

- Systemic Teaching about Christian Life -



Every Good Gift and Every Perfect Gift

(With particular emphasis on
“The Gift of the Holy Spirit”)

Series:
The Life of the
Christian in the World

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General Considerations about Using This Material:

The subject presented in this material aims to provide support to knowledge and an in-depth study of the Bible and the Christian life.

Based on the understanding that in the Christian Bible is contained the consolidation of fundamental and formal records of the writings inspired by God for humanity and each person of it, the contents exposed in this material are not intended to add, ever, anything to the Bible, nor ever remove anything from it. The aim through this subject is to contribute to the exploration of what already was registered and passed on to us over thousands of years of history by the One Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth.

The contents presented on the next pages, of course, intend to address just a portion of the essential themes of life displayed with such great amplitude in the Bible. On the other hand, however, this subject is presented in a grouped, colligated, organized and systematized manner with the objective to serve as an aid to knowledge and understanding of the Christian life without losing sight of the main aspects of it.

Ecclesiastes 12: 11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

Related words put together, as told in the biblical text above, serve as goads and nails for fixing supports and help for the life of people that hear and receive them. Therefore, one objective of this material is to study and seek a broader understanding of the truths handed down to us by the Unique Pastor and God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

We would still like to suggest that the reading and studying of this material also should always be accompanied by prudence and proper investigation, believing that this is a very healthy habit to be practiced toward any material presented to a person.

The act of acceptance, rejection, or “retaining what is good,” is a personal and individual attribute given to those who receive the wisdom from God and which should be exercised or used by them toward all that comes into their hands.

Proverbs 8: 12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion.

Acts 17: 11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Proverbs 16: 1 The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.

3 Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.

More details about these initial considerations are posted at www.zoominchristianlife.org.

Ronald Gortz and Irmelin Gortz, servants of the Lord Jesus Christ!

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*Revelation 21: 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."
6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*

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*1Timothy 2: 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

More details about these initial considerations are posted at www.zoominchristianlife.org.

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C1. The Unique Origin of Every Good Gift and Every Perfect Gift

This theme is part of a diversity of materials that aim to offer the reader a Broad and Integrated Teaching, also called Systemic, about the Christian Life and which already has the following previous series:

- ⇒ 1) Suggestions for Reading and Studying the Bible;
- ⇒ 2) The Gospel, The Good News of God;
- ⇒ 3) The Life of the Christian in the World.

Each of the subjects in the series mentioned above aims to deal with a specific theme about the Christian life, but always under the perspective that they are not independent of each other and that they are granted by the Lord to be added to the lives of those who want to walk according to the will of God.

Our desire and our prayer are that each of the materials mentioned above, as well as this new theme, may serve as a tool to help build a more profound knowledge of the Word of God, faith in the Lord, hope, and love in Christ Jesus, our Eternal Lord, as well as in the Holy Spirit and in the Heavenly Father, from whom life comes from.

Yet in the introduction of this present subject, we understand that it is also worth mentioning that some of the themes exposed in it have already been addressed in the various materials referenced above, but that will be approached here again, in a partial way, with the objective of grouping them under the emphasis that **the great or supreme giver of gifts for life is the Heavenly Father**, as stated in the text below:

James 1: 17 **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**

Although the verse above, in English, uses the same word *gift* twice, the word *gift* mentioned first is related to the *act of giving gifts*, while the word *gift* used the second time is more related to the idea of the *gift, present, or benefit* that is effectively conferred by the act of giving *gifts*.

Thus, **every act of giving a good gift and every perfect gift that is granted or can be given comes from above, comes from the heavenly kingdom and the Heavenly Father, from the Father who is also called the Father of Lights.**

In turn, **to assert that every good gift and every perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights is a very comprehensive and significant statement, for in this statement, it is implied that everything that is good in life, and in the entire universe, has its primary origin in God.**

And because every good gift and every perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of Lights, a human being can only do an act of true

kindness and pass on a truly good gift if this is first granted to an individual by the Heavenly Father, as is also exposed in the following text:

1 Corinthians 4: 6 **Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.**

7 **For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?**

Whether a person has made a discovery that indeed benefits oneself and others, or whether a person has achieved a thought from which something really beneficial has been derived, every good gift and every perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights, even if many do not recognize it and attribute their discoveries to their own ability or the ability of the very creation.

Human beings may be granted, by the Lord, the act of passing on good gifts and perfect gifts to other people, but this possibility does not make them the source of good gifts. For example, one of life's central gifts that a person may share with one's fellow men is true love, which, as a gift of immeasurable value, is only possible to be shared by a person if one previously or first receives it from God.

1 John 4: 19 **We love Him because He first loved us.**

If human beings were more aware of the truths mentioned in these few texts of the Bible referenced up to this point or accepted these truths without giving rise to such expressive and continuous resistance to them, they would not need to demand such a broad effort in the attempts to elevate themselves before others and would not need to subject themselves to the continuous and exhausting disputes and competitions they carry out towards their fellow men.

If every ability to do good and everything that is good comes from the Heavenly Father, why should anyone always dispute and compete with other people to prevail over them in order to try to take away or destroy what they have?

Human beings can only do or have something truly good, with legitimacy before God, if the Heavenly Father grants or allows them to do or have it, and not by taking other people's things by force or competition.

What the human being takes, and which has not been granted to a person through the gift or favor of God, is not seen before the Lord as actually belonging to an individual. What is dominated by the human being, and has not been granted or bestowed on a person from above, may be considered as misappropriation before the Lord.

John 3: 27 **John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven."**

Human beings may come to think that their possessions and what they dominate are what give value to their existence. However, what credits a person before God is the faith one has in the Lord, for apart or estranged from an appropriate relationship with God, a person also moves away from the condition of being able to have something that indeed is one's own or that is truly beneficial to one's life. Since the entire universe belongs to God, a person dissociated from fellowship with Him also becomes deprived of any right of eternal inheritance or property before the Lord.

*Luke 12: 15 **And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."***

*Hebrews 11: 6 **But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.***

*Romans 1: 16 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.***

*17 **For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."***

In the theme The Gospel of Peace, we commented on the origin of the conflicts and wars that exist between people, presenting the fact that the Scriptures show us that, essentially, it is their distance from the Creator and the enmity with God that provoke the most various animosities between people.

If a person does not believe that every good gift and every perfect gift is bestowed by God by His eternal grace, through faith in Him, and for living according to His will, one will tend to develop a belief and practices in other actions to obtain one's more diverse desires, which are what the Scriptures call the initiating elements of strife, conflict, and even wars, whether small or large.

*James 4: 1 **Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?***
*2 **You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.***
*3 **You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.***
*4 **Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.***

For not believing or for not wanting to recognize and accept that every good gift and every perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights, many people surrender to dense obscurities, which also lead them to terrible acts that oppose not only God and the heavenly righteousness, but also themselves and their fellow men.

Below are some texts that mention the acceptance or rejection of the light granted by the Father of Lights and some consequences that come from each option:

John 1: 10 **He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.**

11 **He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.**

John 3: 19 **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

20 **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**

21 **But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.**

John 3: 31 **He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.**

32 **And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.**

33 **He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true.**

34 **For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.**

35 **The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.**

36 **He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.**

When we think about the aspect that all good gifts (favorable and good acts) and perfect gifts (beneficial gifts) come from the Lord, whether directly or indirectly, we can see that understanding this truth affects everything in a person's life, including the most diverse "decisions" that one needs or intends to make during one's life in the present world.

Deciding correctly, with sobriety, and with wisdom is a good gift of immeasurable value that a person can only receive fully and perfectly from God, for only in the Lord resides the full knowledge and wisdom concerning everything and everyone.

James 1: 5 **If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.**

Colossians 2: 1 For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,
2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,
3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

On the other hand, knowing that every good gift and every perfect gift to people in the world comes from God, and that they are innumerable and always given for good, also shows us that several aspects in the world run against the good will of the Lord for people's lives, as exemplified in the following text:

James 3: 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.
14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.
15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.
16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.
17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.
18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Although God or the Father of Lights offers His wisdom to people, a person can choose to try to live and walk by one's own knowledge or understanding, relying on one's heart to decide which paths one wants to follow. But the heart of an individual is far from being trustworthy and far from being wise enough, an aspect that is also explicitly exposed in the Scriptures, as follows:

Jeremiah 17: 9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"
10 I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings."

Proverbs 26: 12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

The Heavenly Father is the granting source of all that is good. And the Lord is not upset when people, who desire to walk according to His will, come to Him in all circumstances in order to discern whether what is offered to them is appropriate and

indeed from the divine source. The Lord is pleased with those who seek Him in everything with the aim of discerning whether something offered to them as a gift actually has the seal of the heavenly kingdom. The Lord is pleased when people turn to Him with the purpose of achieving discernment to filter and receive what is beneficial to them in the eyes of God and to know how to reject what does not cooperate for their good.

By not consulting the Lord about what is or is not appropriate for them or what is or is not from the Lord, many people try to establish their own criteria for evaluating what good gifts are. But in these assessments, they begin to confuse what is indeed a gift or a favor with God's approval and what is contrary to the Lord's will for them.

Some people, for example, advocate that abundance or material abundance automatically means that a person is being blessed by gifts from God. However, the proposition of this thought is very far from the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ about what really matters for the present life and even more for eternal life.

Although God can grant material abundance to His children in the world, what matters, above all, is a person to be firm in faith in Christ Jesus as the Lord of one's life and to be steadfast in faith in God to the point of being moved by the love of God in what one does. When they come from an appropriate gift granted by God to them, matters of material abundance may cooperate for God's purposes in the lives of His children, but they never automatically mean that a person is under a condition of life that pleases the Lord.

The testimony that really matters about a person's condition is the testimony that the Lord Himself gives to a person, which cannot be replaced by merely external aspects.

Colossians 3: 15 ***And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.***

Romans 8: 16 ***The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.***

1 Corinthians 4: 4 ***For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.***
5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

Continuing yet concerning material abundance, if it distances a person from faith in the Lord, from dependence on the Lord, and from God's love in what one does in one's life, material abundance for this person does not act as a good gift and, therefore, it is not in line with the major gifts from heaven for a person to live and walk according to the will of God.

*Hebrews 11: 6 **But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.***

*Galatians 5: 6 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.***

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, also in the parable of the sower, warned people about the risk of inclining their hearts to what seems to them a good gift but which distances them from fellowship with the Heavenly Father. And He even showed us that, in many cases, the abundance of goods and the heart excessively inclined to “earthly gifts” can suffocate “the gifts that truly come from the Heavenly Father for people's lives.”

When people think that external and material matters are the primary mark that they are being favored by the Lord, they can simply start welcoming everything that seems convenient to their own natural eyes, without even questioning whether what they consider as gifts is indeed coming to them from above and the only source from which every perfect gift comes for what is beneficial for the present and primarily to their eternal life.

In the theme of Works, Labors, and Services, we highlighted several times what kind of gifts a person should primarily incline one's heart to and for which type of work one should labor, having as one of the basic references the text which we repeat below:

*John 6: 24 **When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.***

*25 **And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"***

*26 **Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.***

*27 **"Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."***

*28 **Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"***

*29 **Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."***

When people stop looking only at the temporary or ephemeral things, which the Lord also promises to provide according to the needs of those who trust in Him, and start to lift their eyes towards their Eternal Creator, they can also begin to have the eyes of their understanding enlightened to see how much non-material gifts from God are available in the Lord for their lives.

It is from an appropriate condition regarding the eternal gifts from God that also the relevance of questions related to what is transient can be adequately seen. From a proper relationship with the eternal gifts, even eventual oppositions and sufferings can be seen from an adjusted or adequate perspective.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

5: 1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,

3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.

4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

When people stop looking only at the natural or passing and start to lift their eyes towards their Eternal Creator, they incline their hearts to be enlightened by God to see that the eternal gifts that the Lord offers to human beings are so many that it would even be impossible to list them all.

Just as an example, let us see below a small list of eternal gifts that come from the Lord that demonstrate the greatness and sublimity of what God has prepared for all human beings and that can be accessed by all those who open their hearts to receive the offer of eternal salvation in Christ Jesus:

- ⇒ Eternal grace;
- ⇒ Eternal salvation through the grace of God;
- ⇒ Eternal life;
- ⇒ Faith, hope, and love;
- ⇒ Wisdom for the right decisions for the present and the eternal future;
- ⇒ The gift of the Holy Spirit and the diversity of gifts of the Spirit, works, and operations to be carried out in the Lord;
- ⇒ The condition of eternal children of the Heavenly Father;
- ⇒ The position of heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ Jesus;
- ⇒ And much, much more.

By way of observation, we remind that many of the aspects mentioned in the last paragraph are addressed in the various themes of the other series we mentioned earlier. And for this reason, they will not all be covered more extensively in this specific material, for in it, we will try to focus more on those points where the mentions of gifts are used in a more evident or direct way.

Finally, in this introduction, although this is redundant with what has been mentioned several times in the other themes, **we understand that it is always crucial to repeat that the first and principal aspect about the gifts that come from God does not refer to the gifts themselves, but who is the Giver of the good and perfect gifts.**

When approaching gifts, we understand that it is essential always to remember that the greatest gift that a person can receive is the very Giver of life and all other things through the fellowship that God offers us in Christ Jesus.

The Lord's other gifts never surpass the major gift of being able to have the Lord Himself as our portion, for to be an heir of God is to have the Lord Himself as an eternal inheritance since He is everlasting and lives forever.

*Psalms 119: 57 **You are my portion, O LORD; I have said that I would keep Your words.***

*Lamentations 3: 24 **"The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"***

*Psalms 16: 2 **O my soul, you have said to the LORD, "You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You."***

*5 **O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot.***

*1 Corinthians 1: 9 **God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.***

*Romans 8: 15 **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."***

*16 **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,***
*17 **and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.***

C2. The Gift of Righteousness: The Lord Jesus Christ given for Our Cause and to Us for Justification, Salvation, and Life

*Romans 5: 17 **For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.***

When the subject of good gifts is approached, it also becomes very significant to know the classification and qualification of the gifts that are most essential for a person's life and that are precedent to others.

There are gifts for people's lives that we should never fail to see in their position of primacy and highest esteem. There are gifts that an individual should never put in the second place, set aside, or exchange for other gifts, for there are gifts that contribute to some varied aspects of people's lives, but there are gifts that underlie and give eternal support for them.

*1 Corinthians 3: 11 **For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.***

Thus, among the countless good gifts that God offers to human beings, there are those that have a higher prominence because they have a position of greater excellence by the fact that they are the forerunners of others and because they are also those who give life and purpose to all the other good gifts that come from the Heavenly Father.

There are gifts directed to us by God that even precede the very eternal salvation that human beings so essentially need for the eternal life of their souls.

Although eternal salvation from God seems to be the first and most essential gift that a person specifically needs to receive in one's life, in order to establish a proper fellowship with the Lord, this very salvation can only be achieved by being preceded by what God, through the Scriptures, calls the "gift of righteousness."

A person can only achieve the eternal salvation of one's soul because the gift of righteousness made and makes it possible.

Without the gift of righteousness offered prior to salvation, there is no possibility for a person to receive the "gift of salvation," for it is through the gift of righteousness that God made salvation available and possible to be accessed by human beings who incurred in perdition by becoming associated with sin and, as a consequence, with the body of sin or with the bondage that comes from subjection to sin.

*Romans 5: 6 **For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.***

- 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.*
- 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
-

It is the gift of righteousness that allows a person to receive salvation to eternal life in God. And without the gift of righteousness, as the forerunner of salvation, there is no possibility for anyone to approach the Lord's salvation. Therefore, it is the "acceptance of the gift of righteousness" that leads a person to reach the salvation and eternal life offered by God.

The offer of the gift of righteousness by God and the acceptance of the very gift of righteousness by a person is what allows an individual to enter into the salvation offered by the kingdom of God.

And the gift of righteousness, in turn, due to which a person can receive the salvation of one's soul to eternal life in God, is the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Son of God also born as the Son of Man, crucified, buried, resurrected, and seated eternally at the right hand of the heavenly throne of the Eternal Father.

John 3: 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

1 Corinthians 2: 1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

1 Timothy 3: 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

It is by the grace of God, through believing in Christ Jesus as the Lord and as the gift of righteousness to everyone who believes in Him, that a person's salvation is granted by the Heavenly Father.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb who was slain and rose again to be our Eternal High Priest, the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace, according to the Order of Melchizedek, is the primordial and supreme gift that has precedence and primacy over all other gifts that God, by His grace, offers to all humankind.

- Acts 4: 8* **Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:**
- 9** *If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,*
- 10** *let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.*
- 11** *This (Christ) is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'*
- 12** *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*
-

So that we could have the way of eternal salvation and reconciliation with God established, it was necessary that the Lord Jesus Christ should be made "our righteousness," be made, by the gift of God, the "gift of the righteousness of the Heavenly Father" offered to us for our justification, salvation, and newness of life in the Lord.

Jeremiah 23: 6 **In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

- 1 Corinthians 1: 30* **But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,**
- 31** *that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."*

Romans 10: 4 **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**

Therefore, before being called to believe in God's salvation, or together with this calling, a person is called to believe in Christ Jesus as the Lord, through whom one can be saved, for it was through Him that the Heavenly Father provided us with the way of justification to new life in the Lord as His eternal children.

Romans 10: 13 **For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."**

...

- 10** *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

John 1: 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Romans 5: 18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

The essential door and path for reconciliation with the Heavenly Father and for all the other gifts that God offers us through His grace and as a consequence of salvation is, and always will be, the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 14: 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 10: 7 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."

Hebrews 13: 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And beyond being the door to salvation and the way to the truth and the Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ is also the provision of sustenance and life for those who follow this path, that is, for those who live and walk in Christ Jesus.

1 John 5: 11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

John 6: 32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

By the gift of righteousness, called Christ Jesus, the Eternal Emmanuel given to us for justification for salvation and life, God was in Christ giving Himself to humanity to grant to everyone who believes in Him, freely by grace, the way of eternal fellowship with the One Living God and Creator of the Heavens and the Earth and all that is in them.

*2 Corinthians 5: 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,
19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

Romans 6: 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Christ Jesus, as the gift of God given in favor of humanity, is the possibility for people to have access to the gift that they most need for all present and eternal life, which is the restoration of an appropriate fellowship or relationship with the Heavenly Father, with His Eternal and Beloved Only Begotten Son, and with the very precious and Beloved Holy Spirit of the Lord.

The gift of righteousness for justification, salvation, and newness of life is so essential and fundamental that the one who receives it also receives the Heavenly Father, and the one who does not receive it also does not receive the Heavenly Father either.

John 13: 20 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Luke 10: 16 "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

The Heavenly Father is the Supreme "Giver" and "Rewarder" of every good gift and perfect gift. However, He has ordained that everything is to be given to us through the Lord Jesus Christ, for Christ Jesus likewise participated in all creation and because He gave His life as a perfect sacrifice so that we may be justified in Him unto eternal salvation.

In the face of this, a Christian should never forget that Christ is the essence of every Christian's life. Christ is the first love that should never be overlooked or put aside, not even in the second place. The life called "Christian," without having Christ as its

essence and support, is a misstep, for without Christ, a Christian can do nothing that is indeed Christian.

The so-called Christian life or Christianity, without the living participation of Christ in those who claim to believe in Him, is a human religion with the appearance of being true, which is called in the Scriptures as Another Gospel or A Different Gospel, a proposal of a Gospel that is not a Gospel indeed, but a false proposition built on deceit. (A more specific look at the theme of the Another Gospel is found in the series on the Gospel of God.)

Therefore, **Christ is the very foundation and essence of a Christian's Christian life!**

Galatians 2: 20 **"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."**

Colossians 3: 4 **When Christ who is our life appears (or will manifest Himself), then you also will appear (or be manifested) with Him in glory.**

In all the universe, there is no other gift that exceeds the giving of the Son of God to us by the Heavenly Father and the surrender of the Son of God Himself for us, who gave Himself, for our redemption, moved by the gift of perfect heavenly love.

Besides the gift of righteousness from God, there is no other gift in the universe that demonstrates a more exalted, sublime, and entirely perfect gift of righteousness. The gift of righteousness offered to all human beings by the Lord is matchless and incomparable.

And having God already offered the highest of His gifts, would He not also give us the other gifts through the most elevated gifts given to those who believe in Him and receive Him in their hearts?

Ephesians 5: 2 **And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.**

Romans 8: 32 **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**

Finally, in this chapter, under the subject of gifts, there is so much more to be said about the Lord Jesus Christ as the gift of the complete and perfect heavenly righteousness, the supreme action of God's mercy towards us, and the exalted gift bestowed upon us for the salvation and life that the Lord even revealed to us a broad or

vast set of gifts called the Gospel to expose it to us in its most varied aspects, and from which, we tried to show many relevant points in the specific series on this Gospel. Thus, due to the greatness, uniqueness, and sublimity of the Gospel of the Lord, we suggest that the reader looks intensely at what the Scriptures have to teach us about it if one has not already done so and goes back to the teaching about it from time to time so as not to distance oneself from the understanding of what is indeed fundamental for one's life.

