

## Who is the Holy Spirit? Pt 3 (23/11/14)

### Recap of 09/11/14 sermon: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Today God has sent His Holy Spirit with abundant provision for the church.

Included in it is nine beautiful spiritual gifts and with these spiritual gifts, the Church is marked out as the one who is committed to become the bride of Christ.

These nine gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. These gifts can be group into three headings to help us understand them more clearly:

- a) The power gifts – Faith, gifts of healing and miraculous powers (workings of miracles)
- b) The vocal gifts – Prophecy, speaking in different kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues
- c) The revelation gifts – distinguishing between spirits (discerning of spirits), message of wisdom (word of wisdom) and message of knowledge (word of knowledge)

What we need to know about these spiritual gifts?

1. All these gifts are “manifestations”. “Manifest” means “clearly visible”; “manifestation” means “display or disclosure”

The Holy Spirit Himself is invisible, but through these gifts He manifests Himself. He impacts our senses in a way we can see or hear or feel.

2. All of them are “for the common good – NIV” or “for the profit of all -NKJV”. Through them, Christians can minister to one another. They all serve some practical purpose. They are tools NOT toys.

3. All these gifts are supernatural. They are not a product of natural ability or special education.

Spiritual gifts are available to all who desire them.

Paul thanks God for the Christians at Corinth because “you do not lack any spiritual gifts as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed” (I Corinthians 1:7).

Therefore Christians are expected to continue to exercise spiritual gifts until the return of Christ.

4. It must be emphasized that all these are gifts of God’s grace.

They are received by faith. We can never earn them. We can never be “good enough” to exercise them.

### **How to allow God to release these spiritual gifts through us?**

Firstly it is released through love and/or compassion. God is love and when God is in us, His love in us will start to grow.

Secondly, we need to step out in faith. Be obedient.

### **How do we practice this?**

The more we used these gifts, the better we will become.

### **Unhindered operation of spiritual gifts**

We need to cultivate sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and to make room for Him to move as and as He wills.

### **Limitation of Spiritual Gifts**

a) Spiritual gifts are limited to the present life.

b) The exercise of spiritual gifts gives no indication of a person's character.

c) Once we received one of these gifts, we are free to use it, misuse it or just not use it at all.

Spiritual gifts do not tell us the spiritual conditions of the person having these spiritual gifts.

Jesus followed up these words by an explicit warning that the exercise of spiritual gifts is not necessarily a passport to heaven:

Matthew 7:21-23 (NIV)

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evil-doers!’

In NKJV vs 23 says – And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from me, you who practice lawlessness!’

This indicate that it is possible for a person to exercise spiritual gifts and at the same time to “practice lawlessness”

What is lawlessness? It is an arrogant assumption that God's moral law and ethical standards no longer apply to those who can exercise gifts of supernatural power.

## Who is the Holy Spirit? Pt 3 (23/11/14)

### The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

This morning, we are going to focus on the fruit of the Spirit.

There is a difference in kind between gifts and fruit. This may be illustrated by comparing a Christmas tree with a mango tree.

A Christmas tree carries gifts as part of the decoration. Each gift is attached to it by a single act and received from it by a single act. No time or effort is required of the person receiving the gift.

On the other hand, there is both time and hard work to cultivate a mango tree. To produce fruit, it must go through a series of stages that takes several years.

First the seed must be placed in the earth.

From this a root goes down into the soil and at the same time the sprout rises upward.

Over a period of years the sprout will grow into a tree.

In due course blossoms appear on the tree.

Then these blossoms will fall off and fruit begins to develop.

But if the tree is to be strong, the blossoms or the young fruit must be pluck off in the first years so that the tree's root system will develop to support a strong tree. (Under the Law of Moses at least four years were required – Leviticus 19:23-25)

At various stages of its growth, a mango tree is very fragile. Strong winds may uproot the young tree. Strong wind and too much rain may destroy the blossoms or the fruit.

In this process, seed and fruit are inseparably linked to each other. Fruit must grow from a seed, but on the other hand it takes fruit to produce further seeds.

"...plant bearing according to their kinds trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kind" Genesis 1:12

This establishes an important spiritual principle: **Christians who do not produce spiritual fruit in their own lives have no seed to sow into the lives of others.**

The New Testament speaks of spiritual gifts in plural (more than one).

On the other hand, the New Testament speaks of spiritual fruit in the singular (one only).

The nine forms of spiritual fruit are listed in Galatians 5:22-23:

"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control".

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

Love is the primary form of fruit – is listed first. The others that follow may be understood as different ways in which the fruit of love manifest itself. Derek Prince has this to say about the fruit of the Spirit:

Joy is love rejoicing  
Peace is love resting  
Patience is love forbearing  
Kindness is love serving others  
Goodness is love seeking the best for others  
Faithfulness is love keeping its promises  
Gentleness is love ministering to the hurts of others  
Self-control is love in control

We would also describe the fruit of the Spirit as different ways in which the character of Jesus manifest itself through those whom He indwells.

