

Meeker Christian Church
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Answering the Call

We have spent a couple of weeks looking at and identifying our Spiritual Giftedness, I pray you have taken the survey and given your results to Beky for our records and as a resource for this ministry. This week I want to encourage you in acknowledging your gifts of Spiritual giftedness as a direct communication with GOD. A call and equipping from God as a guideline and instruction for kingdom service. As an old cowboy I cherish the vision of our combined spiritual gifts being the harness that yokes us all together as a team for the ministry of Meeker Christian Church.

Peter puts it into perspective for us in: 1 Peter 2:9 - *9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*
You just cannot deny it, -as the chosen of God you are among GOD'S OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE.

Medical personnel have their own language, as do philosophers, scientists, mechanics, heater and air conditioner persons, police, plumbers and cowboys and all the rest as you are well aware. In like manner - Christians develop their special language. As we conclude this series on the gifting of the Holy Spirit we are going to be reminded of some things - that only in the language and attitude of a Christian can it be understood. Along with that understanding, comes the assurance of the reception, life action and activity under the authority and approval of God by the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Let's go to the Gospel book of John - not John the Baptist, but the apostle John who writes from the perspective of an eye witness who knew Jesus personally and was taught by and chosen by Jesus as one of the 12 apostles.

Jesus establishes a requirement for the promise and explanation of the coming of the Holy Spirit: Listen to John 14:15-21 *15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.* {Christianeze communication of understanding and application of our word 'love.' Then with that qualification...} *16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. 19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. 20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."* Christians understand Jesus is talking about the trinity Godhead and God's provision of that very presence in the body of Christians as He communicates in Christianeze, repeating the pre-qualification of love. i.e. The Spirit of Truth is none other than the Holy Spirit. Within that statement reveals a message of incredible eternal understanding, forever virtue of life!

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH. That is the source, the definition, total and unchanging truth for the universe. And you, my brothers and sisters, are given direct access to what the rest of the world makes up or pretends to understand. You get the Holy Spirit because You first have learned to love Jesus because you now know what He did on your behalf. Though the audience to whom Jesus spoke in the scripture was only on the cusp of even personally experiencing Jesus sacrifice! But do not miss the fantastic truth at the closing: *And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.* Jesus will make Himself and His righteousness known by way of the Holy Spirit for those who choose the Holy road of truth as a highway provided to heaven for believers.

For just a moment, join the audience of those who are standing listening to Jesus. Your Christianeaze is pretty good and you hear Him say: John 16:5-11 5 *“But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’* 6 *But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.* {in fact that sorrow gets so much worse for them in the coming days - as you well know and as we will soon be memorializing at the upcoming Resurrection Sunday } Jesus continues: 7 *Nevertheless I tell you the truth* {now you know about truth, what is about to be said is exactly the way it is, no negotiation or deviation is possible - the truth is} *It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.* {the Helper is the Holy Spirit, and He was dispatched as we now know in Acts 2:38 at baptism} Still in John 16, verse 8 *And when He {Holy Spirit} has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:* 9 *of sin, because they do not believe in Me;* 10 *of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;* 11 *of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

Oh my! the battle lines are therein drawn, the forces of heaven commanded by the Holy Spirit are gifted to recognize the deceit, deception and delusion of the forces of evil commanded by the ruler of this world (satan) where we exist, but do not miss the truth of the promise, the hope, the encouragement contained in that last word - “judged!” The whole, and exacting truth is ---satan is already judged, resulting from the cross and resurrection of Jesus. satans duration as the Prince of the earth powers is almost to be terminated, hallelujah! We know what the judiciary of the universe sentence is, we do not know exactly when satan along with his subordinates and supporters will face the incarceration of that sentence. If you are curious, study Revelation chapter 20 for additional foreboding details of their eternal confinement and retribution.

The critical application for us is that our spiritual giftedness is related to our love and obedience before Jesus. John 14:15, 21.15 *“If you love Me, keep My commandments. 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”* All this is the reason and consequence of why we take time to teach about Spiritual Gifts and to urge their action in every Christian life. The next passage this morning is further documentation of the purpose for your spiritual giftedness. It is part of the angelic prophecy given to Zacharias regarding his soon to be born son John, whom we now know as the Baptist, not to be confused with John the apostle whom we looked at earlier... Luke 1:17 *He will also go before*

Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John the Baptist was also given the specific purpose or calling for every New Testament Christian "... *to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*" ... That is a prophecy of YOU. The Holy Spirit's indwelling is for exactly the same purpose - and we the ones called in our generation and our community.

That predates this next passage from Paul regarding qualities of a sound church, but with the exact same purpose: Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

Here is another verse written by our faithful old scribe, the apostle John to help us realize the significance and extent of spiritual gift usage as Jesus is inspiring John to teach the Jews: John 10:16-19 *And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. 17 "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.*

Then as you can imagine from our knowledge of the Jewish leaders: verse John 10:19 *Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings.*

In that incredible passage, Jesus is teaching Jews - He is not violating or changing the Abrahamic promises of Israel as the chosen nation, He is reiterating what their purpose as what a chosen nation means - to reach the world population with the truth of the God of creation. Not for selfish reasons, but for totally altruistic reasons after the model of Jesus Himself.

CHRISTIAN brothers and sisters, you and I are the contemporary results of that explanation, we are not of that fold, unless of course, you have Jewish heritage. But we are given to hear the message or "voice" of Jesus to become one united group of believers under the one shepherd our Holy God. Spiritual Giftedness is one aspect or as I characterized it last week, is the harness that helps us pull the load of life together. As I use that illustration I see my Dad pulling on the lines of Maud and Mollie our Percheron team with the command gee (r) or haw (l) depending whether he wanted them to go right, or left or simply "giddy up" if he wanted them to go forward. Can you feel yourself in the harness of the Holy Spirit awaiting the words of the Master?? .."giddy up" means answering our call from God and giving attention to His divine plan and purpose as inspired, encouraged and provided for through our Holy Spirit gifts.

So Answering the Call - your call is not unlike that of Jeremiah - his was in the O.T. yours is in the N.T., but the call is the same: Here is Jeremiah 1:5 from the NLT - 5 *"I knew you before I*

formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my spokesman to the world." i.e. God said: "Giddy up Jeremiah!"

Paul shares his own experience for us in: Galatians 1:15-17 *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.* Then God said "Giddy up Paul."

Y-o-u have a call from the LORD GOD CREATOR for your life Acts 2:38 *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. Add 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;* God is saying loud and clear "Giddy up Christian."

This message is my effort to clarify that as a Christian you are called by the Heavenly Father, He places His presence within you at the time of Baptism and that Holy Spirit is the constant and ever present companion to guide and encourage you through the trials of this life. I want the same thing for you that God wants, because I learned it from Him. And I also have learned to have great fear and dread for all who minimize, marginalize, or outright reject grace, love and mercy of God's goodness and righteousness. Until the trumpet sounds and Christians are snatched away... I want to be in the harness of the Holy Spirit yoked together with you for Kingdom service and righteous living. The attitudes and actions of a secular world without God, challenges God's Sovereignty. His Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnipotence. He and He alone in creation knows the extent of that deliberate and chosen ignorance until the prophetic events of the end times culminate. But every indicator suggests that time may very well be imminent.

Today the invitation for eternal life is extended. For those who have never confessed Jesus as Lord, only you can respond for you. Your parents may have dedicated you as an infant but only you and God are aware of the sins for which you repent and the depth of sincerity of your desire to accept Jesus as Lord and be baptized as the scripture teaches. If you are directed by the Holy Spirit's presence to make that decision public, then come forward as we stand and sing...