Concluding, then, this chapter, **we emphasize that a Christian should never depart from the gift by which one can have access to salvation and from the gift by which one is sustained at each new day and moment in life as saved and redeemed by the Lord, for just as the righteousness of God grounds the eternal throne of the Lord, so also the gift of the righteousness of God supports the life of the one who lives by faith in the Eternal Lord.**

Romans 1: 16 ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.***

***17* For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."**

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Romans 6: 23(b) ***The gift of God is:***

"Eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

C3. The Gift of Grace and the Gift of God's Salvation

Ephesians 2: 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Titus 2: 11 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, ...

The word *gift*, mentioned in the text above from Ephesians, is related to the expression of a gift that is offered in honor of a person, showing us how much God appreciates and loves each human being, despite that people many times despise Him as the only Creator and Lord of their lives.

In addition, the two texts referenced above declare very expressly and clearly that salvation is offered to all human beings and is an offer whose origin comes exclusively from God, through His grace, and cannot be begotten or achieved by human works. Salvation can only be received as a gift through faith in the Lord.

If we still try to briefly see some aspects of the gift of grace and the gift of salvation, we could initially say that the grace of God is what allows a person to understand the gift of righteousness for salvation so that one can also choose to receive the very salvation which grants remission of sin and, together, eternal life in the Lord.

Nevertheless, if we look at the grace of God from a broader perspective, we can see that it was through it that all the provision of righteousness was made, as well as we can also see that the working of grace remains equally available to the saved throughout their lives after obtaining salvation itself.

Both grace and salvation do not only refer to a past or momentary act regarding a person's life, but they refer to gifts or living gifts that are granted by the Lord to continue to act throughout the whole life of those who receive it.

Something very significant to be highlighted here about God's offer of grace and salvation to all human beings is that it is not limited to rescuing people from risky situations, but also accompanying them at all times in their new condition of life in God.

Thus, due to the high importance that the grace and salvation offered by God have for each person's life, we would like to emphasize them here as also being part of those major gifts to which every individual should primarily incline one's heart.

On the other hand, precisely because of their importance and breadth, we do not intend to go deeper into them in the present material, indicating, however, the reading of the subjects on The Gospel of Salvation and The Gospel of the Grace of God exposed in the series on The Gospel, The Good News of God, as well as the theme Work Out Your Own Salvation, for in them a more specific and broad overview of these two gifts referred to in this chapter has already been addressed.

C4. The Goodness of God that Leads to Repentance

*Romans 2: 4 **Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?***

At first, when the subject of gifts is approached, many people may think that gifts are always given in the sense of adding something to their lives. Nonetheless, as we have seen in the first chapter of this subject, **there are gifts that act in the sense of helping people to leave behind what does not cooperate with their lives, as is the case of one of the facets of God's goodness.**

Thus, **paying attention to the description that the Scriptures present to us in the text of Romans 2 about goodness is very significant or crucial, for if God does not grant His goodness to a person or one despises the goodness bestowed by God, this same person will not even be able to find the place of repentance concerning what one should repent of,** as exemplified regarding Esau's life in the text that follows below:

*Hebrews 12: 5 **And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;***

6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."

7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

Returning, then, to the matter of the goodness of the Lord, we can observe that several people say that they adopt the idea of not abandoning the practice of sins that they like to commit because of a thought that in the future, when it pleases them, they will repent, ask God for forgiveness, and turn to God's salvation when it is most convenient for them. These people, however, forget or despise that this does not depend only on them, but it depends on the goodness of God to be with them in the future for them to be able to do so.

Repentance is a voluntary act done by the person who repents, and it is not God who does it for an individual. However, if God's goodness is not granted to a person to repent or if that person despises the gift of God's goodness towards him or her, one will not even have the ability to choose to repent.

Although the option for repentance depends on the people to whom it is offered, the ability to realize the need to repent does not depend on people, but on the Lord granting them the goodness to do so.

Yet in other words: **No person, when one perceives the need to repent of one's postures and one's acts that are contrary to God, one's life, and one's fellow men, should despise the act of repenting, for the fact that one perceives the need to repent, as well as the fact of being able to do it indeed, are signs that God's goodness is working in favor of this person so that one changes one's heart, attitudes, and actions.**

A conscious contempt, in the present, of the goodness of God is something very delicate and dangerous to adopt, as this attitude conveys the idea that people themselves have full autonomy to define by themselves, whenever they see fit, everything they want or do not want to do and everything that is good and what is not good to do.

If a person merely repeatedly postpones the act of repentance which would be beneficial to adopt, thinking that one can do it any time one intends to do so, that person is adopting a thought that he or she is the one who is, and always will be, in control of one's entire life. An aspect that is not the actual reality of the one who surrenders to a life of sin and who opposes the Lord, as widely exposed in the theme of The Gospel of the Righteousness of God and exemplified by the following text:

Romans 6: 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

No person has the ability in oneself to free oneself from the yoke of bondage to sin, from the body of sin, from the law of eternal condemnation if one is not helped by the Lord. Therefore, one should not despise the

goodness of God when it manifests itself towards him or her so that one repents in one's heart and changes one's posture and actions.

For example, when a person realizes that one should repent in some attitude towards one's spouse, or a father or a mother towards sons and daughters, or, still, sons and daughters towards their parents or their siblings, to re-establish an appropriate relationship between them, none of them should despise what they realize that needs to be done, for the fact of someone perceiving something in this sense results from God's goodness towards him or her.

The Lord may lead a person to godly sorrow in the heart to repent. And this, too, is a gift for the benefit of a person.

2 Corinthians 7: 10 **For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.**

At a certain point in his life, one of the psalmists exclaims and recognizes that even some afflictions to which he was exposed cooperated so that he could know the truth of God.

Psalms 119: 71 **It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.**

...

67 **Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.**

The Heavenly Father truly wants the good of people. And He bestows goodness upon goodness, mercy upon mercy, and grace upon grace so that people may repent and return to Him through the reconciliation of fellowship that can be done through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, this also goes through the path of repentance concerning the ways and acts dissociated from the life according to the will of God that a person adopts, also exemplified by the two texts that follow below:

Acts 17: 24 **God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.**

25 **Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.**

26 **And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,**

27 **so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;**

28 **for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'**

- 29 *Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.*
- 30 *Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,*
- 31 *because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.*

- 1 Timothy 2: 3 *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,*
- 4 *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
- 5 *For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ...*
-

The Lord God grants us life and everything necessary for this life to be directed according to the truth and His good will towards us. However, part of this process involves the gift of the Lord's goodness that leads us to repentance in order to let behind what is not good and appropriate for the life that the Lord has given us.

No person, much less a Christian, should take lightly the calls to repentance that the Heavenly Father presents to him or her, for the central aspect in focus is not the resistance to repentance but the rejection and contempt of the goodness of God that a person practices when one does not accept the Lord's instruction to repent of what one is shown to repent.

Without the goodness of God, how can a person walk and distinguish between the path of truth and deceit? And without the goodness of God, expressed by His grace and mercy, how can anyone repent of what does not come from God for one's life?

The path of submission to the mighty hand of God is the option that brings life, even when the Lord guides a person to repentance that generates profound changes in one's understanding and attitude.

- James 4: 6 *But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."*
- 7 *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*
- 8 *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*
- 9 *Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.*
- 10 *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*
-

Considering the fundamental and indispensable function that the goodness of God has so that a person can move away from the paths contrary to the will of God for one's life and remain in line with the good, acceptable, and perfect will of the Lord, it is not surprising that one of the most famous psalms of the Scriptures worldwide ends with

words of exaltation and such expressive reference to the goodness of the Lord associated with His mercy, as follows:

*Psalms 23: 6 **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.***

In this way, **one of the central dangers of life is not only the inclination to aspects that are contrary to the will of the Lord, but also the resistance to what God offers people in His goodness and mercy, including for them to practice repentance.**

For the sake of passing fame, riches, and power, or because of the most diverse fascinations or seductions in the world, many people are inclined to despise the gift of God's goodness and give themselves up to pursuing the most varied gifts or achievements through their fleshly efforts. However, if a person disregards God's goodness, including when it leads to repentance, can there still remain anything that is indeed good for this individual?

What good can remain for a person who rejects the very source of goodness, mercy, and newness of eternal life?

Therefore:

*2 Corinthians 6: 1 **We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.***

*2 **For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.***

*Hebrews 3: 14 **For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,***
*15 **while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."***

*Revelation 2: 5 **"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."***

*Revelation 3: 18 **"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.***

*19 **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.***

*20 **Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.***

- 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.**
22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Ephesians 5: 11 **And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.**

12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

C5. The Gift of the Holy Spirit – Part 1

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."**

Amid all the subjects addressed in the series mentioned in the previous chapters, we always seek to include considerations about the participation of the Holy Spirit and the essential position that He represents in life in general, but also, particularly, in the life of every Christian.

Nevertheless, since in the referred materials we have placed a stronger emphasis on the Lord Jesus Christ as the Unique Foundation and the One Head of every Christian, it also seems essential to us to dedicate a larger and more focused space on the person of the Holy Spirit and the work the Lord has appointed Him to accomplish among those who believe in God.

Considering that we have addressed some topics about the Holy Spirit in a distributed manner in the other subjects mentioned, we understand that a more grouped and in-depth view of His action may contribute and be helpful for us to know more specifically about this immeasurable and essential gift offered to us by the Lord.

Here we highlight, then, that **in addition to His inseparable position in God, the Holy Spirit is a "gift" coming directly from the Heavenly Father and from the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, to all those who believe in Christ as the Lord of their lives.**

And, in turn, to say that the Holy Spirit is a "gift" from God is also to say that He is given as a gift or an offer from God Himself to those who receive Christ in their lives.

The Son of God, as the Messiah or the Christ, was the Heavenly Father's great gift to the world for justification, salvation, and newness of eternal life. The Holy Spirit, however, is the great gift of the Heavenly Father and also of the Son of God to those who have received the offer of salvation and the life granted by the Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, as the following texts teach us:

John 14: 26 **"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."**

John 15: 26 **"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me."**

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is a gift coming directly from the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to each individual who has become a child of God through the Lord Jesus Christ, as explained in another text below:

- Galatians 4: 3* **Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.**
- 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,**
- 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.**
- 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"**
-

Therefore, due to the essential condition that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” has for the life of a Christian, we come across the need to observe what the Scriptures have to teach us about it from the most diverse perspectives, also starting with the historical aspect of the promises that have been declared concerning His bestowal upon people on Earth.

And when we come to see the "gift of the Holy Spirit" from the historical perspective according to the Scriptures, we can also observe that John the Baptist was the man who probably most deeply understood the importance and the need for the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit to be fulfilled, and who perhaps also more longed for it to be fulfilled.

When John the Baptist pre-announced the coming of Christ, he always culminated his statements with the great act that the Lord Jesus Himself would accomplish when He would come to fulfill His ministry on Earth. John the Baptist had preached that the Lord Jesus is the Living Word, the light of God coming into the world, the perfect Lamb, the expected Bridegroom, the one to whom all primacy belongs, but he also preached, with enormous expectation, about the great work that the Christ was to fulfill concerning the Holy Spirit, which he described to us in the following ways:

Matthew 3: 11 **"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."**

- Mark 1: 1* **The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**
- 2 As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You."**
- 3 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'"**
- 4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.**
- 5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.**
- 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.**

- 7 **And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.**
- 8 **"I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."**

Luke 3: 15 **Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not,**

16 **John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**

- John 1: 15* **John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"**
- 16 **And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.**
- 17 **For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**
- 18 **No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.**
- 19 **Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"**
- 20 **He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."**
- 21 **And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."**
- 22 **Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"**
- 23 **He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD,"' as the prophet Isaiah said."**
- 24 **Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.**
- 25 **And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"**
- 26 **John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.**
- 27 **It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."**
- 28 **These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.**
- 29 **The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"**
- 30 **This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'**
- 31 **I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."**
- 32 **And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.**
- 33 **I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'**
- 34 **And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."**

***35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.
36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"***

So, John the Baptist's enormous expectation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit should, in no way, be overlooked or taken superfluously or lightly.

Except for the Lord Jesus Christ in His condition as Son of God and Son of Man, John the Baptist was simply regarded by the Lord Himself as the greatest man born of a woman. Moreover, he was a man who surrendered himself to the service of the Lord as no other had done before him, having his words, therefore, an extraordinary relevance or an immeasurable value.

Luke 7: 28 "For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Matthew 11: 11 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

In the eyes of God, John the Baptist was, then, more expressive than Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, and many others.

John the Baptist was not a sophisticated man in the eyes of the world, and he was never a man given to the luxury and riches of the world. On the contrary, John the Baptist was a simple man, but with a surrendered heart like no other to serve God as the faithful messenger who went ahead of the beginning of Christ's ministry as the Son of Man among human beings.

Matthew 11: 7 As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'

11 Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

John the Baptist was not a participant in the human elites, he was not a participant in the rulers who were in palaces, and he did not wear the long and luxurious clothes that the priests displayed in the temples, but he was chosen to be the herald and

announcer of who the Son of the Living God or the Christ awaited for centuries was. And until his death, John the Baptist dedicated himself to serving the Heavenly Father in the service of announcing the coming of the Messiah or Eternal Christ to the world.

John the Baptist never disputed the glory with Christ, nor did he want to retain for himself the glory that men conferred on him, for he knew very well what his place was and what the place of his Eternal Lord in his life was.

John 3: 28 "You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.'
29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.
30 He must increase, but I must decrease."

John the Baptist worked fully dedicated to the noblest and most distinguished goals for which a person could work. And he was a man who truly placed the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God first in his life by accomplishing what he was called by the Lord to accomplish.

Matthew 3: 1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,
2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

+

Matthew 21: 32 "For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him."

On the other hand, considering that John the Baptist, in the eyes of God, was such an important character in history, it is intriguing to see how little is described in the most diverse literature on Christian life about this John, his ministry, and, mainly, about his words. And this may even be one of the reasons why some people do not understand the relevance of what he announced about the "gift of the Holy Spirit" to be granted by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, is the little attention that many Christian pieces of literature weave on John the Baptist, in comparison to other characters who lived before Christ, caused by the fact of his simple lifestyle and for not having occupied positions of prominence in human eyes and only in the eyes of God? Could the little attention paid to him be caused by his example of lack of ambition for luxury? Is it because his example teaches us about the position of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glory that only belongs to Him? Or is it because he teaches us that all primacy belongs to Christ and not to any other human being?

Returning to the matter of the "gift of the Holy Spirit," we see that this man named John the Baptist, who served the Lord faithfully, did so out of love for the Heavenly Father, but also with an enormous expectation in his heart. And the hope that burned

in his chest, he announced it loud and clear to all who sought him out. He repeatedly said: ***He who is coming after me ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit or with the Holy Spirit and fire!***

But why did John the Baptist have such high expectations of the Holy Spirit?

The coming of the Holy Spirit upon each person was a promise given by God and declared many centuries before John the Baptist. A promise that was always associated with an enormous expectation of a remarkable life transition for all those who were waiting for the fulfillment of the prophecies or the words recorded in the Scriptures of God.

Through the Scriptures and faith in the Lord, John the Baptist knew that the only way for people in general to achieve a life according to the truth and the will of God was for them to receive, from God, the Holy Spirit over them or in them.

The Scriptures that John the Baptist believed and trusted were written by men and women inspired by the Holy Spirit. And those who declared and wrote them knew that the power that is in God to live according to His will could only come through the Spirit of God, who also came upon them to speak and write the words of the Lord's promises.

Strength for a victorious life over enemies, as in the case of Samson, also came to people through the presence of the Holy Spirit upon them.

Judges 13: 24 ***So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.***
25 ***And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.***

For John the Baptist, as for David, the presence of the Holy Spirit over an individual's life was like a synonym that the person had the mercy and strength of God in one's favor, and that one was reconciled with the Lord and Creator of one's life to be able to live and walk according to the will of the Lord. For them, the presence of the Holy Spirit over their lives was an evident mark that the very presence of God was with them in their path.

Let us look below at David's statement about the need to have the Holy Spirit with him:

Psalms 51: 10 ***Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.***
11 ***Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.***

The awareness that several of those who knew the Scriptures had about the essential need for a person to receive the “gift of the Holy Spirit” led them to understand that the fulfillment of this promise would be something extraordinarily sublime and immeasurable, for the coming and action of the Holy Spirit upon or in a person were like a certificate that this

person had been accepted by God and that "God Himself would be with this individual."

For example, for Mary, who became the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ in His condition as the Son of Man, the declaration that the Son of God would be begotten in her by the Holy Spirit was enough to bring peace to her heart about how the conception of the baby Jesus would come to happen in her despite her condition of being a virgin, as narrated below:

Luke 1: 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.

32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."

Matthew 1: 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."

Therefore, when John the Baptist announced the type of baptism that the Lord Jesus would carry out, he announced something that was greatly awaited for many years and even centuries.

Nevertheless, in the most diverse centuries, had the Holy Spirit not already come several times upon some people? And had even John the Baptist himself not already been filled with the Spirit of the Lord since he was in the womb of his mother Elizabeth?

What, then, was so special about John the Baptist's so expressive announcement that Christ would come to baptize people with the Holy Spirit?

What was different about the granting of the Holy Spirit this time compared to other times and ancient times?

The expectation of John the Baptist's announcement revolved around the fact that when the Messiah, the Christ, would come, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit would be available to all individuals of the people, and not

just to a few prophets and announcers of God's will. Just as John baptized in water all those who came to him in repentance, so it would be granted the possibility of all people to come to Christ to receive the long-awaited Spirit of God upon their lives.

John the Baptist's announcement declared that the Messiah would come to release the One who, day by day, would supply the victory and power that each human being lacked to live according to the will of God, and no longer in a sparse way as it was until then.

For years, centuries, and even millennia, human beings did try to live successful lives or with real and lasting victories through many and the most varied attempts in their natural strengths, but without actually obtaining the desired success. And over thousands of years, only a few experienced what many wanted. They were the ones who reached substantial victories because they did not believe in their own strength, but in the Lord, His power, and because the Spirit of the Lord came upon them.

Nevertheless, with the coming of the Messiah, the Eternal Christ, anyone and everyone who wanted to receive the Spirit of God would have the opportunity to do so, for the Lord Jesus would freely grant it to all those who would come to believe in Him and voluntarily receive Him.

From the perspective of John the Baptist, the privilege of the intense presence of the Holy Spirit that was upon Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, some judges, priests, Levites, kings and governors, such as King David and Nehemiah, some prophets, Ezra, Zerubbabel, and others, would now be available to people in general regardless of location or their social positions.

For this reason, for John the Baptist, it was an enormous privilege to be able to announce something as sublime as the promise that, together with the coming of the Messiah, a new time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit would also begin on the most diverse people in the world.

John the Baptist, then, was the bearer of the most special, unique, and powerful message that could be given to the people of the world about what was available to them for a truly victorious life.

The promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was like a synonym for a very different or new life for each individual and for the nation that had been waiting for its fulfillment for so many years, as also exemplified in the texts according to the prophets below:

Isaiah 32: 12 **People shall mourn upon their breasts For the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.**

13 On the land of my people will come up thorns and briers, Yes, on all the happy homes in the joyous city;

14 Because the palaces will be forsaken, The bustling city will be deserted. The forts and towers will become lairs forever, A joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of flocks,

15 Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, And the fruitful field is counted as a forest.

16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, And righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

- 17 **The work of righteousness will be peace, And the effect of
righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.**
- 18 **My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, In secure dwellings,
and in quiet resting places,**
- 19 **Though hail comes down on the forest, And the city is brought low
in humiliation.**

Isaiah 44: 3 **For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on
the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My
blessing on your offspring;**

4 **They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the
watercourses.'**

5 **One will say, 'I am the LORD'S'; Another will call himself by the
name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, 'The LORD'S,' And
name himself by the name of Israel.**

6 **"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the
LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is
no God."**

Joel 2: 28 **"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My
Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.
Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.**

29 **And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour
out My Spirit in those days.**

30 **And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood
and fire and pillars of smoke.**

31 **The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.**

32 **And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the
LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall
be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the
LORD calls."**

Ezekiel 36: 26 **"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within
you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a
heart of flesh.**

27 **I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My
statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them."**

Peter, an apostle of Christ, also recognized the importance of the promise prophesied for centuries and long-awaited by many when, after Christ's resurrection, he was astonished that this promise had also been extended to all peoples or that it had been given to equally be granted to the Gentiles, as summarized in the text below:

Acts 10: 43 **"To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name,
whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."**

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

Through the Holy Spirit who would come through Christ, the Messiah announced and officially presented to the world by John the Baptist, everyone would be granted the possibility of coming to know and understand the words of God in their own hearts, no longer remaining this restricted to just a few people.