When all the forms of fruit are fully developed, it is as Jesus by the Holy Spirit is incarnated/living in His disciples.

In 2 Peter 1:5-7, the apostle Peter lists seven (7) successive stages in the development of a fully formed Christian character:

For context we will read from 2 Peter 1:5—11: (Get them to read this passage aloud and together).

*For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness knowledge; and to knowledge self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.*

*For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins*

*Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.*

*For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

Peter begins by warning us that to go through this process successfully will demand “every effort” or “diligence” on our part.

Paul expresses the same thing in another way when Paul says “The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops” 2 Timothy 2:6.

There can be **NO** real success in developing Christian character without “every effort” or “diligence” or “hard work”.

The process Peter describes could be compared to that by which a mango seed develops into a mature mango tree.

The seed is God's word implanted in the heart. This produces faith which is the starting point.

Then out of faith there follow seven successive stages of development and they are:

1. Goodness (NIV) or Virtue (NKJV)
2. Knowledge
3. Self-control
4. Perseverance
5. Godliness
6. Brotherly kindness
7. Love

### **Stage One:**

Stage one where "goodness" (NIV) or "virtue" (NKJV) can be translated as "excellence". This excellence can be for "moral excellence" and "excellence in any area of life".

Christians must have moral excellence or moral character in his/her life. Moral excellence covers areas such as honesty; integrity, transparency and what is spelled out in the Word of God.

As for "excellence in any other area of life", examples are:

A teacher who comes to Christ should become an excellent teacher.

A Christian businessman should excel in his/her field of business.

A housewife who comes to Christ should be an excellent housewife.

A student who comes to Christ should be an excellent student.

There is no room for sloppiness or laziness in any area of a Christian life.

Very rarely, if ever, does God call a person out of failure in a secular calling to success in a spiritual setting. What it means that if you fail in the secular world most likely you will fail in the spiritual setting.

He who is unfaithful in the least (the secular) is also unfaithful also in much (the spiritual).

Luke 16:10 – "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much"

**Stage two:**

Stage two of spiritual development is knowledge.

There are many different forms of knowledge.

The knowledge extol in scripture is primary practical and NOT merely theoretical. It is knowledge that works.

The scriptural example is the teaching of Jesus himself.

It did not come under the category of what we would call “theology”. Jesus never propounded complicated, abstract theories.

His teaching was based on familiar, practical activities: sowing seed, catching fish, caring for livestock.

The Bible teaches us to lay hand on the sick and they will be healed – we are doing it and we see it work.

The Bible teaches us to cast out demons and some of us are doing it. Those who are doing it can testify that the demons have to leave when we command in the name of Jesus.

If these works, surely what the Bible teaches us about prosperity, family, relationship etc must be also work.

(Word of God to healing, deliverance, business, life, relationship, family etc)

The most essential form of knowledge in the Christian life is the knowledge of God’s will as revealed in Scripture.

This too is practical. It demands a regular systematic study of the whole Bible.

*In 2 Timothy 3:16,17 – All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

**Stage three:**

After knowledge comes self-control. Self-control is also called self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7).

*“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline”.*

This is the stage at which a Christian must prove himself/herself a genuine disciple – that is, a person under discipline – and not a mere church member.

This kind of discipline must be applied in every major area of our personality – our emotions, our attitudes, our appetites, and our thought life.

It must govern not only our actions but – more importantly – our reactions.

(Give illustration of Mr Ding asking me to finish the work for building plan submission when 2 day earlier gave flimsy reasons that we are not performing and want to have a mutual termination of our appointment as consultant engineers).

**Stage four:**

Until we have developed this kind of discipline, we cannot move up to the next stage - that is perseverance.

The word “perseverance” which implies the ability to overcome various tests and trials in our life. And these tests and trials that will expose any weak and undisciplined areas of our personality.

That pinpoints one major reason why some Christians never progress beyond a certain stage of spiritual development.

They never fulfil these two requirements of self-control and endurance.

To take an illustration from the mango tree, their blossoms are blown away by the winds of adversity or their young fruit is killed by the rain of rejection.

In the remaining stages of development, the beauty of a truly Christian character unfolds.

**Stage Five:**

Godliness. Godliness is the mark of a person whose life is centered in God – a person who has become a vessel of the presence of God.

Wherever such a person goes, the atmosphere is permeated by a faint but unique pervasive fragrance.

There may not be any preaching or other religious activity and yet people become strangely aware of eternal issue.

