

Holy Spirit: Community and Commission



Past > **Present** > **Future**



www.prophecylive.org



**Learn from the Past > Understand the Present >
Prepare for the Future**



Inreach & Outreach Resource



This booklet is an eye opener of what's happening in the world.

This 40 page A5 size booklet has the key aspects of the –

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE.

It's available at the cost of printing & postage for bulk orders.

PDF is available on ProphecyLive.org



Enter The Ark of Hope

The Great Controversy between God and
Satan is primarily over

“WORSHIP”

Who will you Choose?



Get into the Ark **Sanctuary**



**And let them
make me a
sanctuary;
that I may dwell
among them.**

– Exodus 25:8

Psalms 77:13



Health Snippet – Water: Alternatives

Alternatives to Water for When You're Over H2O

For a lot of people drinking the essential “eight glasses a day” of water feels like seven glasses too many – maybe it feels overwhelming, excessive or just plain uninteresting.

But here's the thing: we *need* water. So let's make the “eight glasses a day” recommendation into fun: something you can look forward to and sip on with ease.

Try these 3 Healthy Alternatives to Water:

- 1. Fruit-/Citrus-Infused Water** - an easy way to add some natural flavour to make your drink feel more of a treat.
- 2. Unsweetened Iced or Hot Green Tea** - Chamomile or Valerian tea, might help you feel relaxed and stress-free.
- 3. Low-sodium Broths** - try mushroom broth to get same amount of water plus antioxidants & heart protection.

Avoid these 3 Less Healthy Alternatives to Water:

- 1. Regular & Diet Soda:** linked to obesity, type 2 diabetes depression, brittle bones, tooth decay, and much more.
- 2. Dressed-up Coffee:** a Java-chip Frappuccino can have 220-600 calories and up to 88g of sugar - Ideal <35g/day.
- 3. Bottled Juices:** A recent [study](#) has revealed that many fruit juices contain harmful levels of heavy metals.

10 HYDRATING FRUITS & VEGGIES



Broccoli 91%



Lettuce 96%



Watermelon 92%



Grapefruit 91%



Pineapple 87%



Tomatoes 94%



Strawberries 92%



Celery 95%



Cantelope 90%



Cucumbers 96%

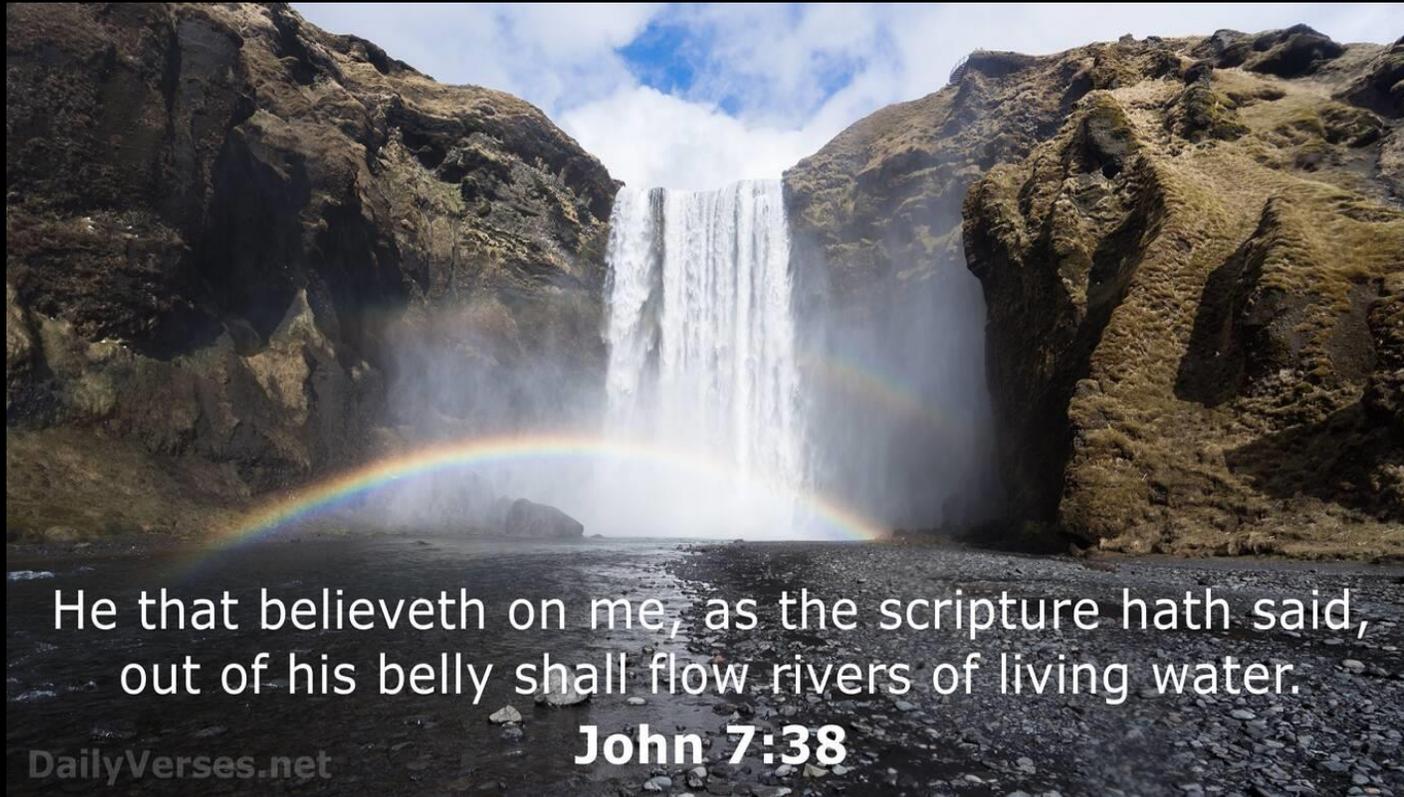
@COACH_TAMI



Can We Trust Bible Prophecy?



Yes we Can!



He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said,
out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:38

DailyVerses.net



Holy Spirit: Community and Commission



Past > **Present** > **Future**

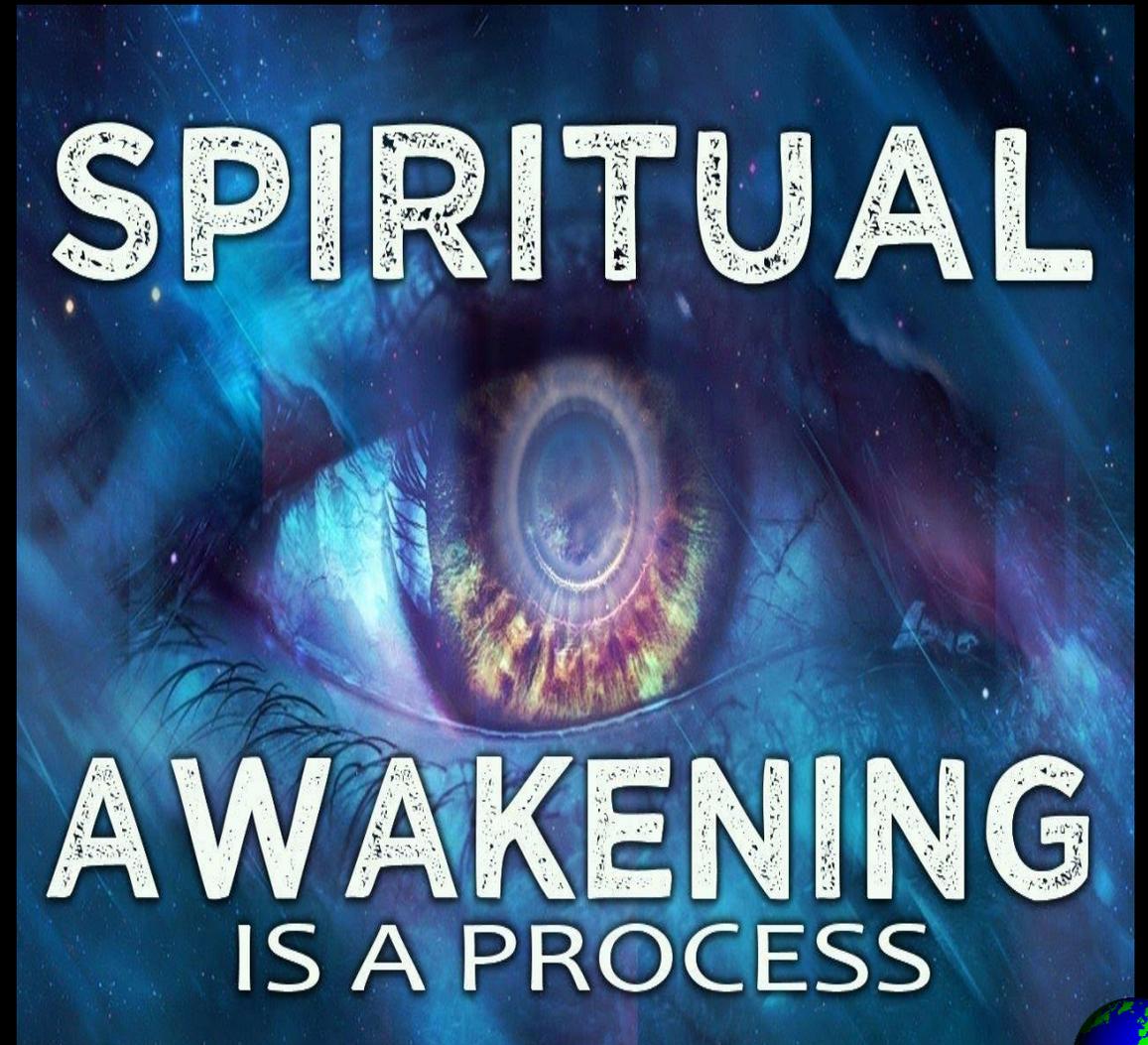


Introduction: The growing interest in things spiritual

People everywhere are concerned about spiritual matters. Bookstores now offer a variety of titles under the topic of "spirituality." Angels have become popular figures. Glossolalia now appears not only in Pentecostal churches, but in mainline denominations, too. Faith healings are no longer the province of backwater preachers.

Dramatic spiritual experiences are not the province of the few. Almost every family contains stories of inexplicable or "supernatural" phenomena.

The Pentecostal movement and the subsequent waves of charismatic Christianity have led Christians to a new awareness of the Spirit and His gifts in the lives of believers.



A STRANGE PARADOX CONFRONTS US

Here, the focus centres on the work of the Holy Spirit in us—the spiritual gifts that empower us in our ministries. Much of this interest in the Holy Spirit is motivated by the benefits we gain from the Holy Spirit. However, we have to remind ourselves that the Bible is first and foremost about God and not about us or our spiritual potential.