Through the gift in reference bestowed from Heaven, that is, through the Holy Spirit, each person could come to know God's words for their own lives as they had never known before, and would have direct access to God's guidance and how to apply it in their own existence, for each one would have the Holy Spirit directly upon one's life or in one's heart, as also exposed in a series of other texts presented below:

Proverbs 1: 23 **"Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you."**

1 John 2: 27 **But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.**

Hebrews 8: 8 **Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD.**

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

11 None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

For John the Baptist, the baptism with the Holy Spirit or the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on everyone who would receive the Messiah in one's life, together with the forgiveness of sins through Christ being the perfect Lamb on behalf of all, were the greatest and most important firm pieces of evidence of who was the true and only Christ who was to come from God to

the world. These aspects were explicit evidence of the New Covenant pre-announced so many times throughout human history and also recorded in the Scriptures.

C6. The Gift of the Holy Spirit – Part 2

The benefits that come to a person from the presence of the Holy Spirit in one's life are innumerable, starting with being able to understand the will of God and obtain the Lord's discernment for the most diverse aspects with which one is faced, as also explained by Paul in the following narrative:

- 1 Corinthians 2: 9* **But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**
- 10* **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.**
- 11* **For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.**
- 12* **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.**
- 13* **These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**
- 14* **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**
- 15* **But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.**
- 16* **For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.**
-

Having the Holy Spirit in one's life or having access to personal fellowship with Him is like having access to the mind of the Lord and the wisdom of the Lord. For this reason, for many, the "gift of the Holy Spirit" was probably as expected and longed for as the Messiah Himself or, in some cases, probably even more than Christ Himself, as it is also today.

As we saw in the previous chapter, many of John the Baptist's listeners were indeed waiting for the Messiah. However, many were probably waiting for Him because He would also be the bearer of this gigantic gift of pouring out the Holy Spirit on everyone who wanted to receive it.

Similar to the example of the father who travels and his young child waits with expectation for his return, but not only for the father himself, but also for the gift that the father may bring for the child, there was also an enormous expectation that the Messiah would be revealed to grant the Holy Spirit to all the people who longed for Him.

From generation to generation of the people of Israel, the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit to all their children was repeatedly announced. And behold, suddenly a prophet named John appears, saying that the Messiah, who would fulfill that long-awaited promise, was coming, and even saying that He was already among the people.

John the Baptist knew what he was waiting for from God, and John the Baptist knew how essential the coming of the Holy Spirit was for each individual of the people. And suddenly, on a unique and memorable day, on one of the most central days of the entire existence of the universe, a young man, around thirty years old, arrives before John the Baptist, on whom the Holy Spirit descends like a dove and remains in His life forever to also share this same Spirit of the Lord with everyone who would come to believe in God's salvation and be willing to receive the Spirit of Eternal Grace.

What a glorious day John the Baptist saw when the Son of God, also as the Son of Man and as the perfect Lamb of God, received the Holy Spirit without measure so that He could pour it out in abundance on anyone who also desired this glorious presence of God, as we can see again in the text below:

- John 1: 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*
- 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*
- 30 This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'*
- 31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."*
- 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.*
- 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'*
- 34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."*
- 35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.*
- 36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"*
-

Who, then, in good conscience and with an understanding of the prophecies and the Scriptures like John, would also not be extremely happy and euphoric with the facts that unfolded before one's own eyes?

The nation of Israel had already gone through ups and downs countless times, and had never been able to establish itself in a condition of security, stability, and peace for long generations. Even in the days of John the Baptist, this nation was a prisoner of the Romans and under the bondage of high rates and taxes because it failed to establish itself in fidelity to the Lord.

Therefore, after thousands of years of struggles and attempts to establish themselves in victory, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, becoming empowered with the power of God, being immersed in the Holy Spirit, or being baptized with the Holy Spirit was, in a sense, one of the last hopes they still had to put an end to centuries of arduous history and repeated returns to the submission to bondage.

John the Baptist knew that, historically, only those who were strengthened and guided by the Spirit of the Lord in their lives had their testimonies established for their own and future generations. And placing ourselves within this perspective, in a way, we can understand that the expectation of some for the baptism of the Holy Spirit could even surpass the expectation for the Messiah Himself.

For many, the Messiah could even come to be seen only as the mediator and the bearer of the One who would bestow the Holy Spirit they longed for and expected. And once the Messiah gave them what they expected, they could even fall into the thought of putting their focus on the promise and no longer on the person of Christ.

Thus, if many people would obtain the “power of the Holy Spirit” already at the beginning of Christ's ministry as the Son of Man, many of them probably could even come to think that they would no longer need the Messiah, the Christ, for they would have already received everything that they felt they needed to live a victorious and powerful life. It is very likely that for some, this was the expectation due to which they wanted to receive the power of God through the Spirit of the Lord.

And looking at life from the perspective of this historic and growing expectation, but in some ways blurred by some, it is not surprising that people, in all generations, also yearn so much to obtain this “power of God” through the “gift of the Holy Spirit” even inappropriately, as was explicitly exposed by Simon in the narrative of Acts presented below:

- Acts 8: 14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,*
- 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.*
- 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*
- 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*
- 18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,*
- 19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."*
- 20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!*
- 21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.*
- 22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.*
- 23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."*
-

Therefore, still looking at some historical facts, we can observe another interesting point in the history of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh into the world concerning the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” which shows us that the Lord Jesus, despite the expectations of the people to see the announced promises fulfilled, did not begin His ministry by baptizing people with the Holy Spirit and with fire as John the Baptist had proclaimed. That is, despite the promises and announcements that Christ would impart the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus did not do so extensively, as expected, until He had risen from the dead in glory.

While the Lord exercised His ministry in the flesh on Earth, He announced the effects of the coming of the Holy Spirit for all those who received Him. However, He also taught that this coming, in the promised way, would come after Him, Jesus

Himself, first being glorified before the natural world as the dead and risen Christ, as well as before all the heavenly world.

Luke 9: 22 ... saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."

*John 7: 37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.
38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*

39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Through the Scriptures, we do not know for sure why John the Baptist, when he was in prison, sent some messengers to the Lord Jesus to ask him if He was the Christ or if they should expect another, according to the text below:

*Matthew 11: 2 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples
3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"*

But, perhaps, one of the main reasons that led John the Baptist to make the question above to Christ may have been precisely the fact that John the Baptist was not seeing the Lord Jesus practicing some of the principal aspects that had been prophesied about the Christ who would come.

The culmination point of John the Baptist's prophecy was that the Christ to come would baptize people with the Holy Spirit and fire. However, time was passing, John was on the verge of being condemned to death, and no sign of the announced baptism of the Holy Spirit was already being fulfilled.

It is not that the other works of the Lord Jesus were not admirable, but the work of evidence that He was the Christ who would baptize with the Holy Spirit was not being manifested until those days when John the Baptist had been imprisoned.

When John the Baptist sends messengers to ask the Lord Jesus about the ministry He was carrying out, we may see, in this context, a great virtue of John as a prophet.

The true prophet was not impressed only by some signs and works, but by the word that had been delivered to him to be announced. John, as God's messenger, who had come ahead of the Messiah, had explicitly proclaimed that the Lord Jesus would baptize people with the Holy Spirit, but this was not actually happening before John the Baptist's eyes or ears.

Would John the Baptist, then, have been hasty about who he declared would baptize people in general with the Holy Spirit and fire? Had he announced a prophecy

inappropriately or about someone who was not supposed to do so? Remembering here that an unfulfilled prophecy would also characterize it as a prophecy not propagated in truth.

Nevertheless, when we observe the answer of the Lord Jesus to John the Baptist, we can see that John's prophecy was true and that he was a true prophet of the Lord, but what probably needed to be adjusted in his understanding was the time and focus of what he was aiming to see as the fulfillment of the prophecy.

When asked by the messengers of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus gently answers the questions presented to Him. And through His answer, the Lord Jesus taught much to John the Baptist, but also to us as well.

Thus, among other teachings, the Lord Jesus showed John the Baptist that many times in life, there are stages that precede the manifestation of power for some specific victories that people so desire in their lives.

When answering the question of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus showed that He was first fulfilling other promises that had also been prophesied about His life, such as:

*Luke 4: 18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has
anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal
the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery
of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

The Lord Jesus did not come to destroy people and condemn them. And for this, it was necessary first to preach and manifest the Gospel of God, which is the power for the salvation of both the Jew and the Greek. And it was some of the aspects of the Gospel of the Kingdom that Christ came to preach and manifest that He used to answer John the Baptist's inquiry.

*Matthew 11: 4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the
things which you hear and see:
5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the
deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel
preached to them."*

Therefore, **the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in abundance upon a person is crucial or essential.** However, God's salvation for a person and understanding the Gospel of God are prior foundations so that the baptism or pouring out of the Holy Spirit into an individual's heart may occur for one's edification.

The abundant presence of the Holy Spirit is an essential gift to be received, but the establishment by grace, through faith, of a relationship with the One who works this baptism precedes or goes hand in hand with the very bestowal of the Lord's Spirit.

The preaching of the Gospel of God came to announce that Christ is the means for the remission of sins, but equally that Christ is also the One by whom the Holy Spirit is bestowed or released to act in the lives of those who believe in Him.

Thus, after answering John the Baptist that He came into the world first to preach and manifest the Gospel of God, the Lord Jesus Christ also sent the following words to John the Baptist:

Matthew 11: 6 "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

In the words of Christ, mentioned more above according to the Gospel of the Apostle John, **the Lord Jesus says that “those who believe in Him” are those who will receive rivers of living water through the presence of the Holy Spirit in them, thus declaring that the essence for a person receiving the presence of the Holy Spirit in one's life is first and foremost the Lord Jesus Christ and faith in Him.**

The Holy Spirit works in complete unity with the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is no way to dissociate one from the other.

Given this, **we understand that the Christian is not called to direct one's faith primarily to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit but to Christ, who is the One who, together with the Heavenly Father, grants the Spirit of the Lord to those who believe in Him and abide in Him.**

The “gift of the Holy Spirit,” also called the “gift of God,” is not to be given as a power to draw a Christian away from fellowship with and dependence on the Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, our Lord, King, and Savior.

The Holy Spirit is not an energy or a power that a Christian receives or inhales, and with which one can live with power and do as one pleases, even apart from God or fellowship with Christ Jesus.

We will see more details about this later, but **the Holy Spirit is one with the Heavenly Father and one with the Son of God. And as such, He fully or entirely respects the One who sends Him.**

Thus, **the fullness and power of the person of the Holy Spirit operate in favor of those who love God and walk according to His will, and not in favor of those who want Him just because of the power, but without remaining in fellowship and submission to the Lord who gave His life as the ransom for all human beings.**

There is no way by which we can receive the Messiah with joy only until we obtain the Holy Spirit and then think about discarding Christ, as if Christ no longer had a living, continuous, and present function in our lives. This simply is not part of the purpose of the kingdom of God and how the kingdom of the Lord works in granting the “gift of the Holy Spirit.”

There is also no way for a person to want the Holy Spirit without wanting Christ, for only to those who have Christ in their hearts that the Spirit of the Lord is granted. Although God's salvation is offered so that all

people may receive it, and, through it, the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” the “gift of the Holy Spirit” is only given to those who receive heavenly salvation to be made children of God in Christ Jesus.

Just as the gift of salvation is addressed to all people, so it is God's will for everyone to receive the Holy Spirit. However, just as the gift of salvation is only actually received by those who receive Christ as Lord, so, too, the “gift of the Holy Spirit” can only indeed be received by those who believe in Christ as the Scriptures say to believe in Him.

*John 14: 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."*

Still another aspect that affirms that the Holy Spirit works in total unity with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Heavenly Father is Christ's affirmation that the Holy Spirit only speaks to the children of God what He has heard and received from the Lord and the Heavenly Father to tell them.

Returning once again to John the Baptist's question to Christ and the answer given to him by the Lord, we have the impression that the Lord Jesus was teaching John the Baptist that a person's faith should first be channeled to Christ, the Anointed of God, and that, by continued trust in Him, all other needs would be supplied, including the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus is the one who was exalted above all things and is seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father. Therefore, it is from Him that comes all the newness of life granted to a Christian from the Heavenly Father through the Holy Spirit.

The Christian's life is given to an individual by the Lord through the Holy Spirit, but who first decides to grant this newness of life is always the Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

*John 11: 25 **Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.
26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"***

*Galatians 2: 20 **"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."***

*Romans 8: 11 **But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.***

We highlight here, then, that the fact that the Lord makes us alive through His Holy Spirit does not imply the abandonment of directing our faith primarily to Christ and the Heavenly Father.

Christ is the Christian's foundation and Head, acting in these positions or conditions through the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” not the other way around.

The Holy Spirit is sent by Christ to instruct, guide, and comfort us. And the witness which the Holy Spirit longs to bear to us, and through us to the world, is first of all about the Heavenly Father and about His Son Jesus Christ, who God gave for the justification, salvation, and life of everyone who believes in Christ as the one sent by the Heavenly Father.

We are probably being repetitive at this point. However, we understand that it is very significant to emphasize that people may want to seek the Holy Spirit intensely because of the power and gifts they long to find in Him without, however, yearning, at the same time, for the Lordship of Christ in their lives. And so, they may forget that these two factors are inseparable, as Christ Himself testified to us.

*John 15: 26 **"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.***

*27 **And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."***

*Acts 1: 8 **"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."***

Even if someone is empowered to a new condition of life through the Holy Spirit, the emphasis of a Christian's testimony about the newness of life one has received from God should remain on the One who gave Himself on the cross for the redemption of sinners, that is, the beloved Lord Jesus Christ. It is first in Christ that a person finds the way to the truth and eternal life that is in the Heavenly Father. It is from Christ that the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon an individual. And the Heavenly Father ordained that it be so. For this reason, the Holy Spirit, in line with the Eternal Father, works salvation through the announcement of the good news of Christ and the Gospel of Christ in all those who believe in Christ Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

The Lord Jesus Christ then complemented His response to John the Baptist with the following words: **“blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”**

In other words, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” or the baptism with the Holy Spirit is not given so that the sovereign position of Christ in the

life of a Christian is put aside or in the second place. And when there is some proposition that the pursuit of the Holy Spirit would be even more important than the relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not indeed the Spirit of the Lord that presents such a proposition.

1 John 5: 6 This is He who came by water and blood, ——Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.

8 And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.

10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

1 John 4: 1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

Moreover, yet as for confessing the Lord Jesus as the Christ coming from God, we saw, in the subject on The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ, that confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God who came in the flesh into the world also implies in confessing that He was born of a woman, lived without sin in the world, lived among human beings, died on the cross of Calvary, was buried, rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father, and is already the Christ, the King Anointed of the Righteousness and Peace of God, and not the one who will only come to be so in a distant future.

Thus, the testimony of the Holy Spirit concerning the Lord Jesus Christ is that He is already enthroned above all power, dominion, principality, and might, whether in Heaven or on Earth, and that the Lord Jesus does not need to return to the world to be the King of all things, for He already is in the present and will be eternally. Christ will return, yes, a second time in the air, but to take home those who are His and to establish God's eternal judgment on all human beings.

1 John 5: 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Therefore, **to bear witness to what Christ has already accomplished and what He already is in the present, the Lord sends His Spirit to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, as well as to strengthen all those who believe in Christ Jesus as Lord, Redeemer, High Priest and Eternal King of Righteousness and Peace.**

Despite having insistently sought the Holy Spirit, many people have lacked a more evident or expressive manifestation of the Spirit of the Lord in their lives. And in many cases, this aspect may be occurring precisely because they are not placing Christ, the One who designates the Holy Spirit, as the Lord and Head of their lives, making themselves in need of returning, time after time, to the basic principles of the Christian faith and thus delaying the enjoyment of the “gift of God” which is so abundantly available to them in the Lord.

In the next chapter, then, we will seek to go a little further on some other specific purposes described in the Scriptures for which the Lord wants to grant us the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” We would like, however, to end this present chapter by expressing once again our desire and prayer that every Christian could also be awakened to have, first of all, one's heart inclined to the sovereignty of the Heavenly Father and the very Son of God, the perfect Lamb, since they are the ones who bestow “the gift of the Holy Spirit” on the children of God.

Thus, **one of the most objective ways to know what is the first and primary purpose of the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” for those who receive Christ Jesus as Lord, is to know what the purpose of the Lord Jesus for their lives is.**

It is always good to bear in mind that the "gift of the Holy Ghost" is given to us, first or foremost, to help us live and walk in the newness of life for which we were bought by the blood of Christ Jesus shed on the Cross of Calvary, as Paul describes so sublimely in this last text presented in this chapter:

*Romans 8: 1 **There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.***

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

C7. The Gift of the Holy Spirit – Part 3

A. Fundamental Purposes Associated with the Granting of the Gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians

Continuing the theme of the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” we can see that in the relationship of Christians with the Holy Spirit there are, among others, at least four fundamental aspects to be known by them:

- ⇒ 1st) The strengthening of the inner man generated by the Holy Spirit;
- ⇒ 2nd) The very relationship with the Holy Spirit;
- ⇒ 3rd) The fruit of the Holy Spirit;
- ⇒ 4th) The gifts granted by God through the Holy Spirit.

Each of the four points mentioned in the previous paragraph expresses, then, a facet of essential value in the growth of the understanding of the relevance of the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” as well as the extension or breadth of this same gift in the life of a Christian.

Thus, with the aim of approaching each of the points mentioned above more specifically, we will seek to present them in the sequence also in four distinct topics.

B. The Strengthening of the Inner Man

In the previous chapter, we began to see that the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” or the making available of this gift on the part of the Heavenly Father and Christ so that the Holy Spirit may dwell in the hearts of those who believe in the Lord Jesus, is granted primarily so that the Christian may have a firm witness in one's heart of who one's Lord is and to keep oneself in growing fellowship with Him.

When, however, we delve deeper into the Scriptures about the work and purpose of the “gift of the Holy Spirit” towards us, we can advance in the understanding that there are still several other purposes, but also that, in the same Scriptures, there is the description of several aspects related to the ways and means by which the Holy Spirit works to establish in us the testimony and Lordship of Christ, as well as other purposes.

Thus, **one of the central aspects highlighted in the Lord's word about the work of the Holy Spirit in those who believe in Christ is related to His work in what is called the “inner man” of a Christian. And this, with the goal of edifying and strengthening the “inner man” so that one may know and deepen oneself more in the virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ,** as explained in the following text:

Ephesians 3: 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,
17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height,
19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In previous themes of the Systemic Teaching about Christian Life, we have already seen that the “inner man,” in short, is “the spirit of a Christian” that is made alive by Christ when a person receives Him as Lord of one's life.

The Scriptures also call the quickening of a person's spirit or granting a made alive spirit, through Christ, the “new birth,” which we have also covered in previous topics and is once more covered more extensively in the series on The New Creature in Christ.

In the subject entitled Work Out Your Own Salvation, we also address the importance of a Christian's “inner man” being built and strengthened according to what is pertinent to the “inner man” to grow and become established.

Nevertheless, something that seems to us still necessary to approach more closely, concerning some fundamental aspects of the growth and establishment in the Christian life, is the aspect referring to the conditions or with which strength a person can fortify one's “inner man,” for the “inner man” is eminently a spiritual being, and not a carnal or so-called “natural man.”

John 3: 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

If, on the one hand, it is crucial for a Christian to understand that one has received in Christ the “inner man” who is called to grow, to develop, and to be established in the Lord, on the other hand, it is also crucial for a Christian to receive the enlightenment of understanding on how or by what power or help one may accomplish what is appropriate for this “inner man.” And this last aspect is one of the main reasons for a Christian to become familiar with the “gift of the Holy Spirit” and to know this gift more deeply.

As we have already mentioned in each of the several topics cited above, a Christian is not called to grow in one's “inner man” by one's own strength or by one's merely natural effort. Instead, a Christian is called to grow in one's “inner man” according to God's cooperation towards him or her, which has in the Holy Spirit the great practical expression of help towards those who choose Christ as their Lord.

Therefore, **a Christian is called to be strengthened by the power of God through the working of the Holy Spirit in one's “inner man” so that one can grow in Christ Jesus and the diversity of the greatness of His love.**

The Holy Spirit is given by God to enlighten a Christian's understanding of the greatness of Christ and His love. And this is for a Christian always to glorify the sovereignty of Christ. However, the Spirit of the Lord is also granted to give strength and power so that the Christian can be supported in the understanding and growth in the greatness of Christ towards one's life.

