everyone on earth was given one or more spiritual gifts, and those who believed in Jesus received salvation, were forgiven their sins, and were baptized in the Holy Spirit. As previously stated, that baptism granted the saints then and still grants the saints today the ability to grow in their giftings and use them to their full capacity all to the glory of God. Acts 2 finishes by giving us a model for the Church. And not just any church, but what a church looks like when its members know what their spiritual gifts are, recognize how they can best serve the Church and God with their gifts, and work cohesively together as a body of believers that enriches and edifies both the lives of its members and the surrounding community.

The Fellowship of the Believers Acts 2:42-47 (This is following the events on the day of Pentecost and Peter’s sermon) “**42** And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **43** And awe [fear] came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. **44** And all who believed were together and had all things in common. **45** And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. **46** And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

I’m sure you’ve heard people describe specific Christian church bodies like Bethel or Elevation as being “Spirit Filled”, as though there are some special characteristics and practices specific to them that distinguish them from other church bodies as being “Spirit Filled” or more “Spiritual” in practice than others. It’s as though they are connected to God and encounter Jesus

in a way that is superior to other churches. By labeling them as spirit filled churches it implies that other churches that do not believe the same things or are not exhibiting the same practices as them are by default not spirit filled. This assumption could not be further from the truth. If you hear someone making distinctions of this nature between church bodies, you can count on that individual having no idea what they are talking about. Using Acts 2:42-47 as a basis and model for the ideal Church, because we are Holy Spirit-filled believers each with our own spiritual gifts and talents, then every church body comprised of Christians is automatically a spirit filled church. The only thing that distinguishes a church body further is if its members, work ardently together using their spiritual giftings as lead by the Holy Spirit in what amounts to a well-oiled highly efficient Christian machine that operates in accordance with our ideal Church model in Acts 2. There are of course church bodies that, because of their obedience to the Word of God, work better together than other church outfits. No one disputes that, but to call one Christian church spirit-filled and another not spirit-filled based on observed or unobserved differences in form, function, or theology is just plain wrong.

NOTE - It's a supremely unfortunate truth that a lot of mainstream churches that people would typically label spirit filled, engage in practices born of unsound doctrine and belief that is quite contradictory to the Bible and its truth. We'll be getting into some of that doctrine and some of those practices as we progress through this series.

Understanding where the Spiritual Gifts come from and their importance to the Church, we're gonna dive into just how those gifts are given and what God's will is for us in using them. We know that everyone on earth has a gift/gifts, but do we get to choose what gifts we get? Let's see what the Apostle Paul says in Romans 12.

Romans 12: 1-8 A Living Sacrifice “**1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers [brothers & sisters], by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship [your rational service]. **2** Do not be conformed to this world [age], but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect [what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God].

Gifts of Grace **3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. **4** For as in one body we have many members [parts], and the members do not all have the same function, **5** so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. **6** **Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us**, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; **7** if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; **8** the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads [gives aid], with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Paul is quick to point out that as the body of Christ has many members just like a physical human body has many different parts, that not every member of the Church will have the same spiritual gifts or talents. Some and indeed many people in a church unit will undoubtedly have some of the same gifts as other members of the same church. We won't

however, all have the exact same gifts or skill sets. Instead we'll have gifts that complement each other and foster growth all to the glory of God. Paul also points out that the spiritual gifts we receive are at the behest of the Holy Spirit and the grace that God has for us. Being that the grace of God is unmerited divine assistance given to humans for their regeneration and sanctification, there is nothing we can do to force that grace into action or dictate in what shape and capacity that grace is imparted to us. We can earnestly desire other spiritual gifts, however we don't get to choose which ones we receive. And that's okay. It's actually preferred to maintain unity in the Church as we rely on and yield to the wisdom of God & the Holy Spirit. In his letter to the church in Corinth, Paul clarifies even further the particularities of spiritual gifts and their uses for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 Spiritual Gifts "**1** Now concerning spiritual gifts [spiritual persons], brothers [brothers & sisters], I do not want you to be uninformed. **2** You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. **3** Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit. **4** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; **5** and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; **6** and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. **7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **8** For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, **9** to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, **10** to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. **11** All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually **as he wills.**"

All that makes sense and undoubtedly cleared up some misunderstandings in the church of Corinth, but the Apostle Paul isn't finished. He brings up to the Corinthians the "one body with many members" concept that he shared with the church in Rome. Only this time he adds a few more levels of clarification for their benefit.