Even the spiritual gifts we receive are God's gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Therefore, it is appropriate to study the Holy Spirit and His work from a biblical and theocentric focus.

But here is the challenge: Scripture itself does not present the Spirit in any methodical or structured way.

Perhaps this has to do, in part, with a peculiar characteristic of the Holy Spirit: His behind-the-scenes role.

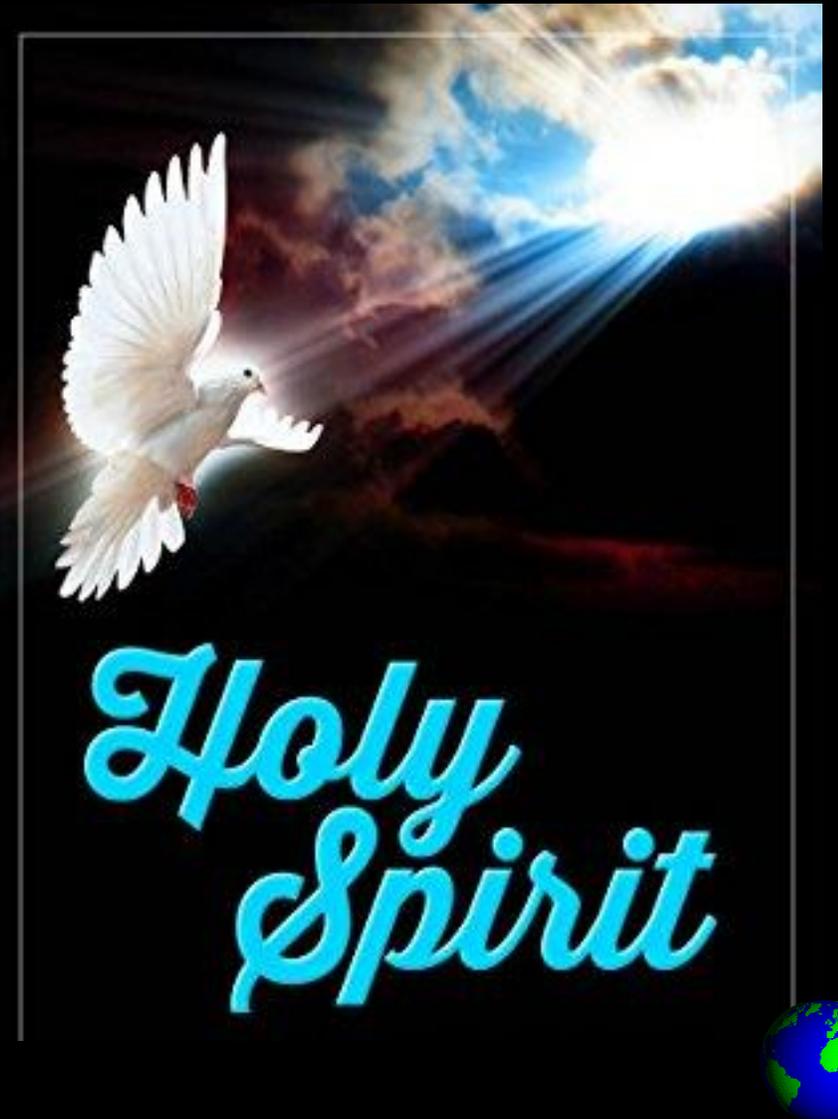


THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the Bible, the Holy Spirit does not seek to be the centre of attention. He plays more of a behind-the-scenes role in the Godhead. The Holy Spirit promotes and mediates the presence and Lordship of Jesus Christ through His presence in our lives.

“The Spirit’s message to us is never, ‘Look at me; listen to me; come to me; get to know me,’ but always, ‘Look at him and see him, and see his glory; get to know him, and hear his word; go to him, and have life; get to know him, and taste his gift of joy and peace.’”

In our sinful world of egocentricity and self-promotion, the beauty of the Spirit lies not in self-display, but in divine selflessness. “For this reason believers are rightly called ‘Christians’ not ‘Pneumians.’” Thus, the Holy Spirit teaches us humility in giving glory to God the Father through Jesus Christ, His Son.



The Holy Spirit gives life

We can easily come up with a list of the Spirit's activities. From studying the Bible, we know that the Spirit participated in the world's creation (Genesis 1:2), inspired the biblical writers (2 Peter 1:21), brings about the new birth (John 3:5), provides spiritual guidance (John 16:13), bears fruit in lives of Christians (Galatians 5:2-23) and gives gifts to the church (1 Corinthians 12:28-29). But behind all these specific activities lies one fundamental function. **The Spirit is the source of life.** Its work is to animate and empower.

The life-giving work of the Spirit appears throughout the Bible, beginning with creation. According to Genesis 1, the Spirit hovered over the waters—an indication that life is about to break forth. And according to Genesis 2, the spirit, or "breath of life," entered the human body God had fashioned, transforming it a "living being."

*The Holy Spirit
Gives Life...*

John 6:63



The Holy Spirit gives life (cont'd)

There is one Hebrew word for both "breath" and "spirit." The breath from God that brought life to humans animates other creatures, too. "All have the same breath," says Ecclesiastes 3:19; "man has no advantage over the animals." In one of the great creation Psalms, the Spirit of God and life-giving breath are closely associated: "when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When you send your Spirit, they are created" (Psalms 104:29-30). We see the Spirit's life giving power in one of Ezekiel's memorable visions. A valley of dry bones came to life when God sent breath into them (Ezekiel 37:5, 10). The Letter of James states a principle that underlies biblical thought when it asserts, "the body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26).

As described in the Bible, the human spirit is not just respiration or life-force; it involves consciousness, feelings and emotions, such as fear, anger, joy and pride (Genesis 41:8; Judges 8:3; Genesis 45:27). It is also related to specific states of consciousness and certain emotional experiences.

John 6:63

The Spirit gives life;
the flesh counts for
nothing. The words I
have spoken to you -
they are full of the
Spirit and life.



The Holy Spirit gives life (cont'd)

When an intention, attitude or emotion is particularly strong, the Bible sometimes describes it as a spirit that comes to reside within a person, like a force that enters from outside. It might be an evil force, like jealousy (Numbers 5:14-30), hatred (Judges 9:23), and prostitution (Hosea 4:12), or a good force, like justice (Isaiah 28:6) or supplication (Zechariah 12:10).

The Bible also describes God's Spirit as the source of unusual human abilities. It accounted for Samson's extraordinary physical strength (Judges 15:14), for Mary's ability to give birth without having been with a man (Luke 1:35), for the power of John the Baptist's ministry (Luke 1:15), and for the various abilities of members of the Christian church (1 Corinthians 12). These endowments are related to the Spirit's life-giving role. The Spirit is the source of every person's life. And when certain people have distinctive abilities, it shows that the Spirit's life-giving power is present to an unusual degree. Such people are more "alive," in certain respects, than humans ordinarily are.

The letter kills,
but the Spirit
gives life.

2 Corinthians 3:16



The Holy Spirit creates a special kind of community

The New Testament not only affirms the priority of the Christian community, it also affirms its uniqueness. The Spirit creates a kind of community that is unlike any other.

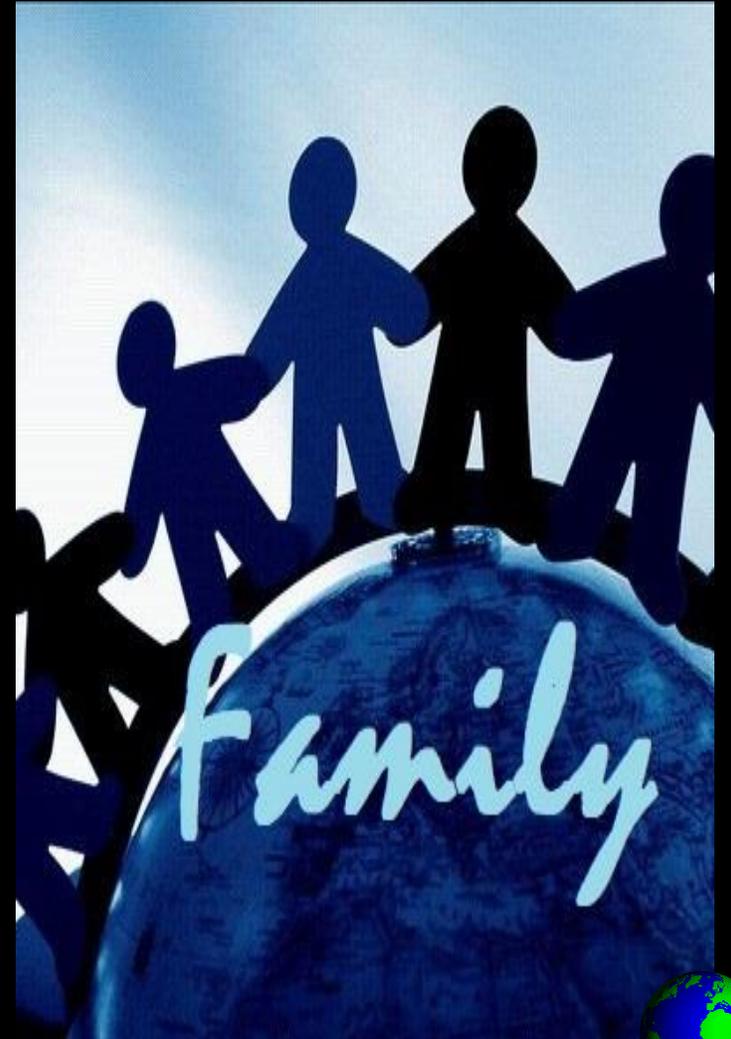
Not only does the Spirit create the church, the creation of the church is the Spirit's most important function. In fact, so closely related are Spirit and church that we can't understand one without the other, and Christian thinkers have sometimes concluded that Spirit and church are simply two aspects of the same doctrine. The Apostles' Creed, the most famous expression of Christian faith since the New Testament, affirms faith in God, Christ, Holy Spirit and Church. While some theologians hold that there are four articles of faith—Father, Son, Spirit, and church—others maintain that there are only three. They see the church and the Spirit as two aspects of the same article of faith. To affirm the Spirit is to affirm the church, and vice versa.



The Holy Spirit creates a special kind of community (cont'd)

The cultural attitude often plays a major role in the way we look at the church. We tend to think of the church as a collection of individuals, each of whom is striving to reach the individual goal of salvation. The church is like a health club or a grocery store. Its value lies in the fact that it meets our individual needs. We want to be saved and the church has resources that will help us get there.