The Holy Spirit is the agent of the Lord who strengthens each one of the Christians with the power of God so that they can understand what is made available to them in Christ, but also to help them to live and walk in the sublimity of what is offered to them in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 2: 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Galatians 5: 16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Galatians 5: 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Just as the Heavenly Father, through the Holy Spirit, taught Christ all things when the Lord was on Earth also as the Son of Man, as well as, through the Holy Spirit, He upheld and empowered Christ to carry out the

heavenly will in everything and at all times, so similarly it is also with the “gift of the Holy Spirit” towards those who believe in Christ and who have Him as Lord of their lives.

The work of the Holy Spirit towards those who, in Christ Jesus, are constituted children of God is not related to something vague, sporadic, abstract, or impersonal. On the contrary, the action of the Holy Spirit towards each Christian is a living and individualized work that consolidates and strengthens the “inner man” more and more, if the person who receives the Spirit of the Lord longs for it and allows it.

Romans 8: 14 ***For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

The action of the Holy Spirit in the life of a child of God is the way defined by the Lord in which He generates in that child the inner firmness in faith, hope, and love of God.

The Holy Spirit, granted as a gift to the heart of every person who receives Christ as the Lord of one's life, is given to the children of God to help them in their prayers to God, to know how to ask according to the will of the Lord, and to achieve this will in their lives. For this reason, it is so necessary that, from the beginning of the Christian life, the Christian becomes aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in one's life.

Romans 8: 26 ***Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.***

27 ***Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.***

In another text, which we repeat below, the Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that the Spirit is given to the children of God to guide them into all truth and to teach them everything they need to know from the Heavenly Father and Christ for their lives.

John 16: 13 ***“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”***

Additionally, yet another essential aspect that we believe needs to be reemphasized about the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” when we see it associated with the function of strengthening the “inner man,” is that the bestowal of this gift to the children of God is not foreseen only for some supposedly “special” Christians or who reached some exceptional levels of a supposed differentiated spirituality, for this would be

inconsistent since it is only by the Holy Spirit that a Christian can grow in one's spiritual condition.

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is foreseen to be given to every Christian from the moment of one's “new birth” to help this Christian to grow in one's condition of “inner man” and to be empowered to grow according to the will of God in other areas of one's life.

Many Christians who have grown in their faith may not even be aware of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, but even if they do not know the Holy Spirit by this specific name, all the real growth they have had in the "inner man" was accomplished by the Lord through His Spirit.

Nevertheless, when a Christian who had not a more specific knowledge regarding the ‘gift of the Holy Spirit’ starts to hear about the Holy Spirit and some key actions of the Spirit of the Lord towards one's life, one can have an even more intense growth and with more understanding, making one's growth more consistent and continuous.

*Jude 1: 20 **But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,**
21 **keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.***

A Christian can pray to the Lord according to the needs that one's five natural senses perceive. However, to grow more objectively or consistently, one can advance further in one's prayer life and begin to be guided by the Holy Spirit to understand what one should actually pray to God, which, in turn, can also lead him or her to be edified more intensely in the Lord.

Through the Holy Spirit, a Christian can be led to ask well and rightly before God. And even when one lacks words, the Holy Spirit can intercede for this person with groanings which cannot be uttered or words and tongues that express what is necessary to be presented in prayer before the Lord.

*1 Corinthians 14: 15 **What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.***

With enlightened understanding, the Christian can express what the Spirit of the Lord makes one understand to be the will of God and according to which one should pray. However, also aided by the Holy Spirit, the Christian can pray beyond what one understands and sees for the will of God to be established in one's life.

Furthermore, **when the “inner man” is strengthened by the Holy Spirit, a Christian also becomes established in delighting in the law of the Lord. And everyone who delights in the law of the Lord meditates on it continually and achieves victories in the Lord.**

*Romans 7: 22 **For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.***

Psalms 1: 2 **But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.**

3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

We understand that it is worth emphasizing at this point, as already widely seen in several other topics, that the mention of the “Law of the Lord” is not a mention regarding the “Law of Moses,” for the Christian is never called to submit to the Law of Moses, nor the Holy Spirit is given to strengthen a Christian to keep the commandments according to the Order of Aaron, the First Priesthood, or the First Covenant.

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is not granted to a Christian to live and walk in “the oldness of the letter of Moses” or some other law similar to it.

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is granted to Christians so that one can live and walk, by the Spirit of God, in the commandments and directions of the Law of Christ, the Law of Liberty, given in a living way by the Lord for Christians to walk in the “newness of the Spirit.”

Romans 7: 6 **But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.**

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's heart is the way established by God so that this Christian can be taught and strengthened to live and walk according to God's will.

Thus, through the Holy Spirit, the Lord makes provision for the Christian to know, understand, and walk in the truth and according to the will manifested by God in the New Covenant and related Scriptures.

Ezekiel 36: 26 **"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**

27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

28 Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God."

Also in a text with words uttered explicitly by the Lord Jesus, Christ declares to us that His words are spirit and life, as follows:

John 6: 63 **"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."**

At yet another time, as we mentioned earlier, the Lord Jesus Christ also said that whoever drinks from the water He gives will see it becoming in oneself a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.

John 4: 14 "But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

In this way, we saw, a little above, that the “blessed” individual is compared to the tree planted by the stream or rivers of waters, but we also saw that He who gives us the living word to meditate on it day and night, the water that strengthens our spirit and gives life, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, what we want to highlight here, in addressing the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” is that the means by which the Lord Jesus Christ gives us His word, so that we can understand it in a living way and apply it to our personal life in all circumstances, is the Holy Spirit.

Returning, therefore, to the example of comparing man to the tree planted by the rivers of water, we can understand that the Holy Spirit, in a sense, is like the riverbed through which the water of Christ flows and reaches the hearts of those who believe in the Lord and seek to live and walk according to His will.

Although the living word, the word of truth that supplies the thirsty and feeds the hungry, is delivered as a living word directly from the throne of the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ seated at the right hand of the Father, it is through the Holy Spirit that this word is presented in truth and life to the addressees who receive it as coming from the Lord, as the text we repeat below also teaches us:

John 16: 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Therefore, **whoever receives the Holy Spirit and has a living and continuous relationship with Him is, through the Holy Spirit, connected to the source of living waters, to the fountain of the river that emanates from the throne of God, and of Him who is seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father.**

*Revelation 22: 1 **And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.***

The Holy Spirit is the One appointed by God to truthfully teach the hearts of Christians about this living water that the Lord addresses to them. And the Holy Spirit Himself is also the bearer of the name of the

Spirit of Truth and who in no way or under any circumstances teaches the words of the Lord in a distorted or corrupted way.

Let us see once again the step-by-step that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself explained to us so that we can be planted next to the streams or rivers of living water, as follows:

*John 7: 37 **On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.***

Reviewing, then, this last text above, we can see reaffirmed that the one who grants water from the rivers and that grants living water to the thirsty heart is the Lord Jesus Christ. He Himself says, "***If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.***"

This water, however, is granted to a person when certain aspects are fulfilled, as follows:

- ⇒ 1st) When the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified as the Son of the Living God, the risen Son of Man, and the source of life;
- ⇒ 2nd) When a person believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of one's life;
- ⇒ 3rd) When a person willingly receives the action of the Holy Spirit as the one who delivers life, the living word, or the living water offered and granted by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The living water, which comes from the throne of God, delivered through the Holy Spirit, makes a Christian like a tree planted by the rivers of water. Unfortunately, however, there are people who want the power of the Holy Spirit, want His coming, but do not want to surrender in humility to the source of all living water, namely: the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore:

Revelation 21: 6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."

1 Peter 3: 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ...

The Heavenly Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit always work in perfect unity, and there is no shadow of variation in God. Therefore, there is no

way for a person to receive the true word for the edification of the “inner man,” through the Holy Spirit, if one refuses to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Scriptures present Him.

On the other hand, there is also no way for a person to receive the word of Christ for one's life, as a living word, without receiving it through the Holy Spirit.

As we saw at the beginning of this material, John the Baptist said that no one can receive anything that is not given from above. And the Holy Spirit, as the one designated by the Heavenly Father and the Son to inhabit the heart of the Christian, should always be honored, respected, heard, obeyed, and loved, for it is through His Spirit that the Lord imparts to the Christian all the life that one needs to live and walk in Spirit and Truth.

Through the Holy Spirit, the Lord can always dwell in the heart of the person who surrenders to Christ. And this, to accomplish in an individual the edification and growth that the Heavenly Father wants a Christian to achieve as a child of God.

The Holy Spirit is the complete and perfect representative given to us by God to strengthen, comfort, and guide us into all truth in all things we need. And the living relationship with the person of the Holy Spirit is essential for us to receive all that comes to us from God the Father and God the Son.

Thus, whoever opens one's heart to receive the work of the Spirit of God in one's life, receives God the Father and God the Son.

But whoever despises the Holy Spirit also despises God the Father and God the Son.

Matthew 12: 31 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.

32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."

In this way, after the resurrection of Christ, the Holy Spirit is the main envoy of God the Father and the Eternal Son of the Lord to people in the world. For this reason, what the Lord says about the one He sends also applies to the Holy Spirit, and mainly to Him, according to the text below:

John 13: 20 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

John 16: 7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. 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."

And to conclude this topic, we would like to propose once again the reading of the text of Ephesians 3, quoted at its beginning, noting especially the participation of the Holy Spirit in the edification of our “inner man” and to what kind of growth He leads us in Christ and the Heavenly Father.

Ephesians 3: 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,
17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height,
19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,
21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The Holy Spirit was sent by the Lord Jesus so that Christ might be glorified. And this, that through Christ and the Body or Church of Christ, the Heavenly Father may be exalted in all generations and forever and ever.

The “inner man” strengthened by the Holy Spirit, then, is the one who comes to have a much sharper and more accurate perception of the Lord by whom one was called to a new life according to the New Covenant. And by this, one is strengthened that one may, whether by words or deeds, glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and the Heavenly Father in one's life.

A Christian's testimony of Christ and the Heavenly Father, strengthened in the Christian by the Holy Spirit, is also a means of cooperation with the Christian's strengthening and victories because it is the way of truth and true eternal life.

1 John 5: 6 This is He who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.

Jeremiah 17: 7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD.
8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

The person blessed in God is the one who delights in the word of the Lord and who inclines one's heart to the voice of the Holy Spirit, through whom the Lord Himself instructs His children in a living way for the present and also eternal life.

Praised, then, be the Lord for the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” through whom we can always have the roots of the “inner man” accessing the river of living waters that emanate from the highest and sublime throne in all the universe, the throne of the only Living God and Creator of the Heavens, the Earth, and everything in them.

Isaiah 57: 15 ***For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.***
(NKJV+AV)

C. The Direct and Personal Relationship with the Holy Spirit

To redeem or free us from subjection to sin and condemnation to eternal death, the Heavenly Father, from whom every good gift comes, gave us first His Son. But, in His beloved Son, the Heavenly Father also gives us His Holy Spirit.

Although the eternal foundation of the Christian is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Christian life is impossible to be experienced if it is not through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Holy Spirit granted to our hearts is the gift of the Heavenly Father and the Son for us to live the life of the Father and the Son even while we are still in the present world.

A Christian who sincerely wants to live the Christian life, but lacks knowledge about the gift of the Holy Spirit, will tend to undertake an enormous effort in the attempt to live it. And this may become a stressful and even exhausting effort, for the true inner joy that comes from the Kingdom of God, and strengthens a Christian, is granted to a Christian through the Spirit of the Lord, as the following texts teach us:

Nehemiah 8: 10(b) ...for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

Romans 14: 17 ...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Zechariah 4: 6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts."

The Lord Jesus Christ strongly warned His first disciples not to try to undertake the testimony about Him merely through their own strength. Instead, He urged them to wait until the moment they received from heaven the Holy Spirit, and through Him, received God's power in their lives.

*Luke 24: 48 "And you are witnesses of these things.
49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

Under the theme The Gospel of the Power of God, we have seen that the power of God is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. However, it is through the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus Christ comes to dwell in the heart of the Christian for the granting of His power and the manifestation of the testimony of His light.

God's mystery to grant us life and power, which was hidden in the Lord for centuries to be revealed at the right moment, is Christ. But it is by the Holy Spirit that Christ manifests Himself with His power in us and through us.

Colossians 1: 26 ... the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Acts 1: 8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The work of the Holy Spirit in us is the very extension of Christ's work in us. And the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in us is the very extent of Christ's abiding in us, the hope of glory, so that we can also dwell "in Christ." That is, so that we can also walk and live "in Christ" or "in the Holy Spirit."

Thus, after a person understands that one is called by the Heavenly Father to have Christ as the Lord of one's life and that the Lord Jesus exercises this lordship through the Holy Spirit, and yet that the Holy Spirit always acts in perfect harmony with Christ, the Christian may also advance with more understanding for a more specific relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Knowing the Holy Spirit, and knowing that it is through Him that the Lord guides a Christian in all aspects of one's life, is essential to live and walk according to God's will and no longer according to the natural man or the creation, which the Scriptures call, respectively, living and walking guided by the Spirit or living and walking driven by the flesh, which oppose each other.

And guided by the flesh, a person will not be able to prevail in the good and will come across the reality expressed by Paul in Romans 7, as follows:

Romans 7: 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Nevertheless, **if a person is guided by the Holy Spirit, or what is also called to live and walk in the Spirit, one receives the grace and power of God to live and to walk according to God's will. And so, then, one can prevail in good and cease to be a wretched person.**

Galatians 5: 16 ***I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.***

17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Romans 8: 12 ***Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.***

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Despite the theme of living and walking in Christ, or according to the Spirit of God, has been addressed in a specific chapter of the subject on The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ, as well as under the theme The Core Principle of Life for a Christian and throughout the series Walking in Newness of Life, what we would like to emphasize specifically in the current topic is that **every Christian should know about the Holy Spirit and how to relate to Him continuously, for it is by the Holy Spirit that the Lord appropriately and perfectly sustains the Christian to live and walk in Christ.**

Given that the Scriptures declare that the Holy Spirit is granted as a “gift,” the Christian should be aware that He is given by the heavenly Father and, as such, He is a perfect, complete, and holy “gift,” or, yet, without any defect, imperfection, weakness, or deformity.

There is nothing that the Holy Spirit does or instructs a Christian to do that is not perfect and for the good of the Christian who welcomes the Spirit of the Lord in one's heart.

Another essential aspect that needs to be very well observed by Christians, although this should be obvious, is that the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal energy or power. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit is a “being” that has the power and the strength to grant and share life, as well as even stop giving life to a person.

Job 33: 4 ***The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.***

Job 34: 14 ***If He should set His heart on it, If He should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath,***
15 All flesh would perish together, And man would return to dust.

When the Lord Jesus said that He and the Heavenly Father would send the Holy Spirit to those who would believe in Him, the Lord was also saying that they would send “someone” who had the attributes of God and who, like the Heavenly Father and the Son, was “someone” with whom Christians could establish personal fellowship. An aspect for which the following texts also point out:

John 14: 26 ***"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."***

2 Corinthians 13: 14 ***The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.***

The “Helper,” mentioned above, is not a sense of comfort that God sends to the hearts of people, is not a feeling of courage and strength, but it is a “being” that God sends us to work in us consolation and the strengthening which come from the heavenly kingdom.

“To whom,” “He,” and “the Helper” are expressions that denote a living “being” with specific characteristics, not something.

Therefore, **just as the first disciples of the Lord Jesus had fellowship with the Lord and needed to learn to know Him and relate to Him in a personal and living way, so every Christian is also called to learn to relate to “the person” of the Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit speaks, comforts, guides, instructs, teaches, saddens, resists, might be jealous, might be insulted, and present oneself willing to help Christians in all areas of their lives.

On the other hand, **since the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force thrown over an individual, He respects the individuality and the limits that people set in one's relationship with Him.**

Let us see below some texts about the Holy Spirit and some aspects of the relationship of the Spirit of the Lord with Christians:

Hebrews 3: 7 ***Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice,***

8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, ...

James 4: 5 ***Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?***

Matthew 10: 19 ***"But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;
20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."***

Ephesians 1: 13 ***In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ...***

Hebrews 10: 29 ***Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?***

Ephesians 4: 30 ***And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.***

John 14: 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."***

Thus, **priceless and sublime is the grace also concerning granting the Spirit of the Lord to all Christians. They are given the privilege of receiving and hosting the Holy Spirit in themselves to the point of being called the "sanctuary or temple of God" precisely also because they have the Spirit of the Lord.**

1 Corinthians 3: 16 ***Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?***

Each Christian is given the privilege of hosting the one who is given from heaven to be one's Helper in all one's new life in Christ. The Holy Spirit is given to the Christian to dwell with him or her all the time, whether the Christian is sleeping, working, traveling, announcing the gospel, or at any other moment of one's life.

The Heavenly Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit to help each Christian in all areas and aspects of one's life, including in all one's weaknesses. However, mentioning this point again, **since the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian refers to a gift offered from heaven, and not to be forcibly imposed on people, the personal position of each individual concerning what is offered from the Lord is decisive for the relationship with the Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit is not given to the Christian to dwell only around the Christian, but to dwell in the Christian, to dwell in the heart of the one who received Christ Jesus as the Lord. And since the Spirit is granted in the heart, not only externally, if the Christian does not neglect Him, nothing can interpose one's relationship with the Holy Spirit, for He dwells in the Christian, that is, in one's heart.

*Galatians 4: 6 **And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"***

For a Christian to relate to God, through the Holy Spirit, it is not necessary to go up to the hill or a mountain, to go down in the cave, to make long prayer vigils in places of retreat, to go to religious temples, because the Spirit of God dwells at all times in the Christian's heart and is ready to speak to, teach, comfort, and help everywhere and all the time those who long for the Lord's direction in their lives.

As long as a person keeps the communication with the Holy Spirit open, one maintains, in one's own heart, personal and direct communication also with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Heavenly Father everywhere.

From the perspective of fellowship with the Holy Spirit, let us see, then, once again, the two texts below:

*John 16: 13 **"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.***

*14 **He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.***

*15 **All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."***

*1 Corinthians 2: 9 **But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."***

*10 **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.***

*11 **For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.***

*12 **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.***

*13 **These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.***

*14 **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***

- 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.**
16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.
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The relationship with the Holy Spirit of God goes beyond the relationship of natural understanding. And it is something extremely relevant to be experienced or lived daily.

The world is full of voices, propositions, and suggestions. However, the most important or essential voice to be heard all over the world by a person, the most precious sound that exists over the entire face of the Earth, is the voice of the Holy Spirit, for He is the only one who can lead a person to the understanding of what really matters for one's present life and especially for one's eternal life.

- John 16: 7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. 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.**
8 And when He 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."
-

These last verses, regarding convincing the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, have already been addressed under the themes of The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ and The Gospel of God's Righteousness. And so, we will not go further about them again at this point. We would like, however, to point out that the Holy Spirit is the only voice that can make a person know and recognize one's own sins. And when this is performed by the aid of the Holy Spirit, He also always does so to offer the gift of righteousness, who is Christ as the Redeemer and salvation to every sinner, and so that, in the eternal judgment, a person may receive eternal life instead of eternal condemnation or perdition.

Returning to the relationship aspect, **since the Holy Spirit is given to the Christian to dwell in one's heart constantly, He also is the expression or the presence of God with which the Christian should have continual fellowship.**

The Holy Spirit is always and everywhere in a Christian's life, something that no individual is able to accomplish on behalf of another, no matter how close one might be to another person.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in an individual's life is so vast or comprehensive that it is even highly challenging to write examples about it. For this reason, the purpose of describing some considerations in this topic about life in the Spirit is not intended to present a specific or exhaustive list of definitions of the person of the Holy Spirit or of actions He performs. The goal here is mainly aimed at cooperating to awaken the hearts of readers to the existence of the Holy Spirit, and so that, once awakened to this, they begin to practice a personal and individual relationship with the Holy Spirit, for He is the One who will help them to establish a firm and continuous

relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who sent the Spirit of the Lord to those who believe in Him.

Just as the set of details of a Christian's life is immeasurable, so is the set of details of the relationship with the Holy Spirit, as He is granted by the Heavenly Father to be with the individual who receives Him in everything. However, there is a practical issue here that we want to underline again, and that is the fact that not all who yearn for God are aware of the wonderful presence of the Holy Spirit in them and His willingness to help them in everything.

Acts 19: 2 ... he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Therefore, the great gift of salvation to be revealed by the coming of the Messiah to the world that John the Baptist looked forward to, in addition to having his name written in the book of life and forgiveness provided by the Lamb of God, was the "gift of the Holy Spirit" indwelling with every person who longed for a life according to the will of God and that "*in Christ Jesus*" became and becomes a reality for those who remain in Him.

