



The Holy Spirit

Small Group Work Sheet
October 24, 2010

Part 1 - Ice Breaker (This is just for fun)

- Go around the room and have everyone complete this sentence.
 - When talking about the Holy Spirit, I think of...

Part 2 - Review the sermon

- Do you think many Christians try to live life on their own power? If so, why do you think they ignore the Holy Spirit?
- In struggles with sin, what means has God used to give you victory? How does the Holy Spirit changing our affections provide victory in times of struggle? How can we cultivate those affections?
- Pastor Kurt talked about the Holy Spirit's comfort in times of trouble. Share with the group comfort the Holy Spirit brought you in a difficult season of life. What other means does God use to comfort us?
- The Holy Spirit produces relational unity. Why is church division such a subtle but effective tactic of Satan to destroy Christ's kingdom? Have you seen this in action? What did you learn from it?
- How often do you think depression is a spiritual, not a medical issue? If you were counseling someone to find joy from the Holy Spirit, what would you tell them to do?
- What is the difference between Christ being a Savior vs. Christ being a Lord? Does it make a difference for eternal salvation? Does it make a difference for the experience of God's power in our life today?
- Pastor Kurt talked about *quenching vs. filling* of the Holy Spirit and *grieving the Holy Spirit vs repenting of sin*. What else leads Christians to live life apart from the power of the Holy Spirit?

Part 3 - Digg deeper ...*get the rest of the story.*

The Fruit of the Spirit vs. the Flesh

How should a church gauge its progress? Do attendance figures tell the story? Does giving tell the story? While those metrics tell *part* of the story, God uses a different

metric because he measures our character. As believers, we are in a battle to walk by the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit rather than drifting with the current around us.

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 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. Galatians 5:16–17 (ESV)

We are in a battle between the desires of our flesh and the desires of the Holy Spirit. Paul lists off what some of these fleshly desires look like in the form of what is called a stoic vice list. I took the time to write down the definitions of these words from my Greek dictionary. They are more commonplace than we realize.

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 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. Galatians 5:19–21 (ESV)

1. **Sexual Immorality** - The Greek word used here is *pornia*, where we get our word pornography from. It involves any sexual expression outside of the marital covenant. We need to remember that God is not against sex. It was his idea! I think it was one of his better ones! In 1 Corinthians 7, God actually commands married couples to be sexually active. Just as God is all about married couples and their regular sexual activity, he is strongly for unmarried couples abstaining *until they are married*. He is also very committed to couples restricting the expression of their sexuality to within their marriage. If you are married, be sexually active, if you are single, be sexually pure.
2. **Impurity** - The word in the Greek is literally uncleanness. It means lacking moral restraint, especially pertaining to our sexuality. This word is used to describe the moral descent God gives people over to when they pursue sexual sin.

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, Romans 1:24 (ESV)
3. **Sensuality** - This means *an insatiable desire for pleasure*. It may be sexual pleasure. It may be the constant desire to purchase something new or have something more. It is the inability to find contentment.
4. **Idolatry** - This is idol worship but it also includes worship of material possessions. Colossians 3:5 calls *covetousness* (having to keep up with the latest and greatest stuff because everybody else has it) idolatry.
5. **Sorcery** - This involves the practice of magic and the involvement with forbidden practices such as spiritualism, fortune-telling, astrology, and the like. Interestingly, the root of the word in the Greek also ties into the use of illicit drugs.
6. **Enmity** - This means stirring up hostility between people. It includes gossip, and slander. God is committed to relational harmony, Satan is committed to factions.