Our visceral individualism makes it difficult to perceive the type of community that church involves. The Spirit brings into existence a distinctive quality of existence. It not only makes the church a community, it makes the church the body of Christ. The Spirit moves over a massive chaotic diversity of human beings and brings it to life. It takes people you could not imagine together in any other social arrangement, transforms them inwardly and outwardly, individually and collectively, and brings forth the body of Christ. Without the creative power of the Spirit, the church is nothing but a collection of individuals.



The Holy Spirit creates a special kind of community (cont'd)

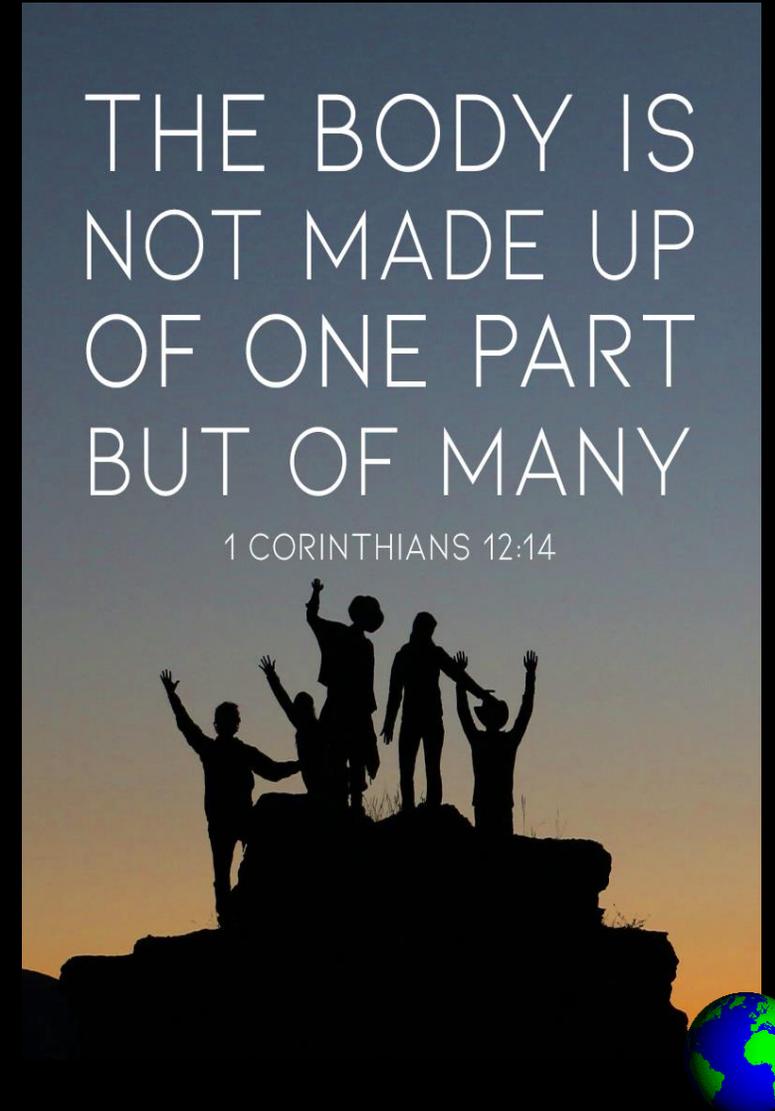
1 Corinthians 12:14 - Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

1 Corinthians 12:27 - Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

When Paul compares the church to a body, we ordinarily view it as an illustration of the fact that people with different personalities and abilities can learn to get along by recognizing that they can complement each other. But the apostle's point is more radical than that. He is really saying that Christian existence is essentially social. In other words, church membership is essential to spiritual life. If we are really parts of the same body, then we need each other for our very survival. Separated from each other, members of the church have no more life than a severed body part. No organ of the body can live on its own; neither can a solitary Christian. It is a spiritual as well as a biological principle: nothing has life in isolation. So, being part of the body is not just the best environment for spiritual flourishing. Connecting to the body gives us our only chance of survival.

THE BODY IS
NOT MADE UP
OF ONE PART
BUT OF MANY

1 CORINTHIANS 12:14



The Holy Spirit creates a special kind of community (cont'd)

The Spirit, then, gives the church its vital connection to Christ and makes the church his body. **It creates such close contact between Christ and his people that they live in him, and he lives in them. As a result, the church shares the life that Jesus lived. Like Christ, its members are children of God, incorporated into his family. Like Christ, the church is devoted to the work of the kingdom. It lives to serve human beings, especially those in great need. Like Christ, the church exhibits self-sacrifice and compassion. Like Christ, the church encounters opposition and suffering in the world. And, perhaps most striking, the church, like Christ, reveals God to the world. Two interesting verses from John's writings, one from the Gospel, the other from his first epistle, support this conclusion:**

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18).

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12).

For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is....

CHRIST

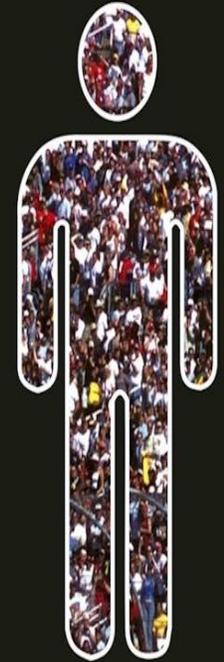
1 Corinthians 12:12



The Holy Spirit creates a special kind of community (cont'd)

The identical opening phrases suggest a similar purpose in the statements that follow. The invisible God is revealed in the life of Jesus, and in the life of the Christian community. God's own love for humanity becomes visible in the love that Christians display toward one another. So, the church shares Christ's experiences, Christ's character, and Christ's work.

When the Spirit gives life to the Christian community, it also gives it a distinctive character. It creates an atmosphere, a mystique, all its own. Successful organizations strive to develop a strong sense of corporate identity. At Disneyland, all the workers are called "cast members," whether they are actors, salespeople, or janitors. They are told to think of themselves as being "on-stage" whenever they encounter the public. The chaplain at Harvard University tells the students that they belong to the greatest educational institution that ever existed. Red Auerbach of the Boston Celtics told his legendary basketball teams that they would win simply because they were Celtics, and they proved him right with one championship after another. Leaders in every area know that an organization cannot achieve its full potential without a group spirit. So, they strive to cultivate a strong sense of identity.



*Now you are the body of Christ,
and each one of you is a part of it.*

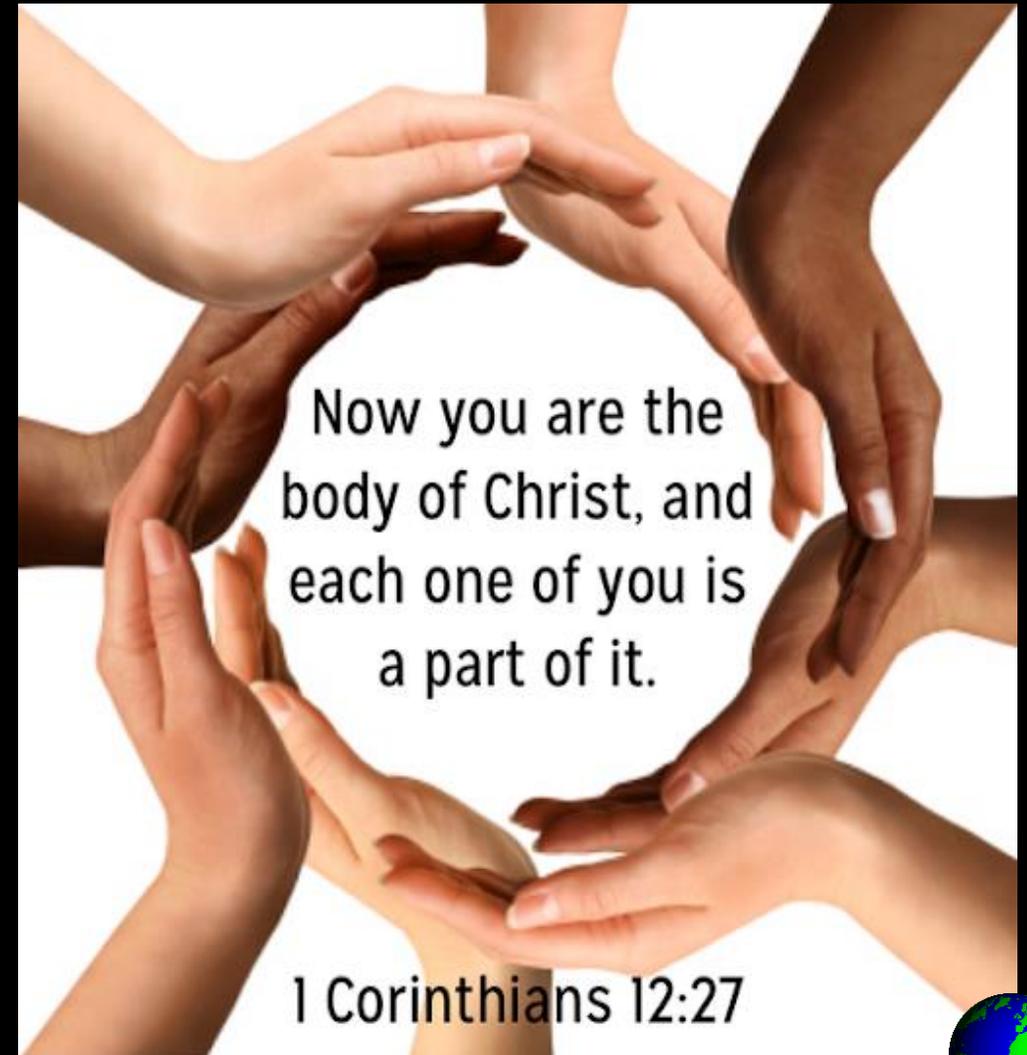
1 Corinthians 12:27



The Holy Spirit creates a special kind of community (cont'd)

It is the Holy Spirit who gives the Christian church its sense of identity. It generates the ethos, the distinctive characteristics, the sense of identity, that Christians have in common. It creates a community whose members know and care for each other, who are deeply committed to certain values, and who share a strong sense of purpose.

We have taken time to spell out the Spirit's relation to the church because this perspective on its work is basic to any understanding of the Spirit that is faithful to the NT. Consequently, whatever people say about the Spirit's activity, whatever they claim about their encounters with the Spirit or the power of the Spirit in their lives, it must be referred to the Spirit's work in creating and guiding the church, the community that is Christ's body.



The gifts of the Holy Spirit

With this picture of the Spirit and the church in mind, we are in a position to understand the nature of spiritual gifts, as Paul's describes them. The main term Paul uses to refer to the Spirit's work through "mutual ministry" is *charisma*, meaning "gift." And for Paul the word encompasses virtually the whole of God's saving activities—sonship, glory, covenant, giving of the law, worship and promises, justification, faith, eternal life, even Christ himself.

