

More...Where our hunger meets His Promises

Ephesians 5:18 NLT

- Week 12 -

“Everyday Grace - the Practical Spiritual Gifts”

Part 4

“Let not your hearts be troubled. I go to prepare a place for you and now you will do the things I have done - and even greater works than these because God will send a Helper, the Spirit of Truth Who will teach you all things and help you remember all I have said. The world does not see Him - the world does not know Him - but you my disciples know Him for He dwells within you.” - John 14

“Good morning, Holy Spirit. Good afternoon, Holy Spirit. Good late afternoon, Holy Spirit. Good evening, Holy Spirit. Good night, Holy Spirit”.

Repeat that as an ongoing thing as we engage this practice of greeting the Holy Spirit. We need to give emphasis to something in order to get focused upon it. That re-trains your focus. Throughout this summer we've been focusing on *the Person, the Power, and the Presence* of the Holy Spirit, and we are growing in this understanding of, what some call, the “lesser known” Person of the Trinity.

We're growing up - growing out - and growing deeper. We're learning together, and we continue that with this message. We've gone through six of the “manifestation gifts” of the Holy Spirit found in First Corinthians, chapter twelve. *“The Holy Spirit is not weird - people are. People that are weird with the Holy Spirit were weird before the Holy Spirit came upon them.”*

Let's be real. Why would God want to give us something that he calls a *Gift*? *“Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38 NKJV).* The Holy Spirit is a *Gift* - he's *not* punishment - he's not here to make you *weird*. The Holy Spirit is a Gentleman.

Our prayer should be, *“Lord You Know what’s needed here. We trust You that You want what’s best for us.”* He wants us to keep it short and simple. Sometimes we’re just tired - we don’t feel particularly spiritual. We *do* feel how hungry we are for lunch. We feel the stress and *dis*-stress of the world. We just get tired - fatigued - and hungry - there’s no fireworks - and it seems like nothing’s happening when we pray. But God says, *“Don’t worry about it. I’ve got this. I’m going to do this!”*

He wants to teach us something about prayer and about belief. It’s not about *us*. He is well able to impart the gifts to us that we need in the moment. We need to stop dictating to God how to do it. He may choose to do it the *opposite* of how we think he should! When we demand that he *“act now”* and tell him *“how”*, sometimes all that gets us is tired - and sometimes disappointed or disillusioned - and that’s the last thing we want. God doesn’t need our theatrics or melodrama. He just needs our child-like faith and belief, even when we’re hungry - or when we’re lacking in total belief.

Today we’re talking about the “Dynamic Gifts” - the gift of faith, the gift of healing, and the gift of miracles, because unfortunately, some believe these don’t happen anymore, and that the Holy Spirit is not involved, intertwined, and interworking with mankind today like he was then. *But why wouldn’t he be?* God doesn’t give a Gift and then take it away. That’s *not* our Father. If that’s something we’ve experienced from our earthly father, then it could have marked and informed how we see God - our Heavenly Father.

“The Holy Spirit enables and empowers us to live Life out of the overflow of his Person, Presence, and Power, and people will be strangely drawn to those whose buckets are filled to the brim and running over with the Holy Spirit.” The more we go out into the world with *full buckets*, the more people are going to open their lives up to us - like cracking open a window to their soul - and we have the privilege of going in and showing Life and sharing Hope with them.

A simple prayer: *“Father, I want everything You have for me - nothing more and nothing less.”* That should be our prayer - our declaration. That is not a radical prayer. It is balanced, and just says, *“I’m not shooting above because I don’t want to run out in front of You, but I also don’t want to lag behind on anything you have for me, because the world needs to see a very real demonstration of a life that is completely given to God.”*

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NASB

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

We are building on the foundation of Love. In terms of spiritual gifts, Love is the center of it all. Let's not think we've got it mastered - *"Oh, I've already heard that. I've got that - let's move on."* No - we *don't* necessarily, because there's always more dimensions of this thing called Love to grow into - there's always more facets to this diamond.

1 Corinthians 12:1 NIV

"Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed."

1 Corinthians 12:7 ESV

"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

Manifest - to reveal or to express, something that was prior-to unknown, now becomes known and seen. "For the common good". It's not about *me* - it's about *we* - though really, it's about them. God gives us these gifts, *and* the opportunities to operate them. There are nine of them, and the beauty of it is that any believer or follower of Christ can operate in any one of the nine - or more - *as the Spirit wills* - as *he* gives the ability to do so.

These aren't gifts that we own for ourselves. They are on loan from the Lord, and we *steward* them, and say, *"Lord, whatever is needed here, I want to be available. I want to be a vessel that is able to carry the gift You have that will help that other person to grow and become more like You."* That's the whole point - it's for their good.

These nine gifts can be broken down into three categories: [1] Discerning gifts: *word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits*; [2] Declarative gifts: *prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues*; [3] Dynamic gifts: *faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles*.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 NKJV

“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 healings 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.”