In this way, since fellowship with the Holy Spirit is offered to each heart that individually believes in Christ as Lord, and not imposed, the relationship with Him is also carried out increasingly by the diligence or dedication of a person towards this relationship. It is clear that on the part of the Holy Spirit, the relationship with Him is already perfect, but on the part of the Christian, this fellowship needs to be learned in a continuous and growing way.

If a person willingly receives the "gift of God," the "Holy Spirit," and opens one's heart to what the Holy Spirit has to teach and do in one's life, He will work wonders in that person. Wonders that even go beyond what we can ask or think, for He will work so that the will of the Son of God and the Heavenly Father in this life may be known and fulfilled.

We, then, emphasize here again that **it is through the Holy Spirit that God works His power in us.**

Ephesians 3: 20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ...

Romans 15: 13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, when the Lord Jesus Christ also said that He would give us His peace, and not give it as the world gives it, He was not saying that this peace was just a feeling of peace, but that it would be personified to us by the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

John 14: 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Romans 8: 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded (or inclined to the Spirit) is life and peace.

John 14: 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."

The peace of Christ, the peace of soul and spirit, the peace that should rule in our hearts, the peace that enables us to achieve sobriety of mind to discern what is good and what is not appropriate for us, is the Lord's divine presence in our hearts also expressed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

Colossians 3: 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Ephesians 4: 1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

The living and continuous relationship with the Holy Spirit guides us to victory against the flesh, sin, the world, and the power of darkness, but it is also through the relationship with Him that we can keep ourselves in peace with Christ and with the other fellow believers of the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The presence of the Spirit of the Lord in the hearts of Christians also generates peace because the Holy Spirit is the Eternal Seal of the fulfillment of the historic promise made by the Heavenly Father to Abraham and of the prophecy of John the Baptist about the Son of God that

was long awaited and had been uttered with such boldness and expectation by the messenger who went before the Lord.

Galatians 3: 14 ... that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Ephesians 1: 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ...

Additionally, **the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a Christian is the seal, mark, or guarantee that an individual has truly become a child of God and that one belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ.** However, if someone does not have the Holy Spirit, it is because one has not yet really known God and has not yet become God's child through faith in Christ, lacking, in this way, the reconciliation and relationship with the Lord for which all people are called.

Romans 8: 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."
16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

Romans 8: 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

The relationship with the Holy Spirit is so crucial because it is also through Him that a person can know whether one is or still remains in Christ or in God.

Thus, **remaining in the relationship with the Spirit of God evidences that a person abides in the fellowship with the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

1 John 3: 24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

A person who resists the voice of the Holy Spirit also resists the voice of God. And although God counts on the cooperation of people to announce

His Gospel to the world, the primordial one sent by the Lord to speak to people's hearts and enliven the word of the Lord for them is the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit can speak through people to other people. And for this reason, it is important to discern when He uses others to preach and announce the will of God. However, the one who is already a Christian is called not to limit oneself to being taught by others, for every Christian is granted to develop a growing relationship with the Holy Spirit and can speak with Him directly and at any time and place, which no other person can provide for another.

The Holy Spirit is the “anointing of God” that dwells in the Christian's heart, and only the Spirit of the Lord can teach an individual at all times, places, and in all things. People may teach others from the Scriptures that speak of the Spirit of the Lord as the “gift of God to guide their lives.” However, ultimately, direction and teaching in precisely how to apply the Scriptures in one's life is an attribute that the Lord assigned to the Holy Spirit to carry out in the life of each Christian. (An aspect also addressed in the subject entitled Knowing about God or Knowing God).

- 1 John 2: 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.*
- 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.*
- 22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.*
- 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*
- 24 Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.*
- 25 And this is the promise that He has promised us, eternal life.*
- 26 These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you.*
- 27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.*
- 28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.*
- 29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.*
- 3: 1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*
-

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is so expressive and even indescribable in many ways because this gift is the indwelling of the immeasurable God in our hearts.

As we already mentioned, the “gift of the Holy Spirit” is given through a good and perfect gift from the Father to His children and from the Firstborn and Eternal Brother to His brethren.

Acts 2: 29 Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

30 Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,

31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

Luke 11: 9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish?

12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

So, the relationship with the Holy Spirit is paramount because the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person's heart is the beginning of "the times of true and lasting refreshing in one's life."

Acts 3: 19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

21 whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Finally, the Holy Spirit gives the Christian a voluntary spirit to live in the love of the Lord, by which even the spirit of doubt, fear, and bondage can be resisted and overcome.

The presence of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of righteousness and reconciliation with the Lord. It is the presence of the kingdom of God in a person's heart. And for this, it brings rest, joy, and newness of life to the broken and contrite heart.

Romans 14: 17 ...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Nehemiah 8: 10(b) Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

Romans 8: 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 5: 1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;
4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.
5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1 John 4: 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Romans 8: 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."
16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

D. The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5: 16 **I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**

17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,

20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

When a Christian is awakened to the greatness of “the gift of God” in allowing the Holy Spirit to dwell in one's heart, one too may become more aware that this presence is continuous in both time and place. And so there is no reason why the Holy Spirit should not guide a Christian “Always and in All Things.” (One of the specific themes of the series *The Life of the Christian in the World*).

Nevertheless, **living or having a relationship with the Holy Spirit not only produces differences in the instructions for a Christian's life, but can also produce remarkable changes in the Christian and in how one performs what one does.**

One of the central aspects of the relationship with the Holy Spirit is that it generates profound and substantial changes also in the person who exposes oneself to the presence and direction of the Spirit of the Lord and, consequently, in how one understands the will of God and acts in one's life.

By the Spirit of God, fleshly works can be mortified, as well as spiritual and heavenly virtues can flourish and become established in the life of the person who exposes oneself to the Holy Spirit and allows oneself to be transformed by the relationship with Him, an aspect that we can see in the texts that we present or repeat below:

Romans 8: 13 **For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

Galatians 6: 7 **Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.**

- 8 ***For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.***
 9 ***And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.***

Galatians 5: 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Therefore, **fellowship with the Holy Spirit generates in the Christian a blessed fruit of the Lord in one's life, with the most sublime and exalted virtues that a person could aspire to.**

The word *fruit*, in turn, according to the comments associated in the Online Bible with the notes relating to Strong's lexicon, refers to:

- 1) *Fruit, that is, the fruit of the trees, vines, of the fields; as well as the fruit of one's loins, that is, his progeny, his posterity;*
- 2) ***That which originates or comes from something, an effect, result, as for example:***
 - ***work, act, deed;***
 - ***advantage, profit, utility;***
 - *praises, which are presented to God as a thank offering;*
 - *to gather fruit (that is, a reaped harvest).*

In this way, if the inclination towards the flesh produces the harvest of the works pertinent to the flesh or the fruit of the flesh, as described above in the Scriptures, the inclination to the relationship with the Holy Spirit produces the results or the harvest of life according to the Spirit of the Lord, which we present again below:

- ⇒ Eternal Life;
- ⇒ Being able to put to death the works of the flesh;
- ⇒ Love;
- ⇒ Joy;
- ⇒ Peace;
- ⇒ Longsuffering;
- ⇒ Kindness;
- ⇒ Goodness;
- ⇒ Faithfulness;

- ⇒ Gentleness or meekness;
- ⇒ Self-control.

Each aspect in the above list is, then, worthy of being known more deeply. For this reason, we suggest that the reader meditates on each of the words or attributes mentioned, even looking for more references to these virtues in the Scriptures and some dictionaries that one may have access to.

At the same time, we would like to clarify that the fact that we do not expand here on the approach of each of the aspects of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, exposed in the list above, is because we understand that, in the first place, having a sober conscience and conviction of the unique origin or source of all these virtues seems to us more important than knowing the meaning and breadth of each of the terms cited in the list in reference.

Thus, the primary focus on the fruit of the Spirit is not a person being able to describe each of the terms of its virtues broadly, but instead being in connection with the One who can produce this fruit in one's life.

And, in turn, **the means for a Christian to achieve the virtues of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in one's life is evident in the word of God, which shows us that all of them come from the personal relationship with the Holy Spirit Himself through whom the Lord expresses life according to the heavenly kingdom.**

It is essential for a Christian to understand that the virtues of the fruit of the Spirit can never come from one's mere natural condition and cannot be achieved by self-effort or natural discipline, for they come through the relationship or fellowship with the Spirit of God.

For example, if a person is not inclined towards goodness, this is natural or fleshly. However, this person does not need to remain so. Through a relationship with the Holy Spirit, one can receive this virtue from God in one's life.

The Holy Spirit, regarding those who relate to Him, does not act with partiality towards them in granting His fruit or each of its virtues. Therefore, anyone who has fellowship with the Holy Spirit, based on faith in Christ Jesus as the Lord, and lets oneself be guided by the Spirit of the Lord, can have the fruit of the Holy Spirit as a result in one's life.

The relationship with the Holy Spirit needs to be extensively highlighted, for the fruit of the Spirit, and each of its virtues, only remain active in a person's life as long as one perseveres in the relationship with the Holy Spirit.

In the series on The Life of the Christian in the World, we covered many ways by which the Holy Spirit helps Christians. But, undoubtedly, one of the central means of His action is that He leads Christians to have each of these precious virtues while they are “*in Christ*,” and not dissociated from the Lord.

Disassociated from a relationship or fellowship with the Spirit of the Lord, there is no way for an individual to maintain the virtues of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, no matter how long one has lived with them, for they are

virtues that act in and through a person only through the operation of the Spirit of the Lord in one's life.

And before concluding this topic, we also accentuate that the decision of a person's relationship with the Holy Spirit is individual or personal. Remembering, also, that the Lord says that “Blessed is the Man,” “Blessed is the Human Being,” “Blessed is the person” who believes and trusts in Him, and that “the individual who believes in Him and draws close to Him” will also become the one who will see the living water of the Lord becoming in him or her a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life, even if there is a dry season or desert around one's life.

*Isaiah 43: 19 **Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert.***

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*Isaiah 44: 3 **"For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;***

*4 **They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.'***

*5 **One will say, 'I am the LORD'S'; Another will call himself by the name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, 'The LORD'S,' And name himself by the name of Israel."***

*6 **"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.'"***

Regarding still the aspect of the personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, there are people who even drink sporadically from the living waters coming from God, but who are not like trees that continually extend their roots to the brook or who do not establish themselves in a continuous relationship with the Holy Spirit. And because of this, they also come short concerning receiving the great gift of the fruit of the Spirit of the Lord in their lives.

There are also other people who only want to walk in the collective, in the community's momentum, in the pace of others, and not in an intimate and personal relationship with the Spirit of God despite the Holy Spirit being ready to help in the heart of every Christian. And for this reason, too, they do not see the fruit of the Spirit working in their hearts and through them.

Therefore, just as faith in God and the salvation offered by the Lord is personal, so walking with the Holy Spirit is primarily an individual or personal decision.

No collective relationships, even those that claim to seek God, can supply what the Lord has determined to be granted by each Christian's personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.

*Isaiah 58: 11 **The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.***

The Holy Spirit, who God gives to dwell in the heart of a Christian, is perfectly powerful. However, because of the virtues of God that are in Him, He also works in everything according to the fruit of God's perfect love and the moderation that is due to the Lord's perfect righteousness, which are also crucial virtues before God for a person's works. And this can only be done by God's direct and continuous work in those who trust in Him.

*2 Timothy 1: 7 **For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (or moderation).***

The Holy Spirit is given to the heart of everyone who, by grace and through faith in Christ, becomes a child of God so that each child may come to know the glory of Christ, of the Heavenly Father, and of the love of God not only "by hearing," but also by experiencing in one's own life the virtues of the same fruit by which the Lord's Spirit performs all His works.

*1 John 4: 16 **And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.***

E. The Gifts Given by God through the Holy Spirit

Regarding the sending of the Holy Spirit to the world by the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, we have seen so far that, through the Holy Spirit, the Lord manifests Himself to human beings on Earth, convincing them of sin, righteousness, and judgment. However, in addition, the Lord also promises the granting of the Holy Spirit as a gift to dwell in the hearts of those who believe in Christ and become children of God through Him.

For those who receive the gift of righteousness for redemption and salvation, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Heavenly Father and the Son of God also grant them the Holy Spirit to dwell in their hearts to lead them in their lives (1) to know more of the glory of Christ, (2) to be strengthened in the “inner man,” (3) to be guided according to the will of God, (4) to be able to put to death the deeds of the flesh by the strength of the Lord, and also, (5) to receive into their lives the virtues of the fruit that comes from a relationship with the Spirit of God.

For those who nurture the relationship with the Holy Spirit in honor, reverence, and love, and do so for the glorification of Christ and the Heavenly Father, God grants them to receive the living waters of the rivers that nourish them like the tree that puts forth its roots to the streams of waters. And this, to be strengthened in the Lord and to see the fruit of the Lord blossoming or sprouting in their lives too.

Extending roots to the streams of living waters can also be a figure of the maintenance and growth of the relationship with Christ Jesus, in which the Christian is called to abide continually. And this can be accomplished through the Holy Spirit, through whom the Lord makes His living waters reach those who believe in Him.

Through the relationship with the Holy Spirit, the Lord produces substantial and profound changes in the inner life, the works, and the attitudes of those who remain in fellowship with Him.

Nevertheless, in addition to what has already been mentioned about the results that come to the life of the Christian through the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” the gifts of the Lord go even further through this same gift.

In this way, **by the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” the Lord allows those who walk with Him also to receive a variety of gifts, or to be used in different gifts, also to be able to act in specific ways as fellow workers with God in the world and through sharing the good with others.**

And why does God give gifts to His children so that they can share them with others?

God shares gifts to His children for them to share them to others because God wants His children to experience the best part of the gifts, as the Scriptures mention in the text below:

*Acts 20: 35 "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. **And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'**"*

The Lord is a giving or generous God, and He wants His children to be too. And for this, the Lord grants gifts to those who are His so that they may also share benefits from God with other people.

So, one of the most evident texts about the gifts that God gives through the Holy Spirit, and that through them God's grace, blessings, or favors are shared with others, is found in the first letter to the Christians in Corinth, and from which, we initially mention the following verse:

1 Corinthians 12: 4 ***There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.***

If we stop here a little to take a closer look at the word *gifts* in the last text mentioned above, we can see that it varies a little from the word *gift* used in some other texts we saw earlier.

When the word *gift* is used as the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” it is used more in the sense of making reference to an offer or a specific gift given to those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. However, in the text of 1 Corinthians 12, and several others with a similar application, we see that the word *gifts* is more used in the plural sense, and, as the text says, pointing to a “*variety of gifts.*”

The plurality of gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians refers more to the Greek word *charisma*, also expressed as *the manifestations of the Holy Spirit.*

Thus, understanding that the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, for instance, are also called “the manifestations of the Holy Spirit” is of great value or essential, as this shows us, already in the general definition of these gifts, that they are not the property of the person by whom they are manifested, but from God.

It is from the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” in the heart of a Christian, that the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ manifest the plural gifts, or called “*charismas,*” so that this Christian may also be a cooperator of God in sharing of the goodness of the Lord to other people.

Nevertheless, if a person distances oneself from the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” that is, from the fellowship with the Holy Spirit made available in Christ Jesus, one does not have in oneself the possibility of acting through the “*charismas*” of God on behalf of other people.

Who distributes the gifts or manifestations of the Spirit of the Lord is the Holy Spirit Himself as He pleases, and not according to how people want Him to act even when they are in disagreement with the will of God or as people want to determine how the Holy Spirit should supposedly work.

1 Corinthians 12: 11 ***But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.***

In the previous topic, we saw that the living waters proceed from the Lord to be delivered to each person by the Holy Spirit. In the first chapters of the present theme,

we also saw that “every good gift and every perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights.” Thus, similarly to the living waters, we can know that the “*charismas*” come from the Lord, and not from the natural man, as well as their manifestations among human beings are administered and always distributed by the Holy Spirit, for ***one and the same Spirit works all these things.***

Let us note well, once again, that the expression “***works all these things,***” referring to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, does not say that people do them. Instead, all of them are performed by the Holy Spirit Himself, as He pleases, which, of course, also pleases and is entirely in line with the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus, who send the Holy Spirit to those who believe in the Lord.

Without the “working” of the Holy Spirit, there is no true manifestation, among human beings, of the gifts of God that are called “*charismas.*” And if somewhere there are spiritual manifestations that are not carried out by the Holy Spirit, they are not from the kingdom of light and thus do not come from God.

We also saw in the previous topics that the Spirit of God always acts to bear witness to Christ and glorify the Lord Jesus and the Heavenly Father, which also makes Him manifest the gifts only through ways that honor Christ. Therefore, if a person, regarding the gifts so-called “*charismas,*” claims to be the performer of a particular gift, and does so for one's “self-promotion,” something really weird is involved in this person's proposition.

The manifestations of the Holy Spirit are designed to be performed by Him, for the Spirit of the Lord is one with the Lord. And He will never carry out the manifestation of gifts that work against the Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son Jesus Christ.

If, in some place, there is a diversity of manifestations of gifts being performed, and some of these manifestations are operating in contradiction or opposition to each other or in opposition to the glory of God, it is because there are actions that are not being performed by the one and the same Spirit of the Lord.

On the other hand, the fact that there are differences in the relationship of fellow believers in Christ does not mean that, among them, there is effectively no manifestation of the Holy Spirit, for some believers may be cooperating with the Spirit of God and others not, as the following text shows us:

- 1 Corinthians 11: 17* ***Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.***
18 ***For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.***
19 ***For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.***

All Christians, obviously, should seek to walk in unity with others who also believe in Christ. However, the mere agreement of opinion, when it is not generated by the Spirit of God, does not mean unity in the Spirit of the Lord, and it may even be unity around an error or a doctrine contrary to the Lord.

The unity of Christians, first, is in each Christian abiding individually or personally in Christ, and not in the unity only among Christians in their relationships in a merely horizontal way, or even in the number of gifts or manifestations that each one claims to be able to perform or carry out.

Christians are called to look to Christ as the One Head of each individual member of His Living Body, as well as the One Head of His Body as a whole. And they are called to individually seek to be under the guidance of the Spirit of God so that they may walk in unity with other Christians.

Another aspect to be observed concerning the so-called manifestations of the Holy Spirit is that they are granted to be expressed by Christians in humility, meekness, and patience, which brings us to the characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

That is, **a person who wants to be willing to be used by the Holy Spirit should also be willing to live or relate individually with the Spirit of God so that, primarily, the fruit of the Spirit of God is also present in oneself to act together with some spiritual manifestation.**

The gifts manifested by the Holy Spirit aim to build people up, not tear them down. And for this reason, the Christian is also called to always work together with the virtues of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

In their relationship with the children of God, Christians are called to act in everything for the edification of others. For this reason, they should also aim for this when they hope to be used by the Holy Spirit in the manifestation of some spiritual gift.

*Ephesians 4: 29 **Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.***

*1 Corinthians 14: 12 **Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.***

*1 Corinthians 14: 26 **How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.***

Therefore, more important than the desire to be used in gifts is the practical attitude of a Christian in seeking to be in submission to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in everything one does, including how to behave and act when there is a manifestation of gifts, as the gifts that are manifested by the Holy Spirit are bestowed for what is beneficial, good, or helpful to people.

Let us see below a little more what narrates the text that speaks about the different gifts that the Holy Spirit may manifest through Christians:

- 1 Corinthians 12: 1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:*
- 2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.*
- 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*
- 4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.*
- 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.*
- 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*
- 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ...*
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Although the last text above does not describe it directly, the impression we have regarding its content is that it indicates a way to present ourselves to the Holy Spirit appropriately and in such a way that He can see in us cooperators for the benefit of other people to whom the Lord wants to extend a specific blessing.

The text of 1 Corinthians 12 begins by narrating general aspects about the gifts, but, after that, it also associates them with the diversity of services according to Christ and the variety of workings or operations according to God.

The word *services*, in some versions, is translated as *ministries* and that originally derives from the Greek word *diakonia*. This word, in turn, denotes *the willingness to serve someone else*.

Thus, a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, associated with a service to fellow believers in Christ, becomes a helpful way for it to be manifested.

For example, if a “Word of God’s Wisdom,” which is a gift, is associated with a gesture of compassion in a specific need, which in turn expresses a service or ministry of help to others, this gift can come to be manifested for a practical benefit to the one who needs a word of wisdom from the Lord delivered through an act of compassion.

More broadly, the manifestation of “charismas” becomes fruitful when combined with the service one does as for the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet, when it cooperates to direct a person to reach a work or accomplishment of God in this individual’s life.

Therefore, seeing the combination of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the services in Christ, and the operations of God, we could perhaps say that the gifts manifested by the Holy Spirit are aimed at their use through a service according to Christ among those who are the Lord’s. And this, yet, to carry out something concrete to be operated by God in the lives of those to whom the manifestation of the gift is addressed.