Paul also sees the gifts as ongoing features of the community's life. There is no indication that the gifts were meant to last for a limited period of time.

They were not given just to get the community started. To the contrary, Paul desired that the church in Corinth should have all the gifts it needed right up until the time of Christ's return (1 Corinthians 1:7).

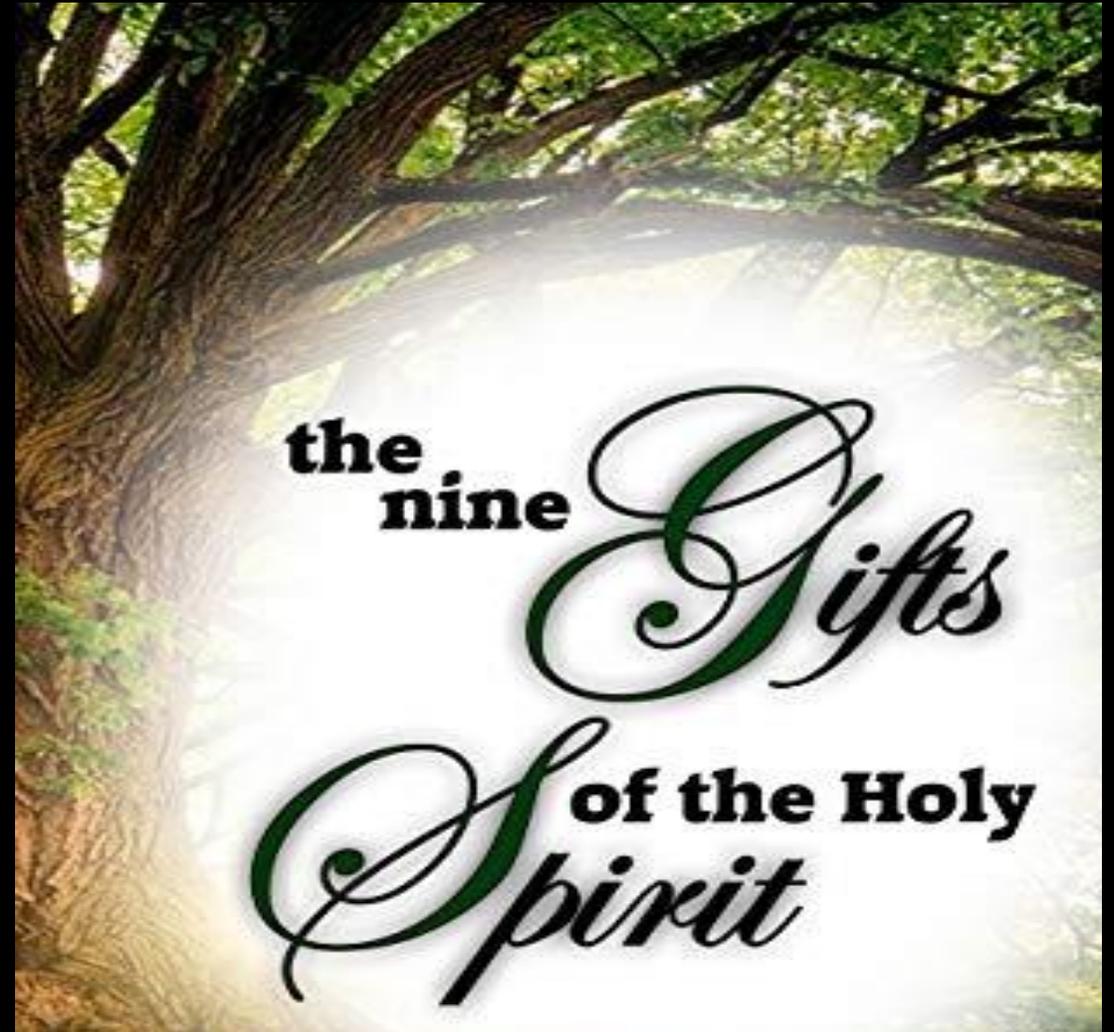
Paul's writings contain five main lists of gifts, three in 1 Corinthians 12, if you count Vs 28 and Vs 29-30 as different lists. If we look at these lists carefully, and the discussion surrounding them, a number of important characteristics emerge.



The gifts of the Holy Spirit (cont'd)

1 Corinthians 12:7-11:

- **Utterance of wisdom** (insight into Gospel)
- **Knowledge** (understanding of OT and Christian traditions)
- **Faith** (re: special circumstance)
- **Healings** (not miraculous; following gift)
- **Miraculous works** (exorcisms)
- **Prophecy** (knowing God's will intuitively)
- **Discernment of spirits** (whether from God, demon, or human opinion)
- **Tongues** (glossolalia)
- **Interpretation of tongues** (glossolalia)



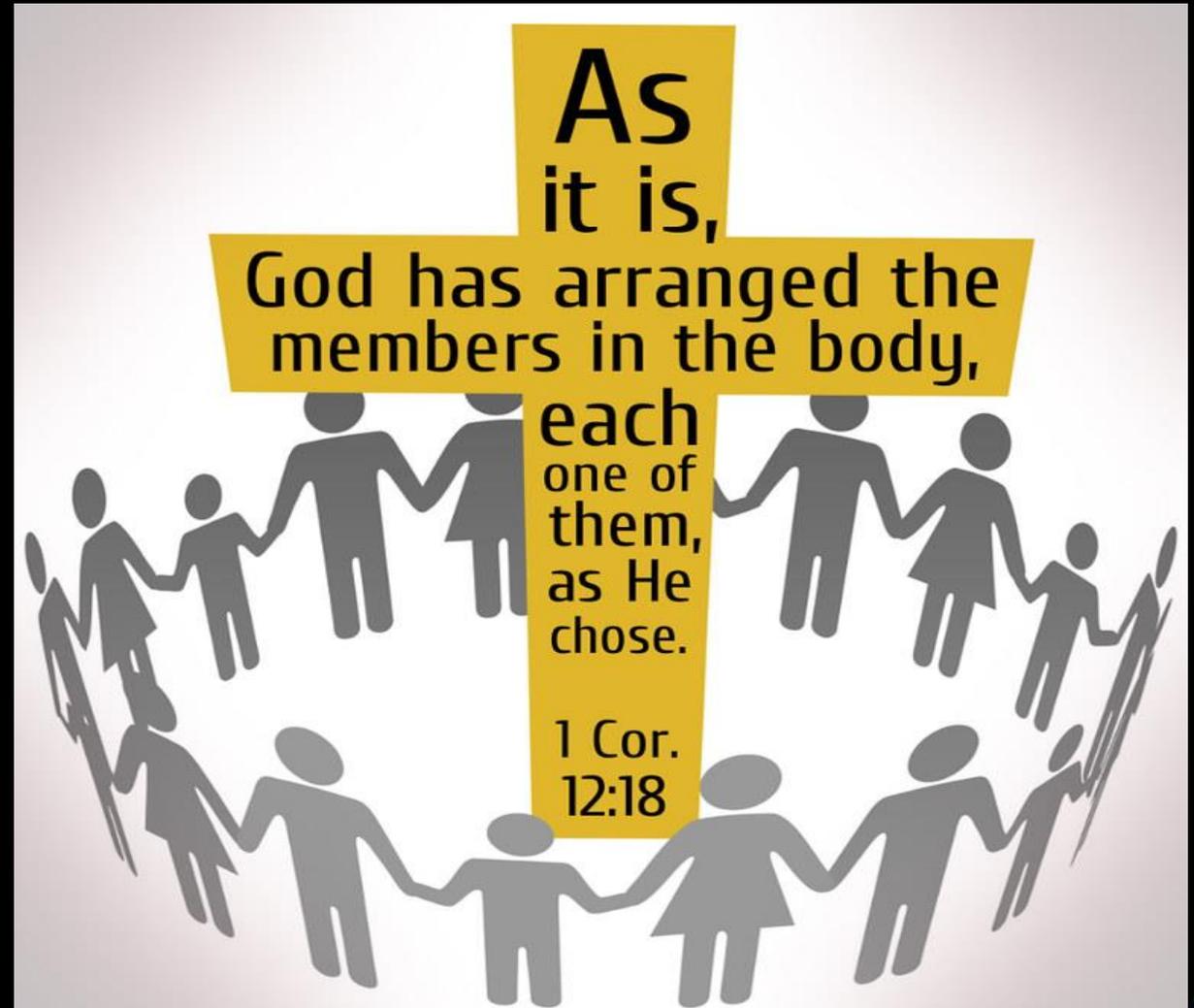
The gifts of the Holy Spirit (*cont'd*)

1 Corinthians 12:28:

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers
- Workers of miracles
- Healers
- Helpers
- Administrators
- Speakers in various kinds of tongues

1 Corinthians 12:29-30:

- Are all Apostles?
- Are all prophets?
- Are all teachers?
- Are all workers of miracles?
- Are all having gift of healing?
- Do all speak in tongues?
- Do all interpret?