1 Corinthians 12:12-26 One Body with Many Members "**12** For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves [*doulos* or *bondslave/bondservant*] or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

14 For the body does not consist of one member but of many. **15** If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? **18** But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. **19** If all were a single member, where would the body be? **20** As it is, there are many parts [members] yet one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." **22** On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, **23** and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the

greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, **24** which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, **25** that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. **26** If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.”

Now we’re cooking with gas! Paul finishes up 1 Corinthians 12 with a list of some of the Spiritual gifts in the order of their importance starting with the “higher gifts” and working his way down to the lesser or lower gifts. This list provides a blueprint for how church bodies should structure themselves and delegate responsibility to all those serving within the church. The delegation of responsibility and people knowing their roles is just as important during times of meeting for a worship service as it is when clerical and behind-the-scenes work is done throughout the week, or even community outreach.

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 "**27** Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. **28** And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. **29** Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? **30** Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? **31** But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way."

In this passage the Apostle Paul names the gifts of apostleship, prophesy, and teaching as the higher gifts. These are Spiritual gifts that we are to desire, knowing full well that though we still don’t get to choose our giftings, we can petition the Lord to grant additional gifts to us, and more can in fact be bestowed upon us as the Holy Spirit wills. Paul also made sure to point out in 1 Corinthians 12 that though our giftings differ in practice and importance, we are not to personally value ourselves below or above another, thereby sowing seeds of discord and causing division. We also have to continually remember that as the collective body of Christ, when one of us suffers, we all hunker down in that muddy trench together, and when one of us rejoices, we all raise a glass and celebrate the victory together. It was needful for the Apostle Paul to impart this wisdom to the churches, as the logical outworking of understanding and not abusing our spiritual gifts is orderly worship. Paul’s admonitions gave the church a number of reference points to measure themselves against to insure that their ministry to each other and their community, and their church gatherings were orderly and structured.

It is crucial for the Church to act in accordance with the principles that Paul and Peter laid out in there Epistles in order for the Church to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” amongst its members. Not letting a Church service or gathering descend into chaos and disarray under the guise of “moving in the spirit”, and instead maintaining orderly worship is also extremely important for upholding a sound and compelling witness to unbelievers. Being that the gift of speaking in other tongues is a sign to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22), the Apostle Paul highlights its role in the Church & Church meetings, the method by which it is to be used, and that it requires an interpreter when employed in a gathering (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). He also made sure to illustrate the importance of people with the gift of tongues speaking one at a time and not all at once - 1 Corinthians 14:22-23 “**22** Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. **23** If,

therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?" Chaotic church services and gatherings where members are doing cartwheels through the sanctuary and yammering all at once in a cacophony of indecipherable noise will turn an unbeliever right off to God and the Church in an instant. I've been in services like that when my family and I were members of an Assemblies of God church. It is often unsettling, and that moronic crap is no way to worship. The Apostle Paul made sure to hammer the importance of orderly worship home as he points out to us in 1 Corinthians 14:33 that "God is not a God of confusion but of peace."

In his letter to the church in Ephesus during his imprisonment, Paul gives further reasoning why knowing our spiritual gifts and applying them effectively is so important, as well as a model for the Church and its mission statement that is in keeping with and expounds on the Church model we are given in Acts 2.

Ephesians 4:1-16 **Unity in the Body of Christ** "1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says,

"When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men [*men & women*]."