When this gift is needed, it will be there for you, so that *you* can help others - provide encouragement and lift for their lives - *we live to lift*. So, we want to *be* there - be *available* - ask the Holy Spirit to reveal whatever is needed - to manifest however they can be helped - *“Lord, release Your Spirit into me and through me so that I can help them - so You can help them through me.”* I just get to bear and carry the gift - *steward it* - and God will show up and do what *he* wants to do.

The Dynamic Gifts

Gift of faith - a supernatural impartation of belief and confidence for a specific situation, where the Spirit gives you a gift in that moment, confidence that God is going to come through and show up - not that you know what he will do, you just know that he's going to be *Good*. That's a gift of faith. It is supernatural - not “*woo woo*” and “*la la land*” - not weird, but simply, above the norm - above natural - above nature.

God takes our *natural* - he puts *super* on it - now, we get to operate *super-naturally*. This is *not* Hollywood and the movies that we've watched, where we think of supernatural - as ethereal - mysterious - other-worldly (which it may be *at times*). We're talking about these gifts that God gives us that are practical - for *everyday life*. These gifts aren't given so we'll have great church services, but for us - as we're living our lives out, and going through our “*dailies*” - where we're engaging people along the way - people we work with, live with, and play with - those in our relational orbit. They ought to, at times, catch something that is *above nature* - super-natural.

The word *faith* in Greek is *pistus*, and means *to trust* or *to adhere to* - *literally, a cling-on, as by a child or pet that will grab you and not let go*. The idea being to *stick to* and not let go - like sticking duct tape together accidentally - you're *never* going to get that apart! - it adheres to itself - you can't separate it once it's there. It becomes *one*, as in adhering to and trusting and believing God. *That's* what faith is.

Romans 12:3 NKJV

"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

God has dealt to *each* of us enough faith, *"as that of a mustard seed"* - to be born again - enough to *trust in Jesus* and be born again. But, faith can also be developed, expanded, and grown depending on circumstances - certain moments we all have - where we know in our knower - that we have a faith that was beyond the norm - super-natural - beyond nature - beyond what's normal - and that is an impartation of the spiritual gift of faith - at a whole other level, where we're adhering to - believing tenaciously - like Jacob grabbing hold of the "Man" at the brook Jabbok - and saying, *"I will not let You go unless You bless me!"*
(Genesis 32:26 NKJV)

That is a picture of adhering to - a picture of *faith*. The Bible says Jacob wrestled with the *Man* (an archetype of God) all night - so much so that his hip was disjointed, and for the rest of his life, Jacob walked with a limp - which reminded him that he got what he came for - he got blessed - he had prevailed in his faith - he had adhered to and held on in spite of getting thrashed.

Hebrews 11:1 NKJV

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Faith is substance. Faith is tangible. When you truly believe, and when you're walking in authentic faith, that faith is *substance* - in fact, you're believing for something that hasn't happened yet, but it's so real to you and you're so confident of it - so convinced of it, that it's as though it's already there - like God who *"calls those things which be not as though they were."* (Romans 4:17 KJV). There's a belief here where we see something - we can literally see by vision something that hasn't happened yet, but we lean into it by faith as though it has.

For that reason, we *thank God before we see anything*. We pray for something according to his will - according to his Word (not presumption). We pray for salvation and thank God for it. That is called faith - adhering to - believing - trusting him. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Biblical hope is the joyful and confident expectation of a desired good - (not the same as earthly hope which is merely wishful thinking) - confident that it's going to happen - expectation that is joyful. Faith is *evidence* - proof of things *not seen* - faith is proof of something you can't see, yet God honors our faith and our trust.

Mark 9:23-24 NKJV

"Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!' "

This was a pure and honest prayer that Jesus responded to by making the child whole. The man said, *"I believe - but wherever I don't, and wherever I'm lacking, I need You to make up the difference."* Do you think God loves you that much? Do you think that the Holy Spirit wants to help you with your faith? When was the last time you *asked* the Lord for the gift of faith? What is it that you're praying for, that you're not sure you necessarily believe will come to pass?

What is it that you need faith for? - for a family member, or a situation? *Super-natural* faith for a gift of faith - more than the norm - confidence for a special situation. So let's *ask God* for it - and then give him thanks for it *as though it's done* - and like Jacob, let's *adhere* - let's be a "cling-on" - let's grab hold and say, "I'm going to hang on to this no matter what!"

Prayer

Father, even now, we come before You as sons and daughters. We believe - help our un-belief. We're asking, would You release to us the gift of faith? Many of us here, for different reasons, need more faith than we have right now - a greater infilling - an impartation - a super-natural faith to cling on - hold on to - adhere to - to trust in You, Lord for these needs.

So, Lord we need help. We need You. We can't do this on our own. Would You impart to each of us a gift of faith - as we need it - as You will to do so - and by faith, we're going to receive this impartation for a greater gift because we need it - as we pray and as we stand.

In the name of Jesus, would You release to me the gift of faith. I receive it, and I trust You in it. Thank You for giving me the gift of faith. In Jesus' name. Amen