



Spiritual things are more important than we understand. The current version of the Church is struggling to find our way because we have lived too far in the world far too long—so much so that we are uncomfortable in the presence of holiness. But our cooperation with God’s truth is essential. You see, God will move Heaven and Earth when our hearts are directed towards Him. The question is, are we willing to change and cooperate with God in ways we never have before? Church, we are going to have to become a more spiritual people, with spiritual vitality, who believe in the power of a Living God.

I. SPIRITUAL (GIFTS), (SERVICE), (WORKING), (MANIFESTATIONS)

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| A. Spiritual Gifts | D. Spiritual Armor |
| B. Fruit of the Spirit | E. Spiritual Weapons |
| C. Ministry Gifts (Empowered by the Spirit for the benefit of God’s people) | F. Spiritual Forces of Wickedness |
| | G. Spiritual Authority |

1 Corinthians 12:1, 7-11 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, **I do not want you to be ignorant.**

Luke 4:31–35 ³¹ Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath began to teach the people. ³² They were amazed at his teaching, because his message had authority. ³³ In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an evil spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, ³⁴ “Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

³⁵ “Be quiet!” Jesus said sternly. “Come out of him!” Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.

Luke 13:10–13 ¹⁰ On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, ¹¹ and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” ¹³ Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

- 1. What has been your attitude about spiritual gifts? (i.e. only for pastors, mature believers, etc.) How do you think a misunderstanding about spiritual things can affect your relationship with the Lord?**
- 2. How does an understanding of spiritual gifts help strengthen you as a believer?**

II. THE STRUGGLE TO BELIEVE IN SPIRITUAL THINGS

Acts 11:1–18 ¹ The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him ³ and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.” ⁴ Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened: ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. ⁶ I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ Then I heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’ ⁸ “I replied, ‘Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹ “The voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.

¹¹ “Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. ¹² The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. ¹⁴ He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’ ¹⁵ “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?” ¹⁸ When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.”

- 3. What struggles do you have in believing in spiritual things?**
- 4. How does Peter’s response to the Lord (in Acts 11:1-18) help you better understand spiritual awareness/obedience?**

Acts 9:10–19 ¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord,” he answered. ¹¹ The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.” ¹³ “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And

he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “**Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**”¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized,¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

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| A. Believing & Understanding | C. Gateway Experiences: Born Again, Spirit Baptism |
| B. Reading & Thinking About the Word of God | D. Revelation: Understanding Given/Granted |

Believe

Luke 24:21–27 (disciples on road to Emmaus)²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning²³ but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.

²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”²⁵ **He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!**²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?”²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Mark 16:9–14⁹ When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping.¹¹ When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.¹² Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country.¹³ These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either.¹⁴ Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; **he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe** those who had seen him after he had risen.

Understand

Luke 8:24–25²⁴ The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we’re going to drown!” He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm.²⁵ **“Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.”**

5. What is the difference in believing in spiritual things and understanding them?
6. Describe a moment in your life when God met you in your weakness and unbelief. What was the outcome?

Role of Scripture

Hebrews 4:12–13¹² For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, **it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.**¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Joshua 1:8–9⁸ “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Prayer

“Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy.

All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” Amen.

Revelation 15:3–4, NIV84®