7. **Strife** - This is the opposite of peace making. It is camp building and division cultivation between people. (I don't think the Iowa vs. Iowa State controversy falls into this area.)
 8. **Jealousy** - Aristotle defined this word as *the absence of building up the good in another because we don't have it in ourselves*. It is seeking to diminish the good actions or gifts of another because we don't have them in ourselves. It can also be understood as lack of appreciation for the God given gifts another possesses.
 9. **Fits of Anger** - Intense rage or fury. This means failing to restrain ones emotions but given to outbursts of uncontrolled anger.
 10. **Rivalries** - In the Greek it means to conduct oneself with self-interest (looking out for number one rather than others.) I found it interesting that in Greek it is the same word used to describe the motives of someone who runs for a government office (it says a lot about the ancient world's view of politics.)
 11. **Dissensions** - This is the creation of factions or divisions in a group. It is the breaking down of unity.
 12. **Divisions** - In the Greek this word is *heretic*. It means someone holds a different view from the group they are a part of but they try to remain part of the group to continue to influence it their way. (This is where we get our word *heresy* from.) A heretic becomes a schism when the individual continues to hold to their views but they break away from the original group.
 13. **Envy** - This means pain felt at the sight of another's happiness. It is the decision to not rejoice at another's fortune.
 14. **Drunkennes** - Drinking to the point where alcohol controls an individual, especially in social parties.
 15. **Orgies** - In the ancient world, this was usually a feast conducted in honor of the god Bacchus, the god of wine. It involved feasting, drinking, impurity and obscenity.
- Need I say more?

Rather than the flesh being the dominant quality of our lives, the Holy Spirit desires to produce a different arrangement of fruit. While we are to strive to produce these fruits in our lives, they are also *a natural outgrowth of a healthy relationship with God* when we are walking in the step with the Holy Spirit. These qualities were embodied in the life of Jesus and as we walk with him, we become more like our savior.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Galatians 5:22–26 (ESV)

1. **Love** - This is not conditional love but is unilateral love of choice. It is the love God has for us that becomes the same kind of love we have for others. It is not dependent upon being loved but as God loves us, this type of love overflows into the way we love others.
2. **Joy** - This joy is independent of circumstances. It is based upon our identity in Christ and God's love for us that transcends circumstances.
3. **Peace** - In the Greek, this is the opposite of war and dissension. It is inner peace of mind that comes from knowledge of God's love for us and looks forward to the final day of peace after Christ establishes his kingdom on earth.
4. **Patience** - This is the quality of self-restraint rather than proceeding to action. *It is having the ability to avenge oneself but refraining from doing so. It is faithfully waiting on God even when in trying circumstances.*
5. **Kindness** - An activity that is useful or benevolent towards others. This is primarily a disposition.
6. **Goodness** - This is kindness in action. It may not always be a comfortable action but may involve rebuking, correcting or chastising.
7. **Faithfulness** - Consistency
8. **Gentleness** - Meekness, it is a condition of mind and heart that demonstrates gentleness, not in weakness but in power. It is a balance between strength and character.
9. **Self-Control** - Temperance or moderation in character. Not given to excesses.

Spiritual Gifts

We receive the Holy Spirit as the supreme Gift, and then He imparts to us of His ability as He wills. We do not receive spiritual gifts apart from the Gift Giver, the Holy Spirit.

The gift of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself. The gifts of the Spirit are the helps, capacities, endowments, enablements that He bestows on us so we might accomplish His purposes. All of the gifts are resident in and the property of the Holy Spirit. We don't own them. We don't create or manufacture them. We don't grow or produce them. They are His gifts to give.

Three classifications of gifts are made to the believers in the New Testament: (1) motivational gifts, (2) gifts given to the church as a whole, and (3) gifts given for specific situations and circumstances. The Holy Spirit gives these gifts to us at His discretion, but He does give gifts to every believer.

The Motivational Gifts of the Spirit

The motivational gifts of the Spirit are identified in Romans 12:4–8:

For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our

ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Every believer has one of the seven motivational gifts described by Paul. I've listed them with some of the meanings or interpretations of these gifts as they appear in other translations of the Bible:

1. *Prophecy*—forthtelling or the speaking out of the truth of God
2. *Ministry*—serving in practical ways (including hospitality, helping, assisting)
3. *Teaching*—explaining the Word of God so that others can understand it and apply it to their lives
4. *Exhortation*—speaking to others in a way that encourages them to follow Christ closely and without hesitation
5. *Giving*—contributing to meet the needs of others
6. *Leadership*—having the ability to administer, govern, and/or rule
7. *Mercy*—giving aid to sick and needy persons (including those who have no merit)

Paul also describes the ways in which we are to use the gifts: prophecy—with faith; ministry and teaching and exhortation—with grace; giving—with generosity; leading—with diligence; and mercy—with cheerfulness.