The late evangelist Smith Wigglesworth relates an incident which illustrates the impact that a godly presence can have in a non-religious atmosphere. After some moments of private prayer, Wigglesworth took his seat in a railway carriage. Without a word spoken, the man in the opposite seat – a complete stranger – blurted out “Your presence convicts me of sin”. Wigglesworth was then able to introduce him to Christ.

**Stage Six:**

Brotherly love describes the way that believers of Jesus Christ relate to their fellow believers – that is their brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Let me give you a revelation: It is not easy for Christians to love one another. This is from my observation and experience during the many years as a Christian.

This is confirmed by the many splits among churches and the many strain relationships among Christians.

The fact that a person has repented of his sins and claimed salvation does not mean that his whole character has been instantly transformed.

Certainly a vitally important process of change has been set in motion, but it may take many years for that change to be worked out in every area of a person character.

When David needed smooth stones to fit in his sling to kill Goliath, he went down to the valley – the lowly place of humility. There in the stream he found the kind of stones he needed.

What made them smooth?

Two pressures: first the water flowing over them and secondly their continual jostling against one another.

This is a picture of how Christian character is formed.

First, there is the continual “washing of water by the word” Ephesians 5:26

Secondly, as the stones jostle one another in personal relationships, the rough edges are gradually worn down until they become smooth.

Let me add that when Jesus needs “living stones” for His sling, He goes to the valley – the place of humility. There he chooses stones that have been made “smooth” by the action of God’s Word and by the pressures of regular fellowship with other believers.

It is the mark of spiritual maturity to sincerely love our fellow Christians, not simply for what they are in themselves, but for what they mean to Jesus, who shed His life blood for each of them.

### **Stage Seven.**

In this final stage of development – agape love – represents the full, ripe fruit of Christian character.

This is no longer how we relate only to our fellow believers. It is God’s own love for the unthankful and the unholy.

It is the love of God that causes us to “bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute you” Matthew 5:44

It is the love that Christ demonstrated on the cross when He prayed for those who crucified Him, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing”. Luke 23:34

It is the same love that caused Stephen to pray for those who were stoning him “Lord, do not hold this sin against them”. Acts 7:60

It is the love that changed Saul the persecutor into Paul the servant of Christ, who became “all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some”. 1 Corinthians 9:22.

For my part, when I contemplate the Bible’s picture of the fully developed fruit of the Holy Spirit, I am both humbled and inspired.

Humbled, because I still have so far to go.

Inspired, because I have caught a glimpse of something more beautiful than anything this world has to offer.

I want to echo the words of Paul: "I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus". Philippians 3:13,14.

**Sermon Outline for Power Point Presentation - Who is the Holy Spirit? Pt 3 (23/11/14)**

**The Fruit of the Holy Spirit**

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This indicate that it is possible for a person to exercise spiritual gifts and at the same time to “practice lawlessness”

What is lawlessness? It is an arrogant assumption that God's moral law and ethical standards no longer apply to those who can exercise gifts of supernatural power.

## The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

There is a difference in kind between gifts and fruit.

A Christmas tree carries gifts as part of the decoration.

Each gift is attached to it by a single act and received from it by a single act.

No time or effort is required of the person receiving the gift.

To produce the mango fruit, it must go through a series of stages that takes several years.

At various stages of its growth, a mango tree is very fragile. Strong winds may uproot the young tree. Strong wind and too much rain may destroy the blossoms or the fruit.

Genesis 1:12: "...plant bearing according to their kinds trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kind"

This establishes an important spiritual principle: **Christians who do not produce spiritual fruit in their own lives have no seed to sow into the lives of others.**

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

The nine forms of spiritual fruit are listed in Galatians 5:22-23:

**"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control".**

Love is the primary form of fruit of the Spirit. Derek Prince has this to say about the fruit of the Spirit:

Joy is love rejoicing

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Patience is love forbearing

Kindness is love serving others

Goodness is love seeking the best for others

Faithfulness is love keeping its promises

Gentleness is love ministering to the hurts of others

Self-control is love in control

In 2 Peter 1:5-7, the apostle Peter lists seven (7) successive stages in the development of a fully formed Christian character:

2 Peter 1:5—11:

*For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness knowledge; and to knowledge self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.*

*For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins*

*Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.*

*For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

Peter begins by warning us that to go through this process Christian character successfully will demand “every effort” or “diligence” on our part.

Paul expresses the same thing in another way when Paul says “The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops” 2 Timothy 2:6.

There can be **NO** real success in developing Christian character without “every effort” or “diligence” or “hard work”.

The seed is God’s word implanted in the heart. This produces faith which is the starting point.

Then out of faith there follow seven (7) successive stages of development and they are:

1. Goodness (NIV) or Virtue (NKJV)
2. Knowledge
3. Self-control
4. Perseverance
5. Godliness
6. Brotherly kindness
7. Love

**Stage One:**

“Goodness” (NIV) or “Virtue” (NKJV) can be translated as “moral excellence” and “excellence in any area of life”.