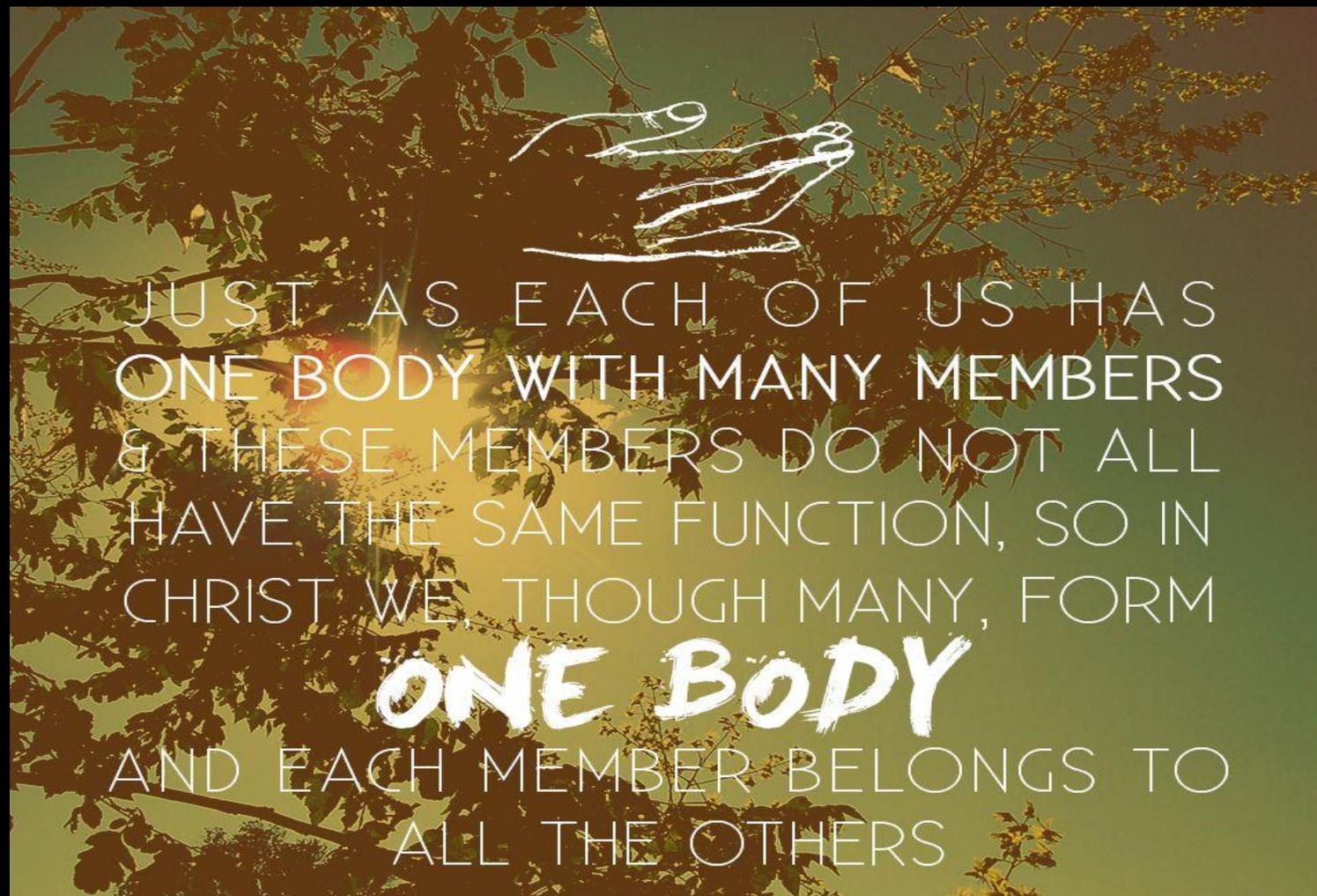
The gifts of the Spirit (*cont'd*)

Romans 12:6-8:

- Prophecy
- Concrete acts of service
- Teaching
- Exhortation
- Financial aid
- Ministry of guiding
- Merciful actions

Ephesians 4:11:

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors and teachers



An examination of these lists supports the following conclusions about the gifts

1. They are open-ended in character: The lists are not exhaustive. There may be other possibilities for spoken and practical ministry in the church. Paul nowhere provides a systematic or full description of the gifts available to the Christian community. Paul would recognize any instructive contribution of a constant member as a gift.

2. They are individually, but not evenly, distributed: Each person in community receives at least one charisma for the benefit of fellows. But not all have the same gift, and some obviously have more gifts than others.

3. Paul gives first place to apostles because of their crucial role in the founding of the church: Perhaps the apostle possesses all the basic gifts. Second are prophets, who communicate to community those things that it needs to hear directly from God for its concrete encouragement, admonition, and direction.



An examination of these lists supports the following conclusions about the gifts

4. They are ranked according to their benefits, not according to their appearance: The Corinthian error was to evaluate the gifts on the basis of their form, attaching greater significance to the more dramatic gifts. But Paul's lists show that quite ordinary, practical actions are more valuable than those dramatic ones, such as glossolalia. Paul wishes to eradicate any distinction between gifts made on the basis of appearance. *Instead, the gifts are graded on the basis of their effect. Those that make the most profitable contribution to the community's growth are accorded the highest importance. As a result, certain gifts of speech predominate over those of deed.*

5. They are exercised on any appropriate occasion: In texts where lists of the *charismata* occur, the primary context for Paul's discussion is not the "church" but the "body," not the gathering of Christians together but the local Christian community itself. So the gifts are exercised not only in church services, but also worship services. They can be exercised on other occasions when Christians are in contact with one another, although the full range of gifts to the community becomes evident only when all are assembled.



The purpose of the gifts

What is the purpose of the Spirit's gifts? The key word for understanding Paul's concept of spiritual gifts is edification. The gifts are granted to individuals not primarily for their own enjoyment but for the building up of the community (1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:12).

In church the service of others, not oneself, is the goal. In fact, it is precisely through seeking to fulfil the needs of others, rather than an individual quest for the *charismata* themselves, that various members of the community will come into a greater experience of the gifts (1 Corinthians 14:12).

We see this basic principle in Paul's famous statement, "*all things should be done for edification*" (1 Corinthians 14:26). Therefore, gifts should only be exercised when the objective is to build up the body of Christ.



The exercise of the gifts

If edification broadly understood is the purpose of the gifts, how should the gifts be exercised?

These are the basic principles of the Spirit's operation: balance, intelligibility, evaluation, orderliness, loving exercise.

1. In a proportionate way:

More time should be given to the more important, more fundamental, gifts, viz., the ones that promote the community's understanding. These include prophecy and teaching and those gifts directed toward growth of the community's understanding. These gifts promote the psychological and social harmony of the community. Still, lesser gifts should not be ignored just because others are more inherently helpful. The higher gifts should not dominate in an unbalanced way (1 Corinthians 14:29). All aspects of the church's life should develop in proper relation to one another.



Ephesians 1:14

The Holy Spirit of promise
is the earnest of our inheritance
until the redemption of the
purchased possession,
unto the praise of
His glory



The exercise of the gifts (cont'd)

2. Within an intelligible context:

One of the main criteria by which contributions are judged is their intelligibility. This is particularly evident in the case of glossolalia. This gift is not without rational content, but this content is hidden from the mind of the person giving expression to it. The gift's incommunicability, not its irrationality, makes its presence inappropriate in the gathers. See 1 Corinthians 14:18-19. *Five words with my mind are better than 10,000 words in a tongue.*

3. Within a framework of love: the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit:

This is the most basic principle of all, according to all Paul's discussion of gifts (1 Corinthians 13; Romans 12:8-9; Ephesians 4:15). All contributions must take place within framework of loving behaviour among the members. *The fruit of the Spirit must always accompany the gifts of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is love (Galatians 5:22).* Since love is not rude, does not insist on its own way, and is not jealous or boastful, it is easy to see its relevance to the previous criteria for spiritual gifts.



He Fills My Cup

May the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

The exercise of the gifts (cont'd)

4. Under the individual's self-control:

Self-control must characterize everyone exercising a gift, even with respect to the more spectacular gifts (tongues, spirits of prophets 1 Corinthians 14:32). Neither prophecy nor glossolalia are ecstatic phenomena that the speaker has no control over. In fact, this is the distinctive mark of the Christian exercise of charismata. Those who have the gifts are able to control them (1 Corinthians 12:2).

Paul avoids all the Greek words for ecstatic experiences (the words common in Hellenistic religious circles to talk about extraordinary charismatic phenomena, especially those of an ecstatic kind): *ekstasis*, *entheos*, *empneusis*, *enthusiasmos*, and probably *pneumata*.

These words apply to people who are manipulated by idols so they have no control over what they say or do.

Gift of the Holy Spirit



The Promised Power – Holy Spirit

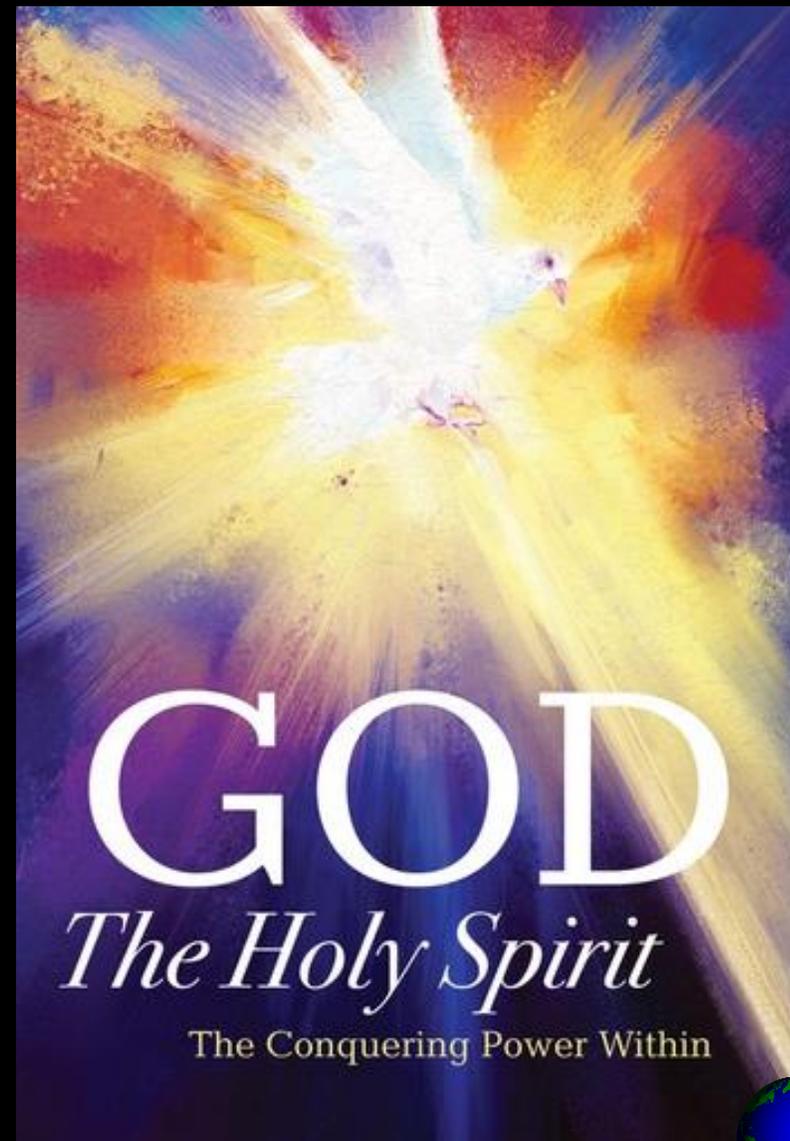
Christ's Great Commission in [Matthew 28:18-20](#) is accompanied by His great promise.

What is that promise, what does it mean in a practical sense, and how can we draw comfort from it?

Why is that promise so important to us?

The disciples preached not in their strength but in Christ's. According to Paul, in fact, the gospel was preached to every creature under heaven in just a few short years ([Colossians 1:23](#)). Although some might question the precise meaning of Paul's words, it is undeniable that the gospel made a powerful impact on first century society. **It changed the world.**

Christ promised His disciples that He would *“send the Promise of My Father”* and they would receive *“power from on high”* ([Luke 24:49](#)). The Saviour added, *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* ([Acts 1:8](#)).