When looking at the text of 1 Corinthians 12, some people focus only on the so-called “spiritual gifts.” However, in this text, we also find mentioned a diversity of gifts, manifested through a variety of services to one another, so that God can accomplish, by diverse operations, a work, a deed, or a purpose in the lives of the people to whom the gifts are intended, also showing us in this text, the joint and entirely harmonious action between the Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

When we note that the manifestations of the Holy Spirit are given to Christians to serve one another, all being under the operation of God towards them, it becomes evident that the gifts are also not given by God so that there are disputes between Christians or so that some exalt themselves to the detriment of others. The latter is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly and perverse, as already seen in previous chapters.

The manifestations of the Holy Spirit are always wonderful, and through them, the Lord wants to bless His people. And this is one of the central marks of the heavenly gifts so that they can be seen in a dissociated way from the propositions of gifts that do not come from the Lord.

The manifestations of the Holy Spirit are granted by the grace of God to His children so that they can benefit and help them to advance in their lives, or even so that they might be called to return more intensely to the Lord. And even if the manifestation of God is given to call a person to repentance, it is granted for the benefit of those who trust in the Lord.

The manifestations of the Holy Spirit are highly significant and precious. However, as already mentioned, the gifts that come from the Lord by the Holy Spirit do not come to destroy people but are given for edification and for what is profitable.

Thus, **once some essential aspects have been mentioned for understanding the purpose of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, the path to knowing each one of them becomes more broadly grounded and paved.**

For this reason, following the text of 1 Corinthians 12 that we are adopting as a reference in this topic, we see a description of this diversity of gifts or manifestations of God that are performed or operated by the Spirit of God through Christians or among them, as can be observed below:

- 1 Corinthians 12: 7* ***But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:***
8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit,
to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,
9 to another faith by the same Spirit,
to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,
10 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.
11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Moreover, when we pay attention to the term *gift* expressed as “*charismas*,” we can see that there is still another text in the Scriptures that also uses this term, which is the text of Romans 12, as shown below:

Romans 12: 4 **For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,**
5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.
6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;
7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;
8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.
10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

Thus, both in the text of 1 Corinthians and in the list of gifts in Romans 12, we can see that the context of the operation of the gifts should be one of fraternal love, where each one should treat one's fellow believer in Christ with honor and sincerity, and not in a feigned manner.

1 Corinthians 14: 33 **For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.**

Once a Christian surrenders to the Holy Spirit and lets oneself be guided by Him also to reap the fruit of the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy Spirit Himself will guide the person so that He Himself can manifest through this individual a gift that is for the edification and profit of others.

In God, there is a diversity of gifts and a variety of services aimed at a diversity of accomplishments, but what all these points have in common is that there is one Spirit, one Lord, and one Father of All, who work together and harmoniously all and in all. And for this reason, they always act for what profits or is helpful for those to whom the gifts are directed.

Finally, continuing under the goal of focusing primarily on the theme of the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” so that later we can see more specifically some aspects of the specific manifestations of the Holy Spirit according to each gift, we will continue to consider some general points about the Holy Spirit Himself being offered to us as “the gift of God.”

And as for a more specific explanation concerning the various gifts called “charismas,” we inform that these aspects will be addressed, then, in Appendix I, presented at the end of this material.

C8. The Gift of the Holy Spirit as The Comforter or Helper Sent by Christ to Those Who Believe in Him

Returning to the great hope and expectation of John the Baptist about the Christ who would come to baptize with the Holy Spirit, we could add to his expectation still other characteristics that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself announced regarding the Spirit of God, as well as some that have been revealed to us or taught in the so-called New Testament texts.

In this way, starting with the attributes explicitly associated with the Holy Spirit, we can see that the Lord Jesus Christ also called Him in the following ways:

- ⇒ The Spirit of Your Father (according to Matthew 10: 20);
- ⇒ The Spirit of God (according to Matthew 12: 28);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Truth (according to John 14: 17, John 15: 26, and John 16: 13);
- ⇒ The Spirit of the Lord (according to Luke 4: 18);
- ⇒ The Comforter or Helper (according to John 14: 16, John 14: 26, John 15: 26, and John 16: 7).

Throughout the other New Testament texts, we find the Holy Spirit being also associated with a variety of names that reveal His attributes, of which we highlight the following:

- ⇒ The Spirit of Life (according to Romans 8: 2);
- ⇒ The Holy Spirit of Promise (according to Ephesians 1: 13);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Grace (according to Hebrews 10: 29);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Glory and of God (according to 1 Peter 4: 14);
- ⇒ The Spirit of the Living God (according to 2 Corinthians 3: 3);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Our God (according to 1 Corinthians 6: 11);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Jesus Christ (according to Philippians 1: 19);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Holiness (according to Romans 1: 4);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Adoption (according to Romans 8: 15);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Power, Love, and of Sound Mind or Moderation (according to 2 Timothy 1: 7);
- ⇒ The Spirit of Christ (according to Romans 8: 9; 1 Peter 1: 11).

And, again, why do the Scriptures present us with this diversity of names for the Holy Spirit? Why is it so significant that we know about this diversity of characteristics or attributes of the Holy Spirit?

Knowing the main names of the Holy Spirit is particularly significant when we return to what John the Baptist was waiting for, which was the baptism with the Holy Spirit, for if a person is baptized with the Holy Spirit, one also becomes baptized with the attributes that exist in Him.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit or being immersed in Him allows the one who receives the Spirit of the Lord also to enjoy His characteristics or “drink from His characteristics,” as explained in the texts that follow below:

1 Corinthians 12: 11 **But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.**

Ephesians 4: 4 **There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;**

1 Corinthians 12: 13 **For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.**

When we come to see the various attributes that are in the Holy Spirit, we can come to understand more and more the high hope that John the Baptist had that Christ would come to baptize people with the Holy Spirit.

Thus, **to be baptized with the Holy Spirit or to be immersed in Him is to be immersed also in the attributes of the Spirit of God.**

For instance, **to be baptized with the Holy Spirit is to be immersed in grace, in truth, in glory, in the adoption of children, in love, in holiness, and the promise of the newness of life in the Spirit of the Lord given by the Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son Jesus Christ.**

In other words, **baptism in one Spirit is also a baptism with God's grace, love, and newness of life for everyone who receives Christ Jesus as Lord in one's heart.**

Being baptized with the Holy Spirit is like being baptized with precious attributes of God Himself that allow us, through the Holy Spirit, to start right away to have access to or enjoy various aspects pertinent to eternal life in God, as we can see if we observe the following two texts jointly:

John 17: 3 **"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."**

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1 Corinthians 2: 9 **But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**

10 **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.**

11 **For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.**

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

It is through the Holy Spirit that a Christian can know more about the depths of God and can know and experience more of the eternal life granted in Christ Jesus, which, in turn, encompasses grace, mercy, power, strength, and joy of the Lord, and so many other aspects that accompany this eternal life.

The attributes of life that are mentioned in association with the Holy Spirit are those that also become available to everyone who is baptized in Him by the Lord Jesus Christ when one receives justification, salvation, and the novelty of life from the Lord.

For example, if someone is baptized in the Holy Spirit when one receives Christ as the Lord in one's heart, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Life, Grace, and Power of God, the one who is baptized with the Holy Spirit is also baptized with the life, grace, and power of God.

Romans 8: 6 For to be carnally minded (or to be inclined to the flesh) is death, but to be spiritually minded (or to be inclined to the Spirit) is life and peace.

Acts 1: 8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

2 Timothy 1: 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Therefore, knowing the characteristics that the Scriptures reveal to us about the Holy Spirit is essential for a Christian to understand what one can expect from the Lord, or rather, what the Lord bestows to a Christian by granting the Holy Spirit to dwell in one's heart, as well as to know what one will cease to enjoy if one despises the Spirit of the Lord.

Through His Spirit, the Lord ensures that what we need for a life according to His will is provided for us. However, He also warns us not to despise such a special offer and gift offered to us, for the Spirit of God is the only alternative that we have to receive the Lord's other gifts and bestowals available for us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4: 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

1 Thessalonians 5: 19 **Do not quench the Spirit.**

*Hebrews 10: 26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.
28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.
29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, **and insulted the Spirit of grace?***

To despise the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of grace is to despise “the seal to the day of redemption.” It is to despise the pledge or guarantee of eternal life. And, on the other hand, to abide in the Spirit of the Lord, or in the baptism with the Holy Spirit in which Christ baptized us, is to remain in the Lord's grace and to keep the seal of salvation unto the day of eternal redemption, for it is the Holy Spirit Himself who was given to us by the Lord to help or support us in the new life given to us in Christ Jesus.

And it is because of the need that we have to be supported by God in everything so that we can live and walk according to His will, and to stand firm for eternal life, that the Lord Jesus Christ highlighted and repeated several times an attribute in particular about the Spirit of God, doing so by calling Him the “Comforter or Helper.”

And in addition to calling the Holy Spirit “The Comforter or Helper”, the Lord Jesus Christ also assured us that He Himself would pray to the Heavenly Father to send this “Comforter” to those who believe in Him and receive Him in their hearts, as we see in the following texts once more:

*John 14: 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."*

*John 14: 26 "But **the Helper, the Holy Spirit**, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*

*John 15: 26 "But when **the Helper** comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, **the Spirit of truth** who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me."*

John 16: 7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. 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."

Why, then, did Christ so want us to know the Holy Spirit by the attribute of “the Helper or the Comforter?” What is so special about His “Helper or Comforter” characteristic for the Lord to express it so explicitly to us?

To answer these last questions, we would like to expose, first, some considerations about the very definitions of the words *to comfort* and *comforter*, as mentioned in the Online Bible in some commentaries associated with Strong's lexicon, as follows:

⇒ **To comfort:**

- 1) *To call to one's side, call for, summon;*
- 2) *To address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, teaching, encouragement, strengthening, etc.*

⇒ **Comforter:**

- 1) *Summoned, called to one's side, especially called to one's aid.*

When the Lord Jesus said that He would send the Comforter to those who receive Him in their lives, He was not saying that He would only send someone who would come to sympathize with people and give them some words of comfort. The Lord Jesus Christ was announcing that He would send someone to help people in their lives effectively, someone who would be summoned to be at the side of the people who received Him to comfort them, yes, but in the sense of helping them, instructing them in the truth, as well as encouraging them and, above all, also strengthening them to be able to live and walk according to His instruction.

When the Scriptures declare that “***blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted,***” they are not referring to a mere consolation for a person to feel better despite the afflictions that may befall one's life, but they are referring to the granting of a real strengthening help to remain firmly established in the Lord, even in the face of sorrows and afflictions that are in the world.

God's comfort to those who mourn does not consist in mere words of human wisdom, but in help from God through the one called the Holy Spirit or “The Comforter or Helper,” and through whom the Lord can manifest real and true strengthening to the heart that needs His joy, strength, or power.

Faced with the actual situation that the world can be a place of many struggles, oppositions, and afflictions, the Psalmist also declares that his support comes from the consolation granted by one's Eternal Lord, as follows:

*Psalms 23: 4 **Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.***

There are many places and situations in the world that are valleys or regions of the shadow of death, and with which the children of God are also sometimes confronted. However, there too, the Lord is with those who trust in Him, and He does so through the Comforter who is always with them.

Through His Spirit, there is no place in the universe where the Lord cannot be with those who trust in Him. And nothing is too high or too deep that the Spirit of the Lord cannot search or peer into on behalf of the children of God, as another Psalm also tells us:

- Psalms 139: 1 O LORD, You have searched me and known me.*
2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.
3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways.
4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.
5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.
7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?
8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.
9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me;
12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.
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In this way, **the characteristic of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter or Helper is worthy of special mention because it speaks in a precise manner about the closeness of the Holy Spirit to each child of God, as well as the immeasurable care that the Lord has for each individual who opens the heart for the work of His Eternal Spirit in one's life.**

Knowing that the Holy Spirit is almighty to accomplish any or all of God's purposes is terrific, as it shows us the greatness and extent of the Lord's work in the universe. However, knowing that this same Almighty Holy Spirit is the Comforter, or the "Personal Helper" of everyone who believes in Christ Jesus, shows us how much God cares about everything that happens in the life of each individual and, especially, in the lives of those who believe in Christ Jesus as their Eternal Lord.

The life, the grace, the power, and the strength for life that is given to us by God, through the Holy Spirit, is given to us in a personal and intimate way, and not in a

collective and depersonalized way as if a force or energy of the heavens would be cast in a general way on those who aspire to it.

One of the most beautiful aspects of the Psalms contained in the Scriptures is the personal nature in which they are written. In this way, the Psalms attest that a person's newness of life with or in God begins in the personal relationship with the Lord to manifest itself later also externally and in the collective, and not the opposite as was desired under the Law of Moses which, also for this reason, became obsolete or outdated after Christ's work on the cross of Calvary.

In the text of Psalm 23 presented above, we saw that the Psalmist declares several aspects of the Lord's action directly in his favor, such as: “even though I walk,” “your rod and your staff comfort me,” “the Lord is my Shepherd,” as we can also see in this other example that follows below:

Psalms 86: 17 Show me a sign for good, That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed, Because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

The Holy Spirit, undoubtedly, can manifest a word or action for a collective or an eventual instruction of comfort to a group of people. But even so, to be comforted, that is, helped or encouraged with strength at all times and in the face of the most diverse tribulations that may occur in everyday life, it is only a consolation that accompanies us in everything that can provide what it is necessary for all circumstances and moments of life.

While God also allows people to cooperate in the Lord's comfort to others, a Christian should be aware that all true and edifying comfort comes first from the Lord and is given through the Holy Spirit. However, a Christian should also be firmly convinced that the Lord can do it and does so, much more frequently, directly to the heart that needs heavenly consolation.

***2 Corinthians 1: 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,**
4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.*

If a Christian is comforted by the “Comforter” sent by the Lord, according to the text above, what is, then, the main consolation with which one was contemplated that one should also comfort others? Would this consolation not be the announcement that others can also have personal access to the same “Comforter” called the Holy Spirit?

Many who claim to be Christians have created ministries of counseling and comfort to others, but have these people in these ministries indeed taught and evidenced to others that the first and foremost “Comforter” sent by the Heavenly Father and by Christ to each Christian is the Holy Spirit?

And did those who so vehemently claim to be God's counselors to people really experience the comfort with which God can contemplate every Christian in one's own heart? And do they indeed want to teach others to seek the comfort of the Holy Spirit to the point of no longer needing to resort so continually to their counseling ministries?

A Christian does not need to have a detailed list with all the answers to comfort other people. What a Christian needs to know, first of all, is that only the Lord is God, and that in Him, whoever believes in Him, has a Comforter who knows not only the depths of each individual's soul, but also the very depths of God's love and comfort for each individual.

Galatians 3: 24 **Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**

25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

When the Lord Jesus Christ announced that He would be glorified at the right hand of the Heavenly Father's throne, He clearly promised and declared that He would not leave His disciples orphans in the world but would send them the perfect companion "Comforter" to be with them in every moment of their lives.

Let us see, then, once again, one of the texts in which the Lord Jesus made a specific reference to the purpose of sending the Holy Spirit as "The Comforter" coming from God towards us:

John 14: 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."

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

25 These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Thus, one of the reasons why the Lord Jesus Christ sends the Holy Spirit into the heart of everyone who believes in Him and receives Him as the Lord is also one of the reasons why we do not need to let our hearts be troubled, agitated, or afraid, for the Comforter is given to us that we should not walk as orphans. The Spirit of the Lord is given to us to be always with us to the point of dwelling with us and in us so that no one externally can interfere with our relationship with the Lord.

We emphasize again here, then, that **the Lord Jesus Christ explicitly promised that He would come to dwell in the heart of everyone who believes in Him. And this promise, He fulfills it through the Holy Spirit. For this reason, all who receive Christ as the Lord also receive the Spirit of the Lord and are inserted into Him at the same time they receive Christ into their hearts.**

*Ephesians 4: 1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,
 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,
 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
 4 **There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;**
 5 **one Lord, one faith, one baptism;**
 6 **one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.**
 7 **But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.***

If a person is of Christ, and Christ dwells in him or her, one also has the Comforter or Helper in one's life, and with whom one is called to associate, have fellowship, and drink from Him. However, if someone does not have the Comforter in one's heart, one is not of Christ and, therefore, does not have Christ in One's life either.

In this way, "Christian life," "life in Christ," "Christ in us, the hope of glory," or "we in Christ" are all aspects of the life of God that can only be achieved with the help of the Spirit of the Lord in the life of a Christian.

*Romans 8: 9 **But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.***

*1 John 4: 13 **By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.***

*2 Corinthians 13: 14 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.***

Finally, by saying that the Lord Jesus Christ would baptize us with the Holy Spirit, John the Baptist was also announcing that the Lord would baptize us with the Comforter or Helper so that He would be a constant and eternal consolation and help to us, and not just sporadic or occasional.

By being sent to be with us, the Holy Spirit was appointed by the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to be with us and to assist, help, sustain, and teach us, and all other aspects that are pertinent to Him and the calling by which He was sent to us by the Lord.

The Holy Spirit is the one through whom the Lord quenches the dry and thirsty heart for true life. The Holy Spirit is the oil of joy from the Kingdom of Heaven. The Holy Spirit is the one who clothes us with songs and spiritual hymns and fills our lips with praise to God, as announced by the prophets and also exemplified by the following texts:

Isaiah 44: 3 ***For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;***

Isaiah 61: 1 ***"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;***
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,
3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Always and in all circumstances, including those where our weakness is most evident, the Holy Spirit is given to us so that we may pray, live, and walk in the will or according to the will of the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ for our lives.

Romans 8: 26 ***Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.***

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to us so that we may have abundant life, the Lord may do good works through our lives, and the Lord Jesus

Christ may be glorified. And to this end, the Comforter or Helper will be eternally faithful, for the Spirit of the Lord will always be loyal to the Heavenly Father and to Christ who sent Him to grant us the life of the heavenly kingdom.

Thus, all the edification proposed by the Spirit of Truth to a Christian is perfect, for He is the perfect gift of consolation and grace given to us from the perfect love of the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2: 16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,
17 comfort your hearts
and
establish you in every good word and work.

C9. The Gift of the Holy Spirit and the Gift of Newness of Life in the Lord are for All the Children of God

John 1: 12 **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

Romans 8: 11 **But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.
13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."
16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,
17 and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.**

When someone believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, calls on His name for salvation, and receives Him in one's heart as the Lord of one's life, this person becomes part of the family of God.

In other words, when a person receives the Lord Jesus Christ, one is inserted into the family of God or the family of Christians with some aspects similar to those that occur when a baby is born into a natural family.

From the moment a baby is born into a natural family, one also becomes part of the family into which one was born. Moreover, this child, in most peoples, when born and inserted into one's family, starts to have all the rights that any previous child has, which also applies to the adopted children from the due adoption. Thus, this insertion of the newborn or the adopted child in the family is like an immersion of the baby in the family one becomes a part of.

And like some aspects of natural birth, so too occurs to a person who receives Christ and is brought into the family of God. That is, one now has access to the privileges that all other previous children had. It may even be that the older children are more aware of what is offered to them in the Lord and access more of what is available to them in their heavenly family, but this is not because they have more rights than other younger children.

In the Christian life, already from the insertion of a person in the family of God, through the new birth in Christ, the new convert to the Lord begins to share the right of a child like the other children who were already part of this family.

For this reason, the favor of God and the gifts of God are for all children, for all Christians are inserted in one Body, in one Family, in one Spirit, and all have one Heavenly Father, according to the texts which we have already mentioned in other chapters and of which we repeat two below:

Ephesians 4: 1 ***I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.***

1 Corinthians 12: 11 ***But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. 12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.***

When a person is joined to Christ by the Lord's grace, through faith, one is included by one baptism into the Body of Christ, also called the Church of Christ. That is, by the baptism in one Spirit, a person receives insertion into the family of God, which, in turn, places this individual before the other aspects of the Christian life that are one's inheritance in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, whoever joins Christ becomes part of the family to which all the benefits of life in the grace of God are addressed. Everyone who joins Christ also has access to the benefits of what Christ achieved for all of God's children, although, as a matter of knowledge and time, each of the children may be aware of them at different times of their lives.

And among the main benefits of the new condition of being a child of God in Christ Jesus, there is also the "gift of the Holy Spirit" that we have already seen throughout this subject, as well as the consolation, the fruit, and the gifts manifested by the Spirit of the Lord.

In this way, when someone is united to the family of God, the aspects mentioned above are already available to him or her, and it is up to each child to open one's heart to seek these heavenly favors and accept their action in one's life.

Colossians 3: 1 ***If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.***

The Holy Spirit is a gift given directly from above, from the throne of God. And it is vital that a Christian understands that one of the essential aspects of the new life in Christ is fellowship with the Holy Spirit and having an understanding of Him from the beginning of this new life, for without the Holy Spirit, a person is not able even to mortify the works of the flesh and neither to live and walk in the newness of life offered by the Lord.