How do you know which of these gifts you have? Examine your life. When a need is presented or a challenge appears before you in the Lord—a problem arises that you know has a spiritual root or dimension—what is your first response? Do you immediately want to speak the truth? Do you start to serve those who are seeking to provide help, to give, or to organize others? Do you jump in and act with mercy for people who are in need or hurting? Do you respond with words of encouragement that others stay close to the Lord and obey Him explicitly?

Gifts Given to the Church

In addition to the endowments that the Holy Spirit gives to individual believers, the Holy Spirit gives gifts to the church as a whole. These gifts are actually people:

He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ (Eph. 4:11–15).

The gifts are given to some in the church. They are the ones called to be

- *apostles*—those who are trailblazers, leaders of new ministry outreaches.
- *prophets*—those who tell the truth of God, including the ultimate consequences of following or failing to follow God's will.

- *evangelists*—those who proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and inspire others to believe in Him.
- *pastors and teachers*—those who nurture, prepare, and teach the believers, equipping them for service to others.

Not every person is called to one of these roles within the church, but in many ways, ministries within a church tend to cluster around these areas of leadership. For example, you may not be called to be a pastor/teacher to a congregation of people, but you may be called by God to serve as a Sunday school teacher. You are operating in the area of ministry as a teacher to the body of Christ, under the leadership of one who is gifted to lead in that area. Or you may serve on an evangelism team. You are serving in the area of evangelism, under the leadership of one who has been gifted to lead in that area.

You will find great fulfillment in serving within the area of ministry to which the Lord calls you. You will find frustration, disappointment, and dissatisfaction in your attempts to serve within an area of ministry to which you are not called to serve by the Holy Spirit.

Gifts Unique to Specific Circumstances or Times

The New Testament provides a third set of gifts given to believers by the Holy Spirit. This set of gifts is unique to particular situations and times. In fact, Paul provided this list because he desired to see order restored to the conducting of services in the church at Corinth:

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.... There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:1, 4–13).

Paul's primary concern was not with the listing of gifts, but with the point that there is only one Holy Spirit. The Corinthians had been idol worshipers. As pagan Greeks prior to their conversion to Christ Jesus, they had a different god for each activity, enterprise, and object. Athens, for example, was filled with thousands of idols, each with a specific identity and purpose. Some idol gods were more valued than others. Paul wanted the Corinthians to make certain they understood that there is only one Holy Spirit—He manifests Himself in different ways through different individuals as He wills.

The gifts that Paul cited are specific to particular times and events. As the church would gather, different gifts might be manifested depending on the needs of the people and the problems in the church at that time. Paul wanted them to understand that all of the

gifts come from the same Holy Spirit, with no one gift having a claim on being the definitive manifestation of the Spirit's presence in their midst.

These gifts are bestowed on the believers so that one person may be given one gift and another person another gift. All of the gifts are possible, but none of them are assured in any one setting or group of people. In like manner, no one person has his or her identity associated with a particular gift. In other words, one person is not expected to be the prophet at all meetings, and another person the one who gives a word of wisdom. The Holy Spirit speaks and works through this one, and that one, and another one at His direction and for His purposes.

The conclusion we must draw, therefore, is that a believer may experience one or more of these gifts operating in and through him during his lifetime, but not necessarily with any predictability or regularity. Why? Because the Holy Spirit orchestrates His particular set of gifts to be in operation in each group of people depending on the needs in the group.

The Corinthians apparently had a fondness and desire for the more dramatic gifts, such as healing, tongues, working of miracles. Paul admonished them in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is far more important than spiritual gifts, and then in 1 Corinthians 14, he admonished them to desire prophecy as the foremost gift to seek, so they might speak the truth of God with clarity to nonbelievers and believers alike.