The Promised Power – Holy Spirit (cont'd)

No matter how challenging the task, the promises of God are sure. Jesus' statement that "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." ([Matthew 24:14](#)) is a promise.

The proclamation of the gospel to the entire world may seem impossible, but God's power will overcome every obstacle. Every person on planet Earth will have a reasonable opportunity to hear and understand God's message of love and truth before the return of our Lord (See [Revelation 18:1](#)).

"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfilment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere." -Ellen G. White, [Early Writings, p. 277](#).



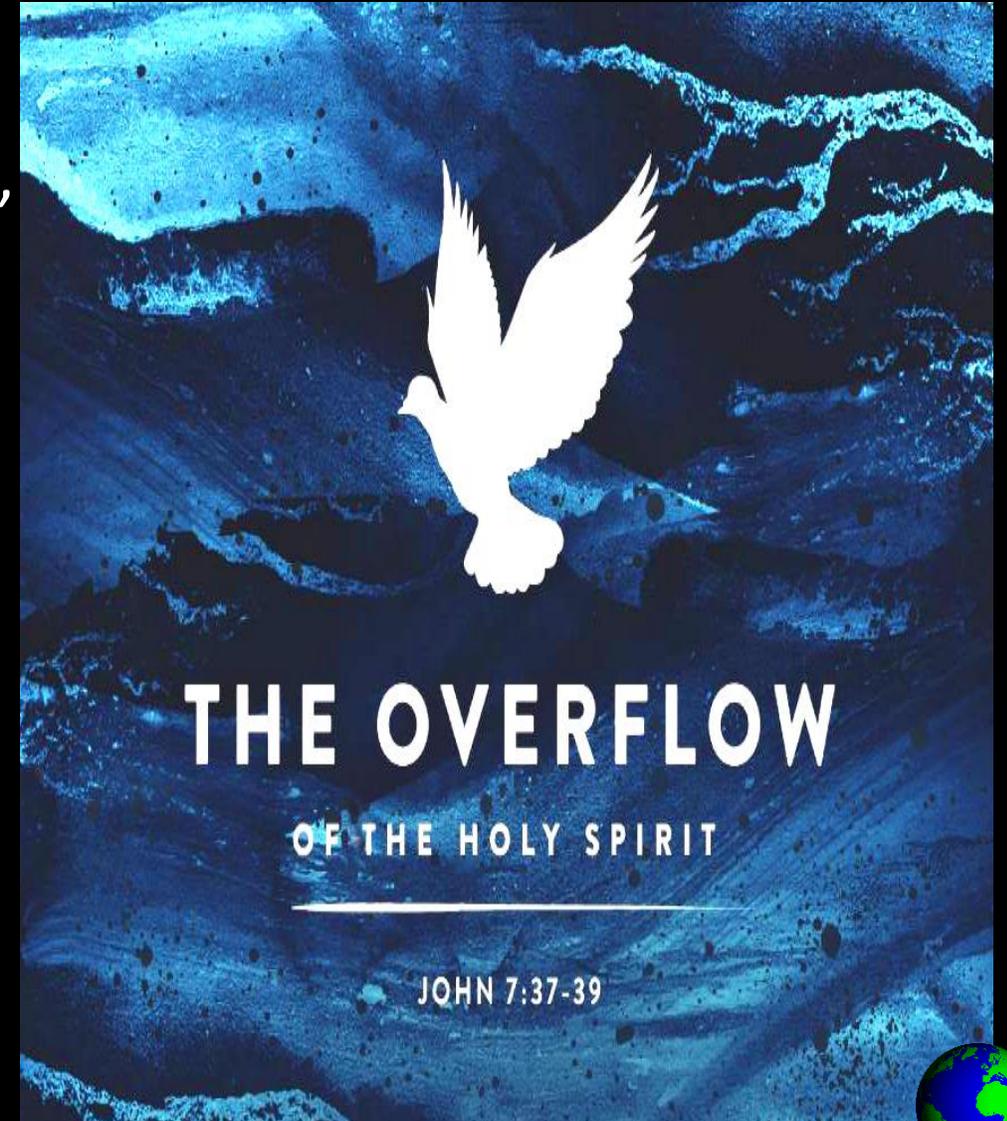
The Early and Latter Rain

Both the Old and New Testament use the symbolism of water to represent the Holy Spirit.

The prophet Isaiah quotes the words of our Lord, *“I will pour water on him who is thirsty. . . . I will pour My Spirit on your descendants”* (Isaiah 44:3). Isaiah uses a common Hebrew literary device called parallelism. The second phrase in the passage explains the first. The prophet Joel also discusses the symbolism of water. God promises to water Israel’s fields, then declares, *“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh”* (Joel 2:28). Jesus uses the symbolism of water to represent the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39).

What are the two symbols that each of the following texts use regarding the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? [Joel 2:21-24](#); [28-32](#); [James 5:7-8](#).

How are we to understand what they mean?



The Early and Latter Rain (cont'd)

In Bible times, sowing and ploughing took place from the middle of October, shortly after the falling of the early rains. These early rains brought the seed to germination and nurtured its early growth. The latter rain came in the late spring to bring the ripening fruit to harvest. The barley harvest and other grain harvests were spring events, followed by the fruit harvest in the summer and fall.

God uses the symbolism of the early and latter rain in two ways. The early rain of the Spirit fell upon the disciples at Pentecost in order to launch the Christian mission. The latter rain will be poured out on God's church at the end of time in order to complete His mission on earth. The term the "early rain" also refers to the daily work of God's Spirit convicting, instructing, guiding, and empowering each believer. The "latter rain" is a term used to describe a special endowment of God's Holy Spirit on Christ's church just before the coming of Jesus.



The Early and Latter Rain (cont'd)

“Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God’s church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result...

“But near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’” - Ellen G. White, [The Acts of the Apostles](#) , pp. 54, 55.



Prerequisites for the Latter Rain

What do the following texts tell us about the preparation needed in order to receive the Holy Spirit's power in its fullness?

Please read: [Acts 1:14](#); [Zechariah 10:1](#); [Acts 3:18-20, 4:31](#); [Psalms 119:25](#); [John 6:63](#).

The Scriptures invites us to ask God for the Holy Spirit ([Luke 11:13](#)). The disciples believed Christ's promise, waited in unity, and prayed for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit ([Acts 1:8, 14](#)).

The reason that God asks us to pray for the Holy Spirit is not because He is unwilling to give us the Spirit but because we are not prepared to receive it. As we pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, God works on our hearts to lead us to deeper repentance. Praying in small groups with other church members draws us into a closer bond of unity and fellowship. Both prayer and Bible study prepare our minds to be sensitive to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives.



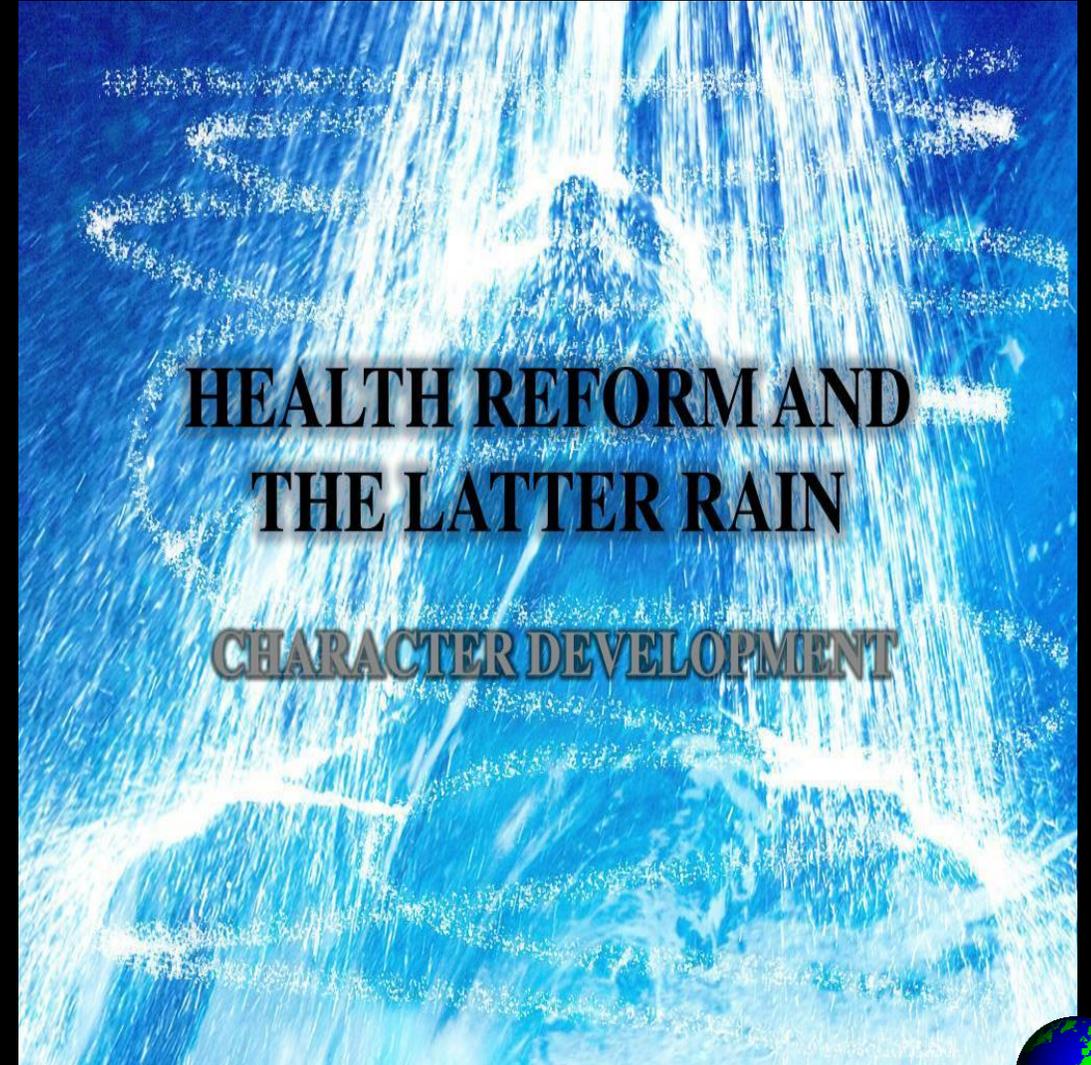
Prerequisites for the Latter Rain (*cont'd*)

What is the natural result of spiritual renewal in our lives? **Where does all spiritual revival and reformation lead?** See [Psalms 51:10-13](#); [Acts 4:13, 20](#); [5:33](#); [8:4](#).

All spiritual revival and genuine reformation lead to a passionate desire to witness.