9 (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds [pastors] and teachers [or *the shepherd-teachers*], 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, **when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."**

In Peter's first Epistle, he gives an admonition to the Church that works hand-in-hand with Paul's admonition to the Church in Ephesians 4 that we just covered. Much like Paul, Peter stresses the importance of being a good witness to unbelievers for God. He also insists on us as Christians using our Spiritual gifts in service to each other.

1 Peter 4:1-11 **Stewards of God's Grace** "1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. 3 For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in

sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. **4** With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; **5** but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. **8** Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. **9** Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. **10** As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: **11** whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Building itself up in actionable love is the goal of the Church, as well as the key ingredient needed among its members to bring about unity among believers, and strengthen their witness to unbelievers. However, as we've seen pointed out again and again in the Bible, Spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical maturity is required to love each other and the World completely. Both the Apostles Paul and Peter stress this truth. Love is a multifaceted, many-splendid thing. Building each other up in love does not mean that we act like a bunch of brainless dandies touting grace from the rooftops while simultaneously shirking responsibilities, telling people that they are fine just the way they are, and making concessions for people in the church to act like a bunch of Bible illiterate wretches. Jesus tells us in John 15:12-14 "**12** "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **14** You are my friends if you do what I command you." If we deign to follow Jesus' command and love each other as God has loved us, then we have to recognize and take on the world of responsibility that comes with it. 1 Corinthians 13 lays out 16 characteristics of love that must be exhibited if our love is to be perfect.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 "**4** Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant **5** or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; **6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. **7** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **8** Love never ends."

As this passage illuminates, it is no small task to love another. It's also no small task to love the Lord either. Love is so much more than simply displaying intense affection or passionate care for another. Those are both components of love, don't misunderstand me. However love goes beyond the kindnesses we grant one another and the endearing moments we share. To love is also to dole out a firm rebuke and discipline verbally and physically when it is required. The book of Proverbs addresses this in a number of places:

Proverbs 4:11-12 "**11** My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, **12** for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights."

Proverbs 12:1 "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid."

Proverbs 13:24 “Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.”

Loving each other does not mean that we act like a bunch of pushovers and let people (especially other Christians) go unchecked when they carry on with wicked intentions and actions. Paul calls believers to spiritual action in Ephesians 6:12 as we “wrestle not against flesh and blood”, and Jesus tells us that we are to pray for those who persecute us in Matthew 5:44. In addition to spiritual action by way of prayer and supplication, there are times where verbal and or physical action is required in opposing those who seek to steal, kill, destroy, and cause division. For the sake of preserving the sanctity of the flock Jesus even gives us a method in Matthew 18 of bringing correction to a brother or sister, and even excommunicating a member of the Church who is in willful and perpetual defiance of the Word. Paul stresses the importance of sober judgement within the Church as well in 1 Corinthians 5.

1 Corinthians 5:9-13 “**9** I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— **10** not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. **11** But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. **12** For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? **13** God judges [will judge] those outside. **“Purge the evil person from among you.”**”

It is our duty as Christians to undertake these responsibilities no matter how grim or hard they seem. As King Solomon points out in Ecclesiastes 3, there is a time and season for everything under heaven. Bearing that in mind let’s return to Proverbs.

Proverbs 16:6 “By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the Lord one turns away from evil.”

Proverbs 8:13 “The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.”

If you desire to be perfected in love, then you better understand when something is evil and get good at hating it and purging it. Not that we have to go around like a pack of rabid Pharisees picking unnecessary fights and railing against everything, but we have to be ready, willing, and able to take a stand when we are called into action. Love is a verb and so is hate. It requires wisdom and self-control to administer both effectively and in accordance with God’s word. And that leads us into our final section on this deep dive – The Fruit of the Spirit. As previously stated, our spiritual gifts are the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and his power. If we are yielding to the Holy Spirit and his influence on our hearts, then his fruit will be produced in our lives for the benefit of ourselves and others.

Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:16-26 **Keep in Step with the Spirit** “**16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the

desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **25** If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”

Each of the fruits of the Spirit is good on its own, especially love which is the greatest fruit and is most beneficial when optimally applied (1 Corinthians 13:13). But every one of the fruits of the Spirit hinges on self-control. Peter even stressed this in 1 Peter 4:7 when he told the Church to “be self-controlled and sober-minded”. Unlike the 20 Gifts of the Spirit I listed, of which we don’t receive all, the 9 Fruits of the Spirit are something that we can and should exhibit in full measure. Fruit as we all know is produced from that which is planted and cultivated. For the Christian that which is planted in us is the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and his power. In turn we should all be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kindhearted, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled. But we cannot be all those things unless self-control that is inspired by love reigns supreme in our hearts and minds. We’re all undoubtedly better at exhibiting some fruits more so than others, and therein lies our incumbent challenge. It takes a focused act of will and obedience to God to love one another, or be patient with one another, or be kind to one another, or to rebuke one another. We don’t just become ripe with all the fruit of the Spirit when we become Christians, and these attributes don’t just become an easily manifested extension of who we are. You may possess all the love in the world or be the most artistically talented person to ever exist, but if you lack the self-control to administer that love or are too lazy and lack the gumption to get out there and apply your artistic abilities, then not only are you wasting your God-given talents but you are setting a bad example as a Christian and being a poor witness. I don’t say any of that from a level of nigh unattainable piety as though I don’t ever put a foot out of bounds. I have to continually battle my own will and sinful nature to act in accordance with God’s will as the Holy Spirit leads me. Jesus speaks about this concept in Matthew 5.

Matthew 5:17-20 A Tree and Its Fruit “**15** Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”

The warning Jesus delivers in this passage is to beware of false prophets who would destroy the Church, but the concept of producing fruit and knowing a person’s heart by the fruit they produce can be applied to every person in every situation and walk of life. As the J-Man illustrates, we all produce fruit that is either good or bad. Whether we realize it or not, our lives are often under a microscope. People don’t often read their Bibles, but they do read their Christians. We are judged in an instant and as saints should be judged, as we not only claim a

God but that we also claim to operate according to a code of morality given to us in the Bible that promises life and life more abundantly (John 10:10). Thank God for grace, because this side of eternity we're not going to be batting 1000 in the fruit department. And we definitely don't have a snowball's chance in Hell of producing good fruit on our own. We need to stay plugged into the Word while petitioning the help and guidance of God, as we make a habit of dying to self daily (Romans 6). Scripture is the primary medium the Holy Spirit uses to speak to us. And knowing the word of God makes it infinitely easier to recognize the Holy Spirit's impressing on our hearts. The Holy Spirit also speaks to us through people who have been enlisted for such a time and are responding to his call on *their* hearts. Only through actively communing with the Holy Spirit and yielding to his leadership can we be obedient to God. All that being said, what kind of fruit are you producing?

Thank you for spelunking along with me on this deep dive. I hope this provided you with some insight into the Holy Spirit and his role in our lives and the Church. As I mentioned at the top of this study, I'll be tackling each of the spiritual gifts individually in future deep dives. In the meantime get into the Word and equip yourself with the truth. You will be enriched for the effort and you may learn a thing or two. All the best to you and yours. God bless you, and have a great day!

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Strong's Concordance References

Strong's G652 – ἀπόστολος - apostolos - (transliteration)

- I. a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders
 - A. specifically applied to the twelve apostles of Christ
 - B. in a broader sense applied to other eminent Christian teachers
 - i. of Barnabas
 - ii. of Timothy and Silvanus

Strong's G1100 - γλῶσσα – glōssa (transliteration)

- I. the tongue, a member of the body, an organ of speech
- II. a tongue
 - A. the language or dialect used by a particular people distinct from that of other nations

Strong's G4102 - πίστις – pistis (transliteration)

- I. conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it
 - A. relating to God
 - i. the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ
 - B. relating to Christ
 - i. a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God

- C. the religious beliefs of Christians
 - D. belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same fidelity, faithfulness
- II.
- A. the character of one who can be relied on