**Stage two:**

Stage two of spiritual development is knowledge – knowledge that works

The most essential form of knowledge in the Christian life is the knowledge of God’s will as revealed in Scripture. *2 Timothy 3:16,17*

**Stage three:**

Self-control is also called self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7).

A Christian must prove himself/herself a genuine disciple – that is, a person under discipline.

This kind of discipline must be applied in every major area of our personality – our emotions, our attitudes, our appetites, and our thought life.

It must govern not only our actions but – more importantly – our reactions.

**Stage four:**

Until we have developed this kind of discipline, we cannot move up to the next stage - that is perseverance.

The word “perseverance” which implies the ability to overcome various tests and trials in our life.

And these tests and trials that will expose any weak and undisciplined areas of our personality.

**Stage Five:**

Godliness is the mark of a person whose life is centered in God – a person who has become a vessel of the presence of God.

**Stage Six:**

Brotherly love describes the way that believers of Jesus Christ relate to their fellow believers – that is their brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Let me give you a revelation: It is not easy for Christians to love one another.

This is a picture of how Christian character is formed.

First, there is the continual “washing of water by the word” Ephesians 5:26

Secondly, as the stones jostle one another in personal relationships, the rough edges are gradually worn down until they become smooth.

**Stage Seven.**

Love - Agape love – represents the full, ripe fruit of Christian character.

It is God's own love for the unthankful and the unholy.

Matthew 5:44: It is the love of God that causes us to “bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute you”

Luke 23:34: It is the love that Christ demonstrated on the cross when He prayed for those who crucified Him, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing”.

Acts 7:60: It is the same love that caused Stephen to pray for those who was stoning him “Lord, do not hold this sin against them”.

1 Corinthians 9:22: It is the love that changed Saul the persecutor into Paul the servant of Christ, who became “all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some”.

**Sermon Outline - The Fruit of the Holy Spirit (23 Nov 2014)**

There is a difference in kind between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

A Christmas tree carries \_\_\_\_\_ as part of the \_\_\_\_\_. Each gift is \_\_\_\_\_ to it by a single act and \_\_\_\_\_ from it by a single act. No \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ is required of the person receiving the gift.

To produce the mango fruit, it must go through a series of stages that takes several years. At various stages of its growth, a mango tree is very fragile. \_\_\_\_\_ may uproot the young tree. \_\_\_\_\_ may destroy the blossoms or the fruit.

Genesis 1:12. This establishes an important spiritual principle:

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Galatians 5:22-23 the nine (9) fruit are:

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

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\_\_\_\_\_ is the primary form of fruit of the Spirit. Derek Prince has this to say about the fruit of the Spirit:

Joy _____	Kindness is love _____	Gentleness is love _____
Peace is love _____	Goodness is love _____	Self-control is love _____
Patience is love _____	Faithfulness is love _____	

2 Peter 1:5—11. Peter begins by warning us that to go through this process Christian character successfully will demand “every effort” or “diligence” on our part.

2 Timothy 2:6.

There can be \_\_\_\_\_ in developing Christian character without “every effort” or “diligence” or “hard work”.

The seed is God's word implanted in the heart. This produces faith which is the starting point. Then out of faith there follow seven (7) successive stages of development and they are:

1.	4.	7.
2.	5.	
3.	6.	

**Stage One:**

“Goodness” (NIV) or “Virtue” (NKJV) can be translated as “\_\_\_\_\_” and “\_\_\_\_\_”.

**Stage two:**

Stage two of spiritual development is knowledge – \_\_\_\_\_  
 The most essential form of knowledge in the Christian life is the knowledge of \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *2 Timothy 3:16,17*

**Stage three:**

Self-control is also called \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Timothy 1:7).  
 A Christian must prove himself/herself a genuine disciple – that is, a person under discipline.  
 This kind of discipline must be applied in \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

It must govern not only our \_\_\_\_\_ but – more importantly – \_\_\_\_\_.

**Stage Four:**

Until we have developed this kind of discipline, we cannot move up to the next stage - that is perseverance.  
 “Perseverance” - implies \_\_\_\_\_  
 These tests and trials will \_\_\_\_\_

**Stage Five:**

Godliness is the \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_.

**Stage Six:**

Brotherly love describes the way that \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Let me give you a revelation: \_\_\_\_\_.  
 This is a picture of how Christian character is form.  
 First, there is the continual “\_\_\_\_\_”  
 Secondly, as the stones jostle one another \_\_\_\_\_

**Stage Seven.**

Love - \_\_\_\_\_ love – represents \_\_\_\_\_.  
 It is God's own love for the unthankful and the unholy.  
 Matthew 5:44      Acts 7:60  
 1 Corinthians 9:22      Luke 23:34