When our hearts are filled with a deep appreciation for everything that Jesus has done for us, then, like Peter and John “we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” ([Acts 4:20](#)).

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the early rain on the day of Pentecost empowered the disciples to effectively witness. **Their witness was so powerful that a rebellious mob in Thessalonica screamed in fear that “these who have turned the world upside down have come here too”** ([Acts 17:6](#)).



Prerequisites for the Latter Rain (cont'd)

Just as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost enabled the disciples to be a formidable witness to their generation, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter-rain power will empower God's church to reach the world in the final generation. It will take nothing less than latter-rain power to complete God's mission on earth, and God offers nothing less. Heaven's most precious gift is offered in infinite supply in order to accomplish the most urgent and important task ever entrusted His church.

- The early disciples turned the world "upside down" with their preaching and witness.
- Why isn't that said of us, believers today?



Joel 2:23

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain,



The Baptism of Fire

Both the Old and New Testaments use a variety of symbols, such as water, wind, and oil, to describe the work of the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist links another image, that of fire, to the work of the Holy Spirit ([Matthew 3:11](#); [Luke 3:16](#)).

There are many who have misunderstood John's statement. The passage does not say, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit or with fire". It says, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." The second expression, "and with fire," explains the first expression, "the baptism of the Holy Spirit."

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the baptism of fire. The word baptism in the New Testament is used 80 times and refers to total immersion.

Read the following passages and describe what the symbolism of fire represents in the Bible. [Exodus 3:2-4](#); [24:17](#); [1 Kings 18:24](#); [Malachi 3:2-3](#); [Acts 2:1-4](#); [Hebrews 12:29](#).

BAPTISM OF FIRE

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:2-4

fineart
america



The Baptism of Fire (cont'd)

The symbolism of fire is a symbol of the glory, presence, and power of God manifest in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. To be baptized with fire is to be immersed in the glory of God's presence through the Holy Spirit in order to witness in His power. Moses met God at the burning bush and then left the glory of His presence in order to witness to Pharaoh. Elijah witnessed to Israel in the glory of God's fiery presence on Mount Carmel. When tongues of fire fell on Pentecost, the disciples witnessed in languages that they had never before known.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is immersion in the presence and power of God in order that we can effectively witness of His glory. Once again, in the last days of earth's history, God's people will be immersed in His presence, filled with His power, and sent out to witness of His glory to the world.



The Baptism of Fire (cont'd)

The earth will be filled with the glory of God.
“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” ([Habakkuk 2:14](#)). **In prophetic vision, John saw an angel messenger descend from heaven and** *“the earth was illuminated with his glory”* ([Revelation 18:1](#)).

God’s glory, His loving character, will be revealed through the power of the Holy Spirit to a waiting world and a watching universe. **Every person on planet Earth will have the opportunity to both hear and understand God’s last-day message.**

God’s glory, His loving character, will be revealed to the world.

How can you, right now, in your own sphere, reveal that glory in your life?
What will that require on your part?



**Holy
Spirit**
*Power
& Fire*



The Great Controversy Ended

The entire book of Revelation can be summarized in just a few words: **Jesus wins, Satan loses**.

- Read [Revelation 12:17](#); [17:13-14](#); [19:11-16](#).

What is the central message of these passages?

Here is good news: the same Jesus who defeated Satan on the cross will come again and triumph over the powers of hell and put a full end to evil ([Revelation 19:19-21](#); [Ezekiel 28:18-19](#)).

Evil will not have the last word.

Poverty and pestilence will not have the last word.

Sickness and suffering will not have the last word.

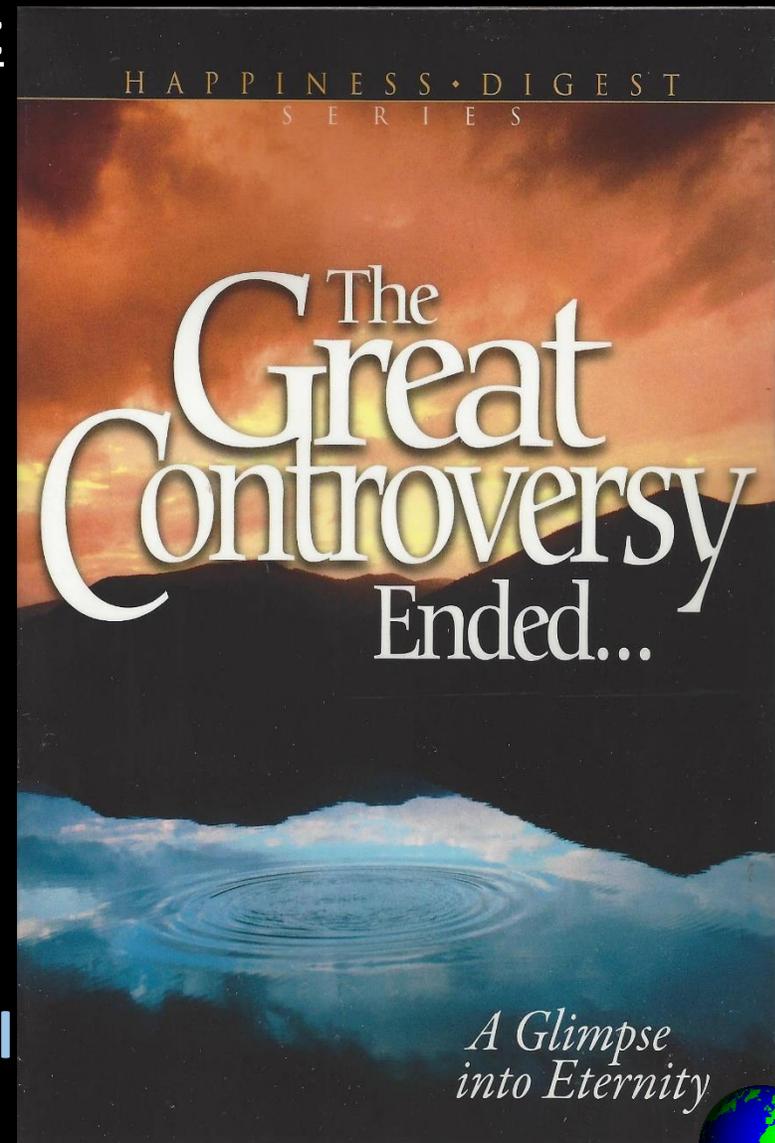
Chaos and crime will not have the last word.

Disease and death will not have the last word.

- **Instead, God will.**

Until then, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are doing everything possible to reach every person.

God's heart aches over a lost world: Soon His people will reveal to the world, in both the witness of their words and their works, Jesus' amazing grace and truth.

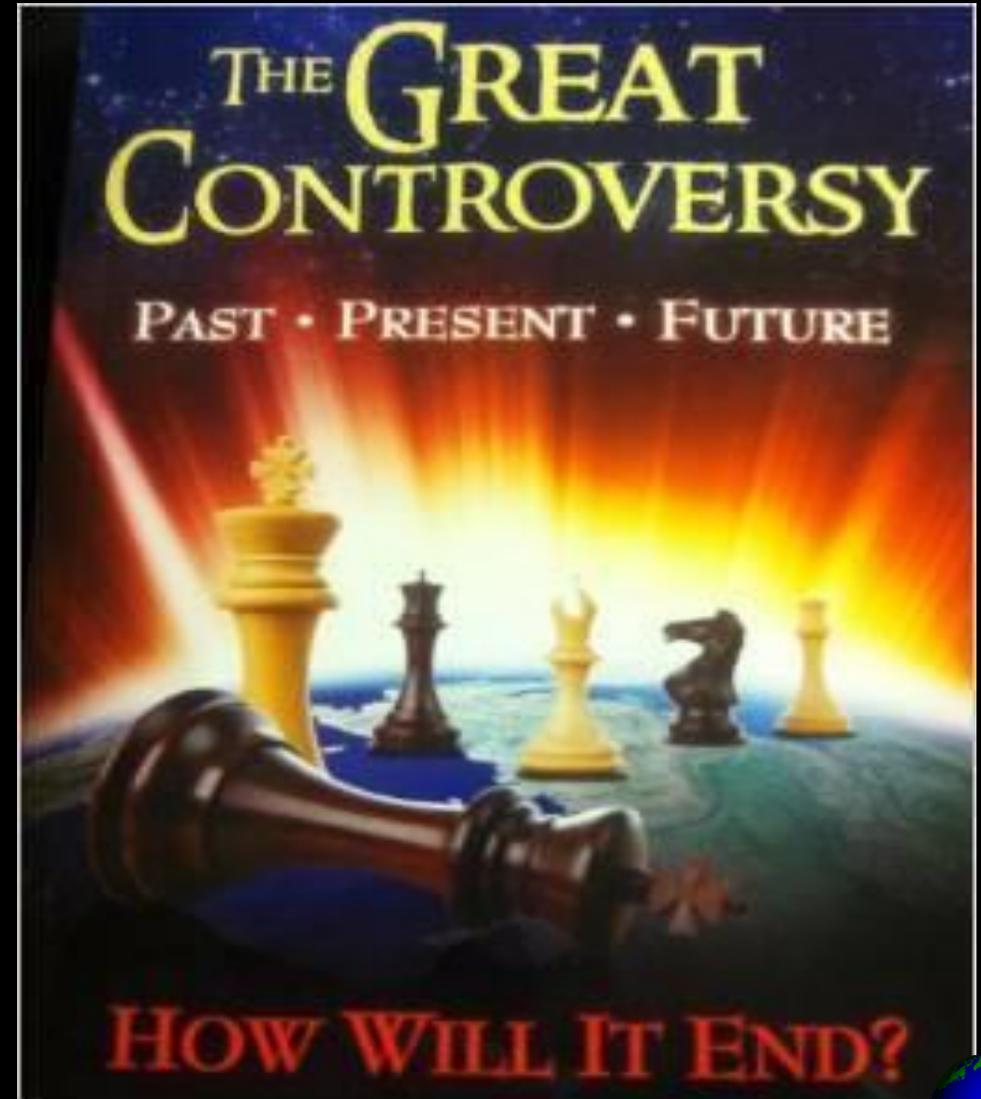


The Great Controversy Ended (cont'd)

Of course, Satan will do everything in His power to oppose this witness. The final crisis will break upon this world. Jesus will pour out His Spirit in latter-rain power, and the work of God on earth will be finished.

“Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers.” - Ellen G. White, [The Great Controversy](#), p. 612.

The work of God on earth will be finished. Jesus will come. All heaven and earth will rejoice. There is no more important priority in our lives than experiencing a revival of God's grace in our hearts daily and inviting His Holy Spirit to make us into His image ([1 John 3:1-3](#)).



