



"Oftentimes we forget that Jesus was Jewish. He didn't come to undo all that had been done, but to fulfill what had written. Pentecost was a Jewish holiday long before it was a New Testament celebration of the birth of the