

## **God's Principles and Priorities on Time, Talent and Treasure**

### **Part 2. Talent: Using God's spiritual gifts, talents and abilities**

#### **IV. Summary**

As we have studied, the giving of spiritual gifts is only one facet of the multiple ministries and activities of the Holy Spirit in the world, the church and the believer. Some of the Holy Spirit's ministry and activity in the believer's spiritual life are:

- Regeneration and renewal - Titus 3:4-7
- Sanctification (holiness) - I Thessalonians 4:7-8, 5:23
- Power to witness - Acts 1:6-8
- Distribution of spiritual gifts - I Corinthians 12:4-7
- Development/production of spiritual fruit - Galatians 5:22-23

#### **Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)**

The distinction between the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit are often misunderstood. We first need to distinguish between being and doing, character and action, substance and service. The fruit (not plural) of the Spirit describes the kind of people Christians should be: loving, joyful, patient, kind, gentle, meek, self-controlled, etc. In contrast (and cooperation), the gifts of the Spirit describe what believers do - teach, serve, give, encourage, heal, administer, etc.

Secondly, the fruit of the Spirit is *Christ-like* character in which the Spirit desires to produce in ALL Christians. *Everyone is to bear all the fruit.* You can't say that "God just hasn't lead me to be kind and loving yet" or "The Spirit hasn't given me patience and self-control yet". However, Christians *are* given different gifts as the Spirit sees fit to distribute them.

Finally, the fruit of the Spirit is meant for all times and all places (anytime/anywhere). Spiritual gifts are given for specific needs and ministries. In short - ***spiritual gifts are to be exercised with spiritual fruit.***

#### **Conclusion**

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts for the purpose of building up the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:4-7, 14:12) for service, worship and witness. We have seen that every member of the body is important and each member is to do its part (I Corinthians 12). We have determined that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He sees fit (I Corinthians 12:11) and for the purposes He chooses. His design is "unity in diversity" and His goal is to always glorify God (Christ), the Head of the body (I Peter 4:10-11).

Above all, we must focus on Jesus Christ (Hebrews 12:2). When we get bogged down worrying about the Spirit's intent, "our" gifts, their use, etc. - let us look to our Lord, who is always related to the Spirit's activities.

Concluding questions:

1. Is my life becoming increasingly under the lordship of Christ in my daily walk?
2. Am I becoming more like Jesus in my attitudes, actions and reactions?
3. Are my moral and ethical decisions those which Christ would make?
4. Am I participating in a Christian fellowship, concerned for the needs of others and open to the Spirit's work through me to meet their needs and fill areas of service?

Some notes taken from *Spiritual Gifts* by Charles and Anne Hummel