*Romans 8: 8 **So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.***

*Romans 8: 13 **For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.***

John the Baptist aspired that “all the people of God's people” could live according to God's will and not just a few rare individuals. And for this reason, too, he rejoiced so much at the coming of the one who would pour out the Holy Spirit on all those who longed for the newness of life promised by the Lord.

So, the claim that the abundant presence of the Holy Spirit is for some children in particular is in no way from the Lord. Instead, it is an attempt to corrupt the availability of “God's gift” to all His beloved children.

Everyone who receives Jesus Christ as Lord and is joined to Him has, by right of inheritance, the benefit of the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” That is, this gift, and what comes from it, is not a privilege for some children who supposedly would be more special than others.

It may even happen that a sincere Christian is not aware of the truth of the “gift of the Holy Spirit” towards him or her, and that it is necessary to be awakened to this reality. However, when one is joined to Christ, one also becomes one spirit with the Lord. And this is a gift to every genuine Christian.

*Romans 8: 9 **But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.***

*1 Corinthians 6: 17 **But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.***

Given this, we can see, then, that the central issue in focus here should not be whether the Heavenly Father offers the “gift of the Holy Spirit” only to some children and not others, for He offers it to all. Instead, the matter in focus here should be aimed at identifying the reasons why some people consider the possibility that the “gift of the Holy Spirit” supposedly might not be for all of God's children.

As we have seen previously, it makes no sense to consider the possibility that the “gift of the Holy Spirit” is not for all of God's children, for just as Christ is the only

provision of salvation offered by the Heavenly Father, the “gift of the Holy Spirit” is the essential provision of the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ for a Christian to be able to accomplish the mortification of the flesh, the burial of one's fleshly motivations, and become quickened to the newness of life in Christ.

Repeating in other words, just as there is only one way of immersion in the family of God, only one baptism in only one Body, only one faith in only one Savior, so there is only one Spirit necessary and indispensable for the Christian life of an individual.

Therefore, to say that the Christian life is only possible to be lived through the presence of Christ in one's heart, and that this presence is offered to all the children of God, is analogous to saying that the Christian life is only possible to be lived with the presence of the Spirit of the Lord in the life of the Christian, which is equally offered to all the children of God.

On the other hand, just as in the same house, not all children are willing to gladly receive the gifts that their parents bestow upon them, so not all who receive Christ are willing to grow in the gifts that the Heavenly Father offers them or are not aware of the need to do so. So, also in the family of God, a situation may occur in which there are those who open their hearts more to be instructed by the Lord to start having more profound experiences in what is offered to them by God and there are those who are not willing to grow in what God offers them, as exemplified in the following text:

*Hebrews 5: 12 **For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.***
*13 **For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.***
*14 **But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

Here we also remember the aspect that the gifts of God associated with the Gospel of the Lord are offered and not imposed on people. For this reason, its concession to a greater or lesser extent may also be associated with how much a person turns to the Lord to receive what He offers. This aspect is also exemplified in the following text:

*Luke 11: 9 **"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.***
*10 **For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.***
*13 **If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"***

On the other hand, the Lord's presence, also expressed by the Holy Spirit in us, bestowed and poured into the heart of a child of God, is God's treasure so that one, even in a fragile body like an earthen vessel, can experience, live, and walk according to the

excellency of the power of God. And for this, regarding the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” it is offered and bestowed indistinctly as a gift to all the children of God.

Since the faith that matters is the one that works jointly with the love of God, it is impossible to dissociate the newness of life in Christ Jesus from the presence of the Spirit of the Lord in the heart of the one who believes in God. An aspect that expresses yet another point that highlights the availability of the “gift of the Holy Spirit” for each one of those who, in Christ Jesus, are inserted into the eternal family of the Heavenly Father.

*Galatians 5: 6 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.***

*Romans 5: 5 **Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.***

*2 Corinthians 4: 7 **But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.***

*5: 5 **Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.***

C10. God's Gifts and Calling Are Irrevocable, but Not Necessarily the Specific Granting of Them

Romans 11: 29 ***For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.***

In the various themes of the Systemic Teaching about Christian Life, we have repeatedly mentioned that the salvation that comes from the Lord is a heavenly gift that is granted not for a price to the one who receives it but, instead, by the grace of God, as we can also remember in the following texts:

Romans 6: 23 ***For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Ephesians 2: 8 ***For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.***

Furthermore, in the previous chapter, we saw that with salvation, the Lord desires that every Christian should also gladly recognize and receive “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” which is given to dwell in the heart of each of God's children, for it is through the relationship with the Spirit of the Lord that a Christian:

- ⇒ 1) Can understand what is freely given to an individual in God;
- ⇒ 2) Is strengthened in the inner man to be established in Christ and His love, as well as in the knowledge of the glory of God and the glory of Christ;
- ⇒ 3) May come to experience and reproduce in one's life the Fruit of the Holy Spirit;
- ⇒ 4) Becomes able to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the manifestation of a diversity of gifts, services, and achievements that are used by God so that they may result in many benefits even to other people;
- ⇒ 5) Receives the presence of the Comforter or Helper sent by the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to support, teach, strengthen, and guide him or her at all times and in all places according to the will of God.

For this reason, we also recall here the following text:

1 Corinthians 2: 12 ***Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.***

On the other hand, as a crucial complement to the present theme, we believe it is prudent, before concluding it, to mention that when the subject of gifts granted by the grace of God is mentioned, there are people who try to claim that this grace or generosity of the Lord grants everything to everyone in any way or in an unrestricted manner precisely because it is given through the grace of God.

And in turn, one of the aspects on which some people rely to present the claim that God supposedly gives gifts unrestrictedly is based on another claim that God supposedly does not or cannot revoke what He has given as a gift.

Nevertheless, **under the theme of the Gospel of the Grace of God, we can observe in the Scriptures that the fact that God gives something through His grace does not mean that what the Lord grants is given without establishing appropriate conditions for something to be granted and remain being given to people.**

For example, the salvation offered by the heavenly kingdom is offered indistinctly to all human beings. On the other hand, however, it is only granted to those who receive Christ Jesus as the Lord of their life, for Christ is the very salvation. Eternal salvation is given indeed by grace and not by the price of works or sacrifices on the part of human beings. However, if someone who comes to know about the offer of the Gospel of the Lord is not willing to believe in Christ and to receive Him as Lord of one's life, one actually does not want the salvation of God either, for it is not possible to dissociate Christ from salvation or the eternal salvation from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Continuing yet with the matter about the “free gift” in Christ for justification, salvation, and life, we can see that the fact that Christ is the Only Way to salvation also expresses the establishment “of an irrevocable gift or calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Christ, as the “gift of righteousness,” is a condition that will never be revoked before God, even though many people do not receive it, despise it, or even reject it intensely and offensively.

God's gifts, in their characteristics and the purpose for which God established them for human beings, are irrevocable. However, this does not mean that all people who receive a gift from God have an irrevocable right to this gift even if they come to despise it, reject it, or adopt a posture that separates them from the grace of God, as exemplified below by some of the various texts of the Scriptures that address this aspect:

*Hebrews 6: 7 **For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God;***

8 but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

*1 Timothy 1: 19 ... **having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, ...***

*Galatians 5: 1 **Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.***

- ...
- 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.**
- 5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.**
-

The characteristics or what is contemplated in what God calls the “crown of life,” “the gift of God,” which is everlasting life in Christ, or “the gift of salvation,” will never change before the Lord, for it is eternal and irrevocable. However, the person who receives this “free gift of God” is called to watch and take care so that one does not lose it through contempt and negligence towards God and the gift offered by the heavenly kingdom, also exemplified by some texts below:

Revelation 3: 11 **"Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."**

Jude 1: 3 **Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**

2 Thessalonians 3: 1 **Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.**

Hebrews 2: 1 **Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.**

2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

The Lord Jesus Christ stated that no one can snatch a child of God out of the hand of the Heavenly Father, but part of this process also takes place if this child of God chooses to abide in Christ, in which one is kept from one's enemies.

In this way, despite the “gift of the Holy Spirit” having the irrevocable vocation or calling of comforting the children of God, in the sense of sustaining, strengthening, and establishing them in Christ, if a child of God voluntarily turns away from the Lord or

one despises the gift offered by God, this child of God puts oneself in a position of an extreme risk of having the concession of the offered gift interrupted.

Therefore, because they do not understand, or are not willing to understand, that it is the calling itself or the vocation itself and the gifts that are irrevocable, and not their granting if a person does not place oneself in the appropriate conditions to receive them and to keep them in their lives, many individuals and groups have claimed, in a distorted and even perverse way, the idea that once a gift from God is received, its granting is irrevocable or that the Lord will never remove it from that person.

And those who claim that God does not revoke a gift given to a person, or that a person can depart from a gift given by the Lord, are often also those who do so in an attempt to deceive other people by saying that they are specially called by God and that the Lord will never withdraw His gift from their lives, even if they come to live a life surrendered to acts and postures contrary to the will of God. These individuals are those who fall into that group of people who justify themselves in order not to want to move away from their acts of unrighteousness.

Luke 16: 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

Also through the letter of Jude, the Lord teaches us that there are those in the world who aim to turn the grace of God into vile and perverse lewdness, using, as one of the means to try to pervert the grace of the Lord, the evil claim that God does not remove a gift given to a person.

The propagation of the thought that God does not revoke gifts in the lives of people or groups is a false message and a misleading proposition of the equally misleading proposition so-called Another Gospel or A Different Gospel. (An aspect addressed specifically under this title in the series on the Gospel of God).

Many propositions that claim that callings and gifts are not revocable in people's lives are associated with a distorted mentality originated in the idea of consecrations and sanctifications that were carried out under the Law of Moses or under the First Covenant, a law that was fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver those who were subject to this law to then render this law obsolete by the everlasting establishment of the New Covenant.

Nevertheless, the very natural people of Israel experienced the revocation of the call that God had conferred on them. And this happened because it moved away from God's vocation to be a people by whom God would bless all nations, and it did it also by wanting the Messiah for itself only and not for the people of all other peoples. From the resurrection of Christ, God's calling to announce salvation to all nations passed to Spiritual Israel, to Jerusalem from Above, or to the Living Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which both "the Jew and the Greek" can see the fulfillment of this calling of God to bless all nations, peoples, tribes, their families, and their individuals. (An aspect also addressed under the themes The Foolishness of the Preaching of the Gospel of God, To Whom Does God Address or Offer His Gospel, and Vocation, Calling, and Election).

*Romans 10: 4 **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.***

The mentality of perpetuating the calling and gifts to specific groups, including from generation to generation on the children of those who received the first calling, regardless of the posture that many had over the centuries, also became evident as not sustainable in the face of other aspects of the revelation of Christ Jesus to the world. *In Christ*, each person is placed individually in the Body of Christ or the family of God, and each person, individually, continues to be associated with the “gift of the Holy Spirit” while also remaining associated with Christ as the Head of one’s life before God and men.

*1 Corinthians 12: 27 **Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.***

*1 Corinthians 12: 11 **But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.***

Therefore, we emphasize once again that **the calling of God and the gifts of God are irrevocable in what they essentially are and for the purpose for which they are designed. But when someone intends to misuse them, the Lord, precisely to keep the calling and the gifts perfect and incorruptible, can perfectly and justly cease to manifest them to those who want to assign another purpose to each of the heavenly callings or gifts.**

When a person has a purpose of availing oneself of the gifts of God for evil purposes, it is no longer according to the divine purpose of the gifts of God that one acts when one claims to be working “in the name of the Lord.” And the Lord, in His righteousness, is not an accomplice of sin and the intent of the wicked.

A person who tries to use the “manifestations of the Holy Spirit” for evil and perverse purposes does not please the Spirit of the Lord. And under these conditions, therefore, the Spirit of God is perfectly free not to manifest Himself further in gifts through that person.

We reiterate here, then, again, the importance of Christians paying attention to the fact that the “gifts associated with the Gospel of God” are given, yes, by grace, but not under any circumstances.

The “gifts of God that accompany the Gospel of Christ” are offered to people for what is pertinent to life in the Spirit of the Lord, who, besides being the Spirit of Grace, is also the Spirit of Truth and who is given to Christians to bear in them the fruit of the Spirit and not the fruit of the flesh or life according to darkness.

Like the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will never have a part in anything that is not bestowed to result in the glory of the Heavenly Father.

God has irrevocably established that the call to justification, salvation, and life is accomplished by His grace, through the faith of those who believe in Christ Jesus as Lord, but also by His righteousness manifested according to His kindness. And the Lord will never remove the foundations of this calling or gift.

God, irrevocably, established that the calling for His children to live and walk according to His purpose can be achieved through the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” and the Lord will never dissociate this calling and purpose from the “gift” through which Christians can do it.

God has established that the calling to live and walk in the “gift of the Holy Spirit” is also the way to live and walk in the other irrevocable gifts that are bestowed on His children. And this is also the path that the Lord will continue to point out as the path to be followed by each of His children.

In the face of this, then, if a person insists on wanting to reach justification, salvation, the novelty of life, and heavenly gifts through other ways or in response to other callings to achieve them, even having already participated in God's callings that have unalterable or irrevocable characteristics, one puts oneself personally in a position of an extreme risk of being deprived of the fundamental callings and gifts of the Lord for one's life.

Thus, something that every Christian should understand and firmly establish in one's heart is that the Christian life is to be lived in Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit, for what is lived apart from the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God is not the expression of what the Christian life truly is.

John 15: 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

Romans 8: 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded (or inclined to the Spirit) is life and peace.

Galatians 6: 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Finally, we understand that it is suitable to remember here that not every gift that seems to be from God is really from God, and not every sign or expression of power, said to be performed in the name of God, is indeed an expression of the “gift of the Holy Spirit” given to the children of God.

Many expressions in the world that are denominated as manifestations of the Spirit of the Lord actually are actions of human strength or even the expression of spirits and forces of darkness, which, contrary to the gifts of God, do not work for the good. On the contrary, they act in an attempt to destroy those who are exposed to them, as the Scriptures warn us several times and of which we present some more examples below:

*Mark 13: 21 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it.
 22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
 23 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand."*

*2 Peter 2: 1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.
 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.
 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.*

*2 Thessalonians 2: 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,
 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

When the Lord Jesus Christ taught the Samaritan woman about true worship or service to God, He said that this worship needs to be “in spirit,” but He also said that it would need to be “in truth,” for the “Spirit of Truth” does not act and does not take part in what is associated with deceit and lies.

And this attention to the truth that the Lord makes known to us is also a crucial point for discerning what is indeed given by God and what only appears to be from God. (A text more widely discussed in the theme Works, Labors, and Services).

*John 4: 23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.
 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

Zechariah 4: 6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts."

John 16: 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Those who try to claim that God grants them the gifts of grace and salvation regardless of what they do, even when they despise the direction of life through the "gift of the Holy Spirit," are those who want to unsettle or distort the ways of God's righteousness on which the Lord's grace is grounded.

Therefore, **understanding that God's calling and eternal gifts for our salvation and newness of life will never lose their characteristics of righteousness and holiness represents a central aspect of security for those who believe in the Lord and remain on the path that He points out to them. They can be sure that in what they are called to live and walk in the Holy Spirit, God will never forsake them nor change what He has firmly and eternally established.**

Just as the kingdom of God is unshakable, so everything that through this kingdom has been established as eternal is unshakable.

In conclusion, then, we emphasize that **Christians should never give way to propositions that subtly want to lead them to think that they do not need to be zealous in remaining in the Lord due to the supposed fact that at some point in their lives they received some gift from the Lord. Instead, for a Christian, what matters most is that one remains in the Heavenly Father, in Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and in the Lord's grace in the way that God offers and grants it to those who believe and remain in Him.**

*Colossians 1: 21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled
22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight,
23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.*

*Romans 5: 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.
20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,
21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
6: 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?
2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?*

John 15: 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me."

1 John 2: 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

*Hebrews 12: 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.
29 For our God is a consuming fire.*

2 Timothy 1: 14 That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

John 14: 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."

Romans 15: 13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3: 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Appendix I - Brief considerations on the "gifts" associated in the Scriptures with the Greek word *charisma*

In the topic of the present theme on The Gifts Given by God through the Holy Spirit, we mentioned that, in the Scriptures, there are basically two lists of gifts associated with the word *charisma*, which are found in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12.

Nevertheless, before reviewing these two lists of gifts, we recall below some meanings of the word *charisma* and its variants, according to comments related to Strong's lexicon in the Online Bible. And this, to show once again that the *charismas* of God are bestowed according to the grace of the Lord, as well as through His grace. The gifts in the lists in reference are gifts that come from God's love, goodness, and generosity towards those who receive Christ as Lord in their lives.

Charisma:

- 1) A favor with which one receives without any merit of his own;
- 2) The gift of divine grace;
- 3) The gift of faith, knowledge, holiness, virtue;
- 4) The economy of divine grace, by which the pardon of sin and eternal salvation is appointed to sinners in consideration of the merits of Christ laid hold of by faith;
- 5) Grace or gifts denoting extraordinary powers;
- 6) To do something pleasant or agreeable (to one), to do a favor to, gratify;
- 7) Grace as that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech;
- 8) Good will, loving-kindness, favor;
- 9) Thanks or gratitude, (for benefits, services, favors), recompense, reward.

We also remember that a part of the general purpose of the *charismas* is exposed in the topic referenced in the paragraphs above, but also in the context of the specific theme of The Fellowship of Christians in the World.

Next, we will seek, then, to make some brief considerations about the gifts listed in the chapters of the Scriptures in reference and which are linked to this word *charisma*. We underline, however, that the following explanations are not intended to exhaust the subject nor to establish a final definition of what comes to be each of the gifts. The following considerations are intended to serve as a support to at least give the beginning of a specific reflection on each of the gifts in reference.

Thus, looking first at the text of 1 Corinthians 12, we can see that it presents a list of 9 groups of gifts or manifestations of the Holy Spirit, as follows:

- 1 Corinthians 12: 7* **But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:**
- 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,**
 - 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,**
 - 10 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.**

11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Following the order shown in the text above, we then have:

1st Gift: The Word of Wisdom:

In several previous subjects, we have already mentioned that Christ is the wisdom of Christians and that He became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Therefore, a word of wisdom represents, first of all, an instruction from the wisdom of Christ, from the mind of Christ, towards the person who needs it at a specific moment or in a particular circumstance of life. And in the case of 1 Corinthians 12, this gift can also be shared by the Holy Spirit to a Christian to share the wisdom coming from the Lord with another person or a group of people.

In the book of James, we can see that God is willing to share His wisdom with those who seek it in Him. And one of the ways God does it can also be through a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, through which the Lord grants the desired wisdom to a Christian to share it with other people in a spoken way. The Word of Wisdom is wisdom from above and given so that it can be shared or also expressed clearly in words.

The gift of the Word of Wisdom is one of the ways that wisdom from on high is delivered, through the grace of the Lord, to those who need it, but it can also be given to a Christian who verbalizes or exposes to another Christian or a group of people the wisdom granted by the Lord.

The Word of Wisdom, as a gift, is not the expression of advice that one Christian gives from oneself or one's life experiences to another or a group, but it is wisdom that is imparted by the Holy Spirit to one Christian to share it with those who can benefit from it.

The Word of Wisdom is an instruction of wisdom from God that may be given to a Christian who even has no experience in the area in which the Word of Wisdom is granted, as it is not a word of wisdom based on human knowledge but is a word "of the wisdom of God," given spiritually through the one the Holy Spirit is pleased to choose.

In addition, the Lord still gives us instructions in the Scriptures so that we can also find out and discern whether a word said to be from the wisdom of God is indeed a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, for in everything, a Christian can always turn directly to the Lord to know what is or is not from God, as well as the time and how to apply what was uttered by a Word of Wisdom.

James 1: 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

- James 3: 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.*
- 14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.*
- 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.*
- 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*
- 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.*
- 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*
-

2nd Gift: **The Word of Knowledge:**

The One God Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, and all that is in them, is the Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient God.

Hebrews 4: 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

The Lord knows everything and everyone. Now, human beings do not. And in many circumstances of life, the lack of knowledge of the children of God in some specific area or aspect may significantly restrict their thoughts and actions. Moreover, we have also seen that the very knowledge of the truth is an essential factor for living in freedom in *Christ Jesus*.

Therefore, through the gift of the Word of Knowledge, the Holy Spirit can impart words of perfect knowledge of the Lord to people who are part of the Body of Christ, that is, Christians in general.

The Word of Knowledge can be given by the Lord in any area of knowledge that is needed, for God fully knows all things.

The gift of the Word of Knowledge, a little different from the gift of the Word of Wisdom, can be the act of making any aspect unknown known or something hidden exposed by the light of God, showing how the facts actually are or how indeed the truth about a specific aspect of life is. And this, through the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and not necessarily by investigation of the facts.