The Fear of Satan is Prayer

Satan wants to confuse the believer concerning prayer. He wants to keep us from understanding the vital role prayer plays in the work of God in this earth and in saving the lost. Satan knows that if he can get the Christian to be negligent in the area of prayer he has little to fear concerning the believer's spiritual growth in Christ or his effectiveness as a labourer for God in His work on earth.

I believe God's Word teaches that prayer is necessary for an individual and church to experience revival. Prayer is necessary for the "strongholds" of Satan to be cast down, and for the saving of the lost. Prayer is necessary for a Christian to remain strong in the Lord. Prayer is necessary for the latter rain of the Spirit to be poured out. I find it amazing that prayer, which seems so powerless and insignificant to the natural man, is so necessary and powerful for the spiritual man.



Pray for the Latter Rain

[Zechariah 10:1](#) is a call to pray for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. Since prayer has always played a vital role in enabling God to carry out His will on earth it should be no surprise that prayer is also necessary for the latter rain of the Spirit to be poured out on this earth. Of this necessity Ellen White wrote the following.

“But near the close of the earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’ In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain’ ([Zechariah 10:1](#)). ‘He will cause to come down... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.’ ([Joel 2:23](#)).



Pray for the Latter Rain (cont'd)

"The revenue of the glory has been accumulating for the closing work of the third angels message. Of the prayers that have been ascending for the fulfilment of the promise – the descent of the Holy Spirit – not one has been lost. Each prayer has been accumulating, ready to overflow and pour forth a healing flood of heavenly influence and accumulating light all over the world." [Manuscript Release, Vol. 21:155](#)

The day will come when the final prayer surge filling the bowls to overflowing will bring about the great out pouring of the latter rain of the Spirit. The hope we have of this mighty out pouring of the Spirit is also a call to prepare for that great event. The truth is; if we are not spiritually prepared by daily receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit we will receive no benefit from the latter rain when it falls. Therefore, as we continue to pray for the latter rain I encourage all to daily seek the Lord that our hearts and lives may be fully surrendered to God.



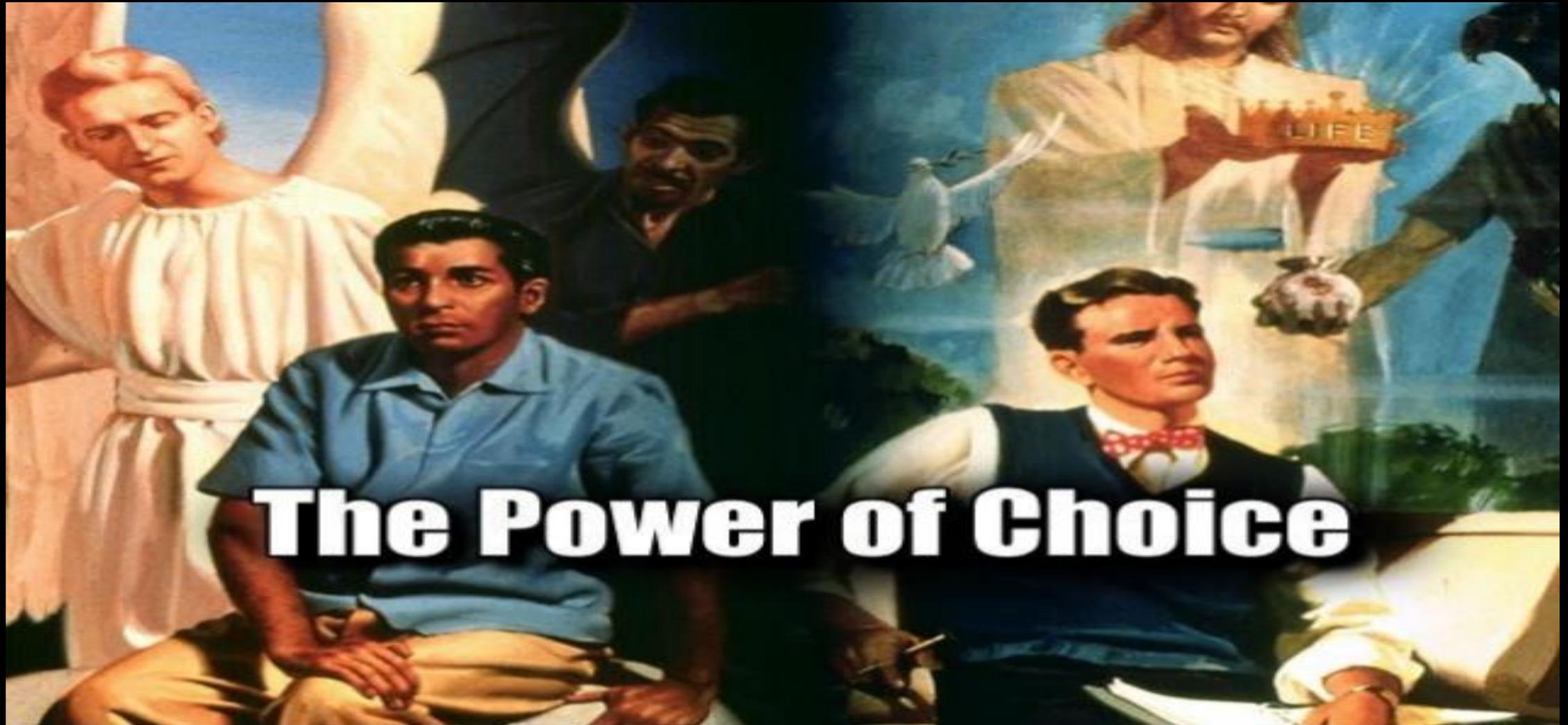
Summary and Conclusion

When we place the gifts in the context Paul provides, it is clear that there is one fundamental test their exercise must meet. **They must contribute to the building of community.** In Paul's scheme of things, that is the one criterion by which every aspect of Christian practice must be evaluated. **So, the gifts of the Spirit are not private experiences, they are public.** And their purpose is not personal, but communal. Genuine manifestations of the Holy Spirit will build up the Christian community, strengthen the corporate life of the church, edify members in the body of Christ. **That is the central goal of the Spirit's work in the world.**

Our world is falling apart. **Who can't see that? Is there anything that matters more than opening our hearts to Jesus and pleading for the revival and reformation so needed, not just by each one of us individually but by our church as a whole?** What would happen if our own hearts were totally surrendered to Him and we were completely devoted to spreading this message to the world?

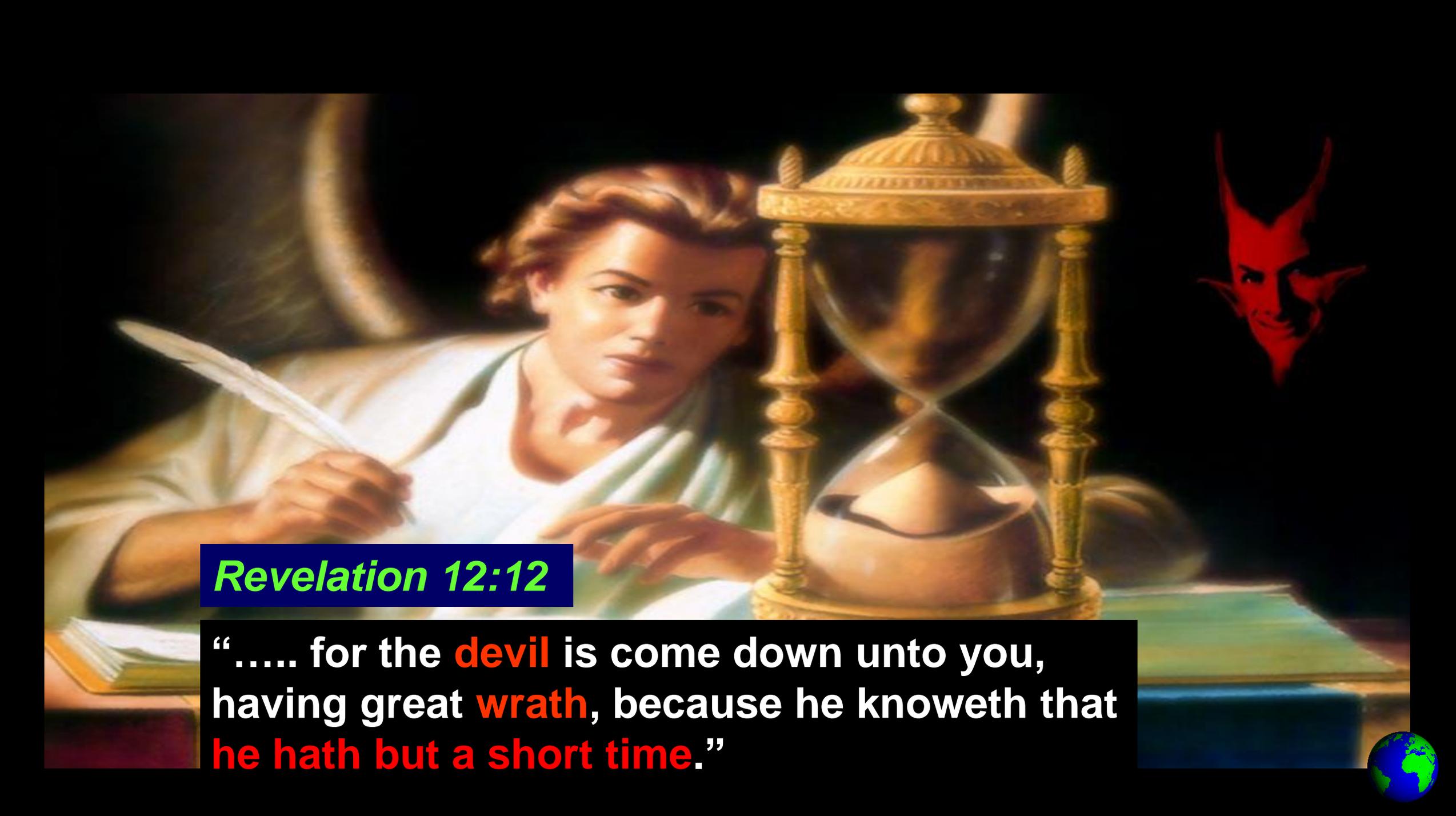


God has given all:



The Power of Choice



An angel with a halo and wings is shown writing in a book with a quill pen. To the right of the angel is a large, ornate golden hourglass. In the background, a red devil's face with horns is visible. The scene is set in a dimly lit room with a book on a desk.

Revelation 12:12

“..... for the **devil** is come down unto you, having great **wrath**, because he knoweth that **he hath but a short time.**”



Enter The Ark of Hope

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

– John 10:16



The Ark of the Covenant



Psalms 77:13

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. –
Revelation 3:20





THE END



ARE YOU READY TO MEET JESUS?