At one point during one of Paul's journeys, the Lord gave him a dream about a man crying out to God for help in a specific city. And for this reason, Paul and his traveling companions decided to go to this city, understanding that the Lord wanted them there to care for a particular person. In this case, through the knowledge revealed to Paul about a person who was praying to the Lord, Paul and his companions recognized that the Lord was calling them to go to a place that, at that particular moment, was not yet in their plans.

In other words, a person or even a people may significantly lack the understanding of something crucial due to the lack of more accurate knowledge. However, the Word of Knowledge, given by the Holy Spirit, can represent one of the ways knowledge is extended to those who need it.

Similarly to the wisdom of God, we also emphasize here that the knowledge from God that a person needs is also found *in Christ*, from whom the Holy Spirit shares what needs to be shared according to what pleases Him and is profitable.

*Hosea 4: 6(a) **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.***

*John 8: 31 **Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.***
*32 **And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."***

*Colossians 2: 1 **For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,***
*2 **that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,***
*3 **in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.***

3rd Gift: **Faith:**

Every Christian is called to look to the Lord Jesus Christ continually and steadfastly, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith (according to Hebrews 12: 1, 2). And faith for salvation and the life of faith in Christ essentially encompasses an individual posture before the Lord, for "***the just shall live by faith.***"

Regarding, yet, the theme of the Lord Jesus Christ being the Author and Finisher of faith, we would like to record here the information that there is a specific chapter on this aspect in the theme of The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ.

Nevertheless, when we find the word *faith* inserted in the list of manifestations of the Holy Spirit to be used to serve and build up the children of God in Christ, it seems to us that faith, here as a *charisma*, refers to the manifestation of the Holy Spirit where a person is graced by God to believe something specific that is of benefit to another believer or a group of people of the Body of Christ.

As we saw in the previous paragraphs, the life of faith in Christ and the various aspects of walking in faith in the Lord is being generated and consummated in a Christian who keeps one's eyes on Christ. This, however, does not prevent the Lord from choosing a particular Christian to be used by the Holy Spirit to believe in specific circumstances in favor of another person and the Body or Church of Christ.

4th Gift: **Gifts of Healings:**

Taking a closer look at the word used in the manifestation called Gifts of Healings, we may observe that the central idea here is the restoration of a person's health through a work of the Holy Spirit, also carried out jointly with some action of a person of the Body of Christ.

Exactly how the Gifts of Healings are manifested is challenging to predict, for the text in reference narrates that “gifts of healings” are granted in the plural, which expresses a diversity of both gifts and types of healings.

By performing many healings by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, while in the flesh in the world, performed them in a very diversified way, but always under the same heavenly grace of God and according to the work of the Holy Spirit through His life.

Of course, a manifestation of healing granted directly by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is always a miracle, but 1 Corinthians 12 highlights the “gifts of healings” separately from the “gifts of miracles.” And this probably is to make evident that God actually grants His grace also to heal people miraculously through His power and not just for other kinds of miracles.

*Matthew 11: 4 **Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:***
5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

5th Gift: **Working of Miracles:**

In a similar way to the Gifts of Healings, we see that there also is a diversity of accomplishments or operations in the Working of Miracles.

The word *working* is the act of actually doing something and the word *miracles* is the term used also to express power. Thus, the *Working of Miracles* could also be named as the *operations of the power of God*.

In other words, the gift of the Working of Miracles encompasses the expression of extraordinary accomplishments of God's intervention manifested by the Holy Spirit through the cooperation of a child of God or a Christian.

While in the flesh in the world, the Lord Jesus also showed us many miracles that He performed, such as calming storms, multiplying loaves and fishes, raising the dead, and many others.

Furthermore, the Lord Jesus remains, and always will be, the same Lord, as well as His power remains the same. And, through the Holy Spirit and the granting of gifts, the Lord can certainly come to work miracles among His people at any time in history or in any circumstance in which this is necessary and for the benefit of people.

*Hebrews 13: 8 **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.***

Regarding, still, the types of operations or miracles that may be included in the gift of Working of Miracles, we do not find any list that describes them in the Scriptures. An aspect that we understand to be very appropriate or beneficial so that people do not want to define what God could or could not do, leading us to believe that for God everything that is necessary is possible to be accomplished.

*Mark 10: 27 **But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."***

*John 21: 25 **And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.***

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*John 20: 30 **And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;**
31 **but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.***

6th Gift: **Prophecy:**

In the Scriptures, the word *prophecy* refers to uttering the words received from the Lord.

Prophecy is a manifestation in which a person receives a word from the Lord to be shared with a person or a group of people and proclaims it as the Lord instructs an individual to do.

Prophecy may reveal aspects unknown to the listeners or express exhortations, warnings, and consolations, but always bearing the mark of being words that the Lord asked to be uttered.

Something important to be highlighted in this aspect about the prophecies among the gifts is that a person, who is given to prophesy, does not become a career prophet or an individual holder of a prophetic office as there was in the so-called Old Testament. The type of prophet that existed "Before Christ," according to the words of the Lord Jesus Himself, lasted until John the Baptist. (An aspect discussed more widely in the theme The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ, more specifically in the chapter that deals with the aspect of Christ being sent by God to Remove the First Priesthood and Establish the Second Priesthood according to the Order of Melchizedek).

In turn, of all the gifts (*charismas*) of the two lists that we are seeing in this appendix, prophecy perhaps is the gift about which there is more explanation in the so-called New Testament Scriptures on how to deal with it.

Chapter 14 of 1 Corinthians, for instance, contains a series of instructions about this gift, which should always be carefully followed by Christians.

In addition, two other crucial aspects to be highlighted concerning the gift of prophecy refer to the fact that the prophecy manifested by this gift is always, firstly, for exhortation (strengthening), edification, and comfort, and, secondly, that every word uttered as a prophecy should be tested so that its veracity or integrity may be checked.

The Holy Spirit can use anyone or any member of the Body of Christ to manifest a prophecy. However, any prophecy, regardless of which person declared it, should always be checked or proved.

And if a person who announces a prophecy, which one claims to come from the Lord, is not willing to have this word proved by the Scriptures and by other Christians, one shows strong indications that one is not acting in the will of God and that the prophecy announced may not be trustworthy.

1 Corinthians 14: 3 ***But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.***

1 Thessalonians 5: 20 ***Do not despise prophecies.***
21 ***Test all things; hold fast what is good.***
22 ***Abstain from every form of evil.***

7th Gift: **Discerning of Spirits:**

Discerning well is the act of using the ability to make clear discernment or sober judgment.

Thus, something crucial for the life of a Christian is the discernment of the origin of the most diverse motivations and actions of people, for the devil himself tries to present himself in the world as an angel of light to try to deceive people in general and even inattentive Christians, even trying to send people who present themselves sneakily as ministers or apostles of God's righteousness.

As we have seen above, all things are naked and open to the eyes of God. And the Holy Spirit is always willing to operate in favor of the children of God who love the Lord and His will, showing them and manifesting which actions are motivated by the kingdom of light and which have their origin in the flesh or, yet, in the powers of darkness.

It should also be noted that the discernment that the Holy Spirit grants is a discernment that goes beyond the mere knowledge that the natural human being can reach or that the mere natural human senses can perceive. And it is granted to a person to discern both the good and the evil.

No human being, no matter how skilled one is and how much accumulated knowledge one has acquired, can perceive what happens in the spiritual world. However, this does not apply to those who rely on the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord, present everywhere, can give personal discernment to each individual, but He can also want to share discernment with a group of people both to certify them about what comes from the Lord and to warn them about what does not come from God.

1 Corinthians 2: 14 **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**

15 **But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.**

To understand more widely the need for proper discernment or judgment in all things, we also suggest the theme of The Law of Understanding, in addition to the entire subject entitled The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5: 16 **Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.**

1 Corinthians 14: 20 **Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.**

Maturity in understanding also means having learned to listen to the Holy Spirit to receive and believe in the judgment and discernment that He grants us on the most diverse aspects of life, people, and the spirits through which people act.

8th Gift: **Different Kinds of Tongues:**

In the Scriptures, we find the reference of speaking in other tongues both to speaking in tongues of other peoples, even without having learned their languages, and speaking in strange tongues, in the tongues of angels, or, yet, praying in spirit.

In Acts 2, we see evidenced an example of the benefit of operating the variety and interpretation of other tongues when many peoples could hear the message about Christ in their own languages.

In Acts 2, God manifested His power in the opposite way to what He had done in the past when He divided the peoples at the tower of Babel, described in Genesis chapter 11.

Now, in 1 Corinthians 14, we can see that the one who prays in tongues does not necessarily pray in languages known among the peoples, for one prays in the Spirit and prays well for one's edification, even if one does not understand the words one prays

and although it would also be profitable receiving understanding about them from the Holy Spirit. Similarly, in 1 Corinthians 13, we can see a reference that points to the possibility of people even speaking with the tongues of angels.

However, the manifestation of the variety of tongues should be used with moderation and wisdom, mainly when Christians gather with others and when there are non-Christians among them, which is also described, for example, in 1 Corinthians 13, 14.

9th Gift: **The Interpretation of Tongues:**

This last manifestation of the Holy Spirit, mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, is the ability to interpret the manifestations of the gift of Different Kinds of Tongues, which can be an interpretation or an understanding to explain them, and not necessarily a literal translation, but, of course, must always be truthful.

Both speaking in tongues and interpreting them are the work of the Holy Spirit through Christians and not a person's sheer mental effort or mere language ability.

And when something said in different kinds of tongues is followed by interpretation, the aspects of judgment used to judge the prophecies also apply to this interpretation. That is, what someone utters as an interpretation should also be judged by one's listeners and in line with the Scriptures. So, in this respect, too, it is essential to know that the discerning of spirits is also among the gifts to which the judgment of the origin of what is being said must be applied.

In Matthew 16, we see that Peter allowed himself to be supernaturally used by God to announce that the Lord Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. However, after a few minutes, Peter uttered thoughts that had been presented to him by the darkness, showing us that both he who claims to speak the words of God and those who hear them must be attentive to the instruction of the Spirit of the Lord not to pass on or not to receive in their hearts that which does not come from the Lord.

Continuing with the gifts, *charismas*, mentioned in the Scriptures, we find in Romans 12 a list of 7 gifts, as shown below:

- Romans 12: 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*
- 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
- 3 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.*
- 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,*

- 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*
- 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;*
- 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;*
- 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads (or presides), with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*
- 9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*
- 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;*
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Following, then, the order set out in the text referenced above, we have:

1st Gift: Prophecy:

This gift refers to what we have already mentioned in the list above of 1 Corinthians 12, increased in Romans 12 by the aspect that all prophecy should be done according to the faith of the one who prophesies and not going beyond what one believes to have received from the Lord.

2nd Gift: Ministry:

The word used for *ministry* is the Greek word *diakonia*, which refers to a gift that, by God's grace, enables a person in a particular way *to serve* other Christians according to Christ's will.

We also remember here that *ministry* is not a title or office, as we have already addressed in this present theme and the subject of The Fellowship of Christians in the World. Instead, it is a function of service, a function of serving Christians according to the strength, the instruction, and the will of the Lord.

The person who is called to act according to this gift is called to remain faithful to the Spirit of the Lord and to serve other Christians according to the will of God, and not according to one's own will or the will of others, a subject that we discussed more widely also in the theme Works, Labors, and Services.

3rd Gift: Teaching:

In the text of Romans 12, the idea of the word *teaching* is associated with a gift by which a person receives from God, through the Holy Spirit and the grace of the Lord, an ability to deliver didactic speeches and teach others about some subjects.

And the one who receives the gift of Teaching should teach what the Lord directs to be shared with others. However, this does not mean that the one who teaches will play the role of mediator and will teach other people to personally know God, for in the New Covenant, knowing God needs to be done by each child of God directly with the Lord. (A point discussed more widely in the themes Knowing about God or Knowing God, The Letter or Life, and on the exclusive ministry of Christ as the Mediator between God and the human beings approached by the subject entitled The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ).

The one who receives the gift of teaching can teach about God, talk about how God wants to relate to a person, and teach about specific topics that collaborate for the edification of God in the life of a Christian. However, the shared teaching should always aim for each person to relate first, mainly, and individually with God and with the Anointing that dwells in each Christian to instruct an individual in the specific manner and time of following what one received as teaching for one's life.

The gift of teaching is also a gift that requires dedication and care for a person to exercise it properly. A point that shows the need for the one who teaches knowing how to "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth," as well as having one's feet shod with "the preparation of the Gospel of Peace."

It is always crucial to emphasize that the fact that God allows or grants a person to act through the gift of teaching does not, therefore, make this individual a "master," "guide," or "leader" of other Christians or children of God, for the Lord Jesus explicitly stated for His followers not to act like this when He referred to the relationship between those who are His disciples, as follows:

*Matthew 23: 8 "But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.
9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.
10 And do not be called teachers (guides, leaders, or masters); for One is your Teacher, the Christ."*

4th Gift: **Exhortation:**

The word *exhortation*, according to the commentaries related to Strong's Lexicon in the Online Bible, refers to:

- 1) To call to one's side, call for, summon;
- 2) To address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, or to admonish, to exhort, to beg, to entreat, to beseech, to strive to appease by entreaty; to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort, to teach.

That is, the word *exhortation* is equivalent to the word used for *consolation* attributed to the Holy Spirit as “The Comforter or The Helper.”

The exhortation, then, encompasses words and attitudes to share encouragement with fellow believers and to help them stand firm in the Lord and the Holy Spirit, and not to rebuke or expose them to humiliation or some kind of oppression.

The word *exhortation* is associated with a God-given ability to encourage others to remain firm and unwavering in the Lord's path for their lives.

5th Gift: **Giving:**

Regarding the gift here in reference, we can see that in Portuguese, the expression *to contribute* is used, but in English, German, and Spanish, for example, this gift is called *to give* or even as the gift of *sharing*.

Moreover, in the text of Romans 12, there is no explanation of what people give or share.

In the book of Acts, chapter 6, we find the description of the need that there was for a correct distribution of food for needy widows and that seven men were chosen for this function. Men of good reputation and full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.

Therefore, in many situations in which people need to share life and resources, it is necessary that there are individuals among them who have the ability to see that everyone receives due attention and that no one is left aside in their needs. And in this sense, the gift of sharing can also cooperate so that an appropriate distribution reaches everyone.

In the very sharing of fellowship and attention to one another, which also occurs in Christian meetings, it can happen that some are left more aside, which, however, can be perceived and adjusted by the gift of sharing that the Spirit of the Lord grants to some of the Christians in their gatherings.

Another aspect that perhaps we can relate to this gift is the term *helps* used in 1 Corinthians 12: 28. Some people are empowered by the Holy Spirit to contribute to what others need to accomplish, whether it is a particular help, an extra hand in carrying out something, the provision of some helping resource, and so on. It is a gift that serves to help a person or a group of people.

Unfortunately, regarding the gift of sharing, there are people who use distorted expedients and the propositions of the Another Gospel (on which there is a specific material with this title) to convey the idea that this gift of giving or contribution refers to the donation of money or financial resources. And those who do it often even say that their listeners should contribute by giving money to them or the causes they promote as their visions or missions.

Several people are very eager for others to serve them because they mistakenly see a profit for themselves in the service and kindness of others. However, they forget or choose to ignore that gifts are given to Christians to genuinely serve others by grace and not to require services or bargains from others as ways of payment for some other supposed gift passed on to others.

In some particular situations, contributions with financial resources may be a form of support for fellow believers or some service they perform, but the text of Romans 12, at no time, refers to this specifically.

The one who receives the gift of giving or sharing, or any other gift, should always be attentive to the Lord's leading to discern whom and how one should serve through a gift, as well as regarding whom the Lord shows not to do it.

Romans 16: 17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

In the following text below, we see that the emphasis concerning sharing is in the sowing of what God gives to a person according to the fruits of the righteousness of the Lord. For this reason, this gift should also be used wisely so that sharing is actually with those seeds that the Lord wants to be shared and how He wants them to be shared.

2 Corinthians 9: 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

11 while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,

13 while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men,

14 and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you.

6th Gift: Leading or Presiding:

The words *leading* or *presiding* can present the meaning of being at the forefront in coordinating the execution of a task.

And if a person, for example, is in charge of coordinating some activity, one should do it with diligence or be dedicated to what is entrusted to be coordinated.

The gift of presiding is a God-given ability to direct or coordinate some activity. And whoever receives this gift should do so willingly and with a commitment to achieve the aimed objective satisfactorily and according to God's righteous will.

On the other hand, the fact that a person has received the manifestation of the gift to preside over some areas or actions does not make this individual a leader of people's lives. In the same way, this gift does not confer any right to an individual to receive titles of leader, guide, teacher, pastor, or any other variant of these regarding one's fellow believers in the Lord. And this is very explicit in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ that we quoted concerning the gift of teaching, whose subject we approached widely in the themes of The Gospel of the Glory of God and of the Glory of Christ and The Fellowship of Christians in the World.

Regarding the gift of presiding or leading, it is crucial that a person does not fall back into the precepts of the First Covenant or the Levitical Priesthood with its temple structures and hierarchies of positions that there were in it, for, *in Christ*, subjection to the law of Moses (or parts of it) has ended and is not appropriate for Christians to practice.

The gift of presiding is to serve and cooperate so that something that needs to be coordinated achieves success for those who participates in it, but never for someone or a group of people to exercise dominion over the other children of God, for these should have over their lives only One Lord and Head who has the right to primacy or preeminence over all.

7th Gift: **Showing or Practicing Mercy:**

In the Online Bible considerations associated with Strong's lexicon, the word *mercy* is presented as:

- 1) *To have mercy on;*
- 2) *To help one afflicted or seeking aid;*
- 3) *To help the afflicted, to bring help to the wretched;*
- 4) *To experience mercy.*

The ability to exercise mercy toward others is a gift from the Lord. The Lord is merciful, and the reason we are not consumed before the holiness of God is this characteristic which is an inherent part of the Lord, as Jeremiah so sublimely declared, as follows:

- Lamentations 3: 21 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.*
22 Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.
23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.
24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"
25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

The need for God's mercy or compassion towards all humanity is continually and daily evident, just as Christians themselves continually need this virtue or attribute of the Lord, as exemplified in the texts below:

Romans 11: 32 **For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.**

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;**
10 **who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

And although all people can find mercy directly in the Lord, for **whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved**, the need for mercy is often more evident precisely when a person finds oneself in conditions of distress and anguish in which one fails to realize that one needs mercy or in which one becomes blind to the need to seek it from God. Thus, in these and other cases, a person may find oneself in a situation where one needs God's mercy coming or being shown to him or her through other people.

Therefore, through the gift of mercy, the Lord manifests Himself merciful to all also through His children so that, in many and diverse ways, people may know how much the Lord has mercy on them and how much He calls them for reconciliation with Himself, His love, and His eternal grace.

Everyone is in constant need of God's mercy. But those who have already received it and recognize its inestimable value may be fellow workers with God so that others may also know about it, so that, in one way or another, they may come to know how much God wants the good for everyone.

Matthew 12: 7 **"But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless."**

Matthew 9: 13 **"But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."**

Hosea 6: 6 **For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.**

Micah 6: 8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Finally, regarding the gifts mentioned in this appendix, we would like to remember that the foundation of the life of every Christian is not in the works they accomplish, not even those performed through the gifts listed above, but in having Christ Jesus in the heart as the Lord of one's life.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit did not come to manifest gifts to exalt Himself above Christ, and He never will do so. And similarly, also the Christian who is used in the work or manifestation of gifts should never seek to exalt oneself above the Holy Spirit, Christ, and the other children of God as if one had gifts by oneself or for one's self-promotion.

The gifts that the Holy Spirit grants to God's children, He gives according to His grace and not the ability of people according to the flesh, and He bestows them to be used in everything in faithfulness first and foremost to the Lord.

1 Peter 4: 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1 Corinthians 4: 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

By placing oneself in the condition of recognizing Christ as the direct Head of each of the members of the Body of Christ and in the condition of living and walking according to the instruction of the Holy Spirit, also regarding God's gifts (*charismas*), is that a Christian positions oneself in the proper way to learn to act according to the will of God also by the gifts that the Lord manifests to an individual according to His grace.

So, in everything, including regarding all the gifts that God may bestow, the essence of the Christian life is to keep oneself in Christ and live and walk under the conviction that all the primacy of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit is due to Christ Jesus and the Heavenly Father.

Colossians 1: 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

- 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.*
- 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*
- 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,*
- 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

Romans 5: 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Romans 6: 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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Note on Biblical Texts referenced:

- 1) The biblical texts without explicit indications of reference were drawn from NKJV Bible, as indicated below.
- 2) Highlights in the biblical texts, such as underline, bold, or similar were added by the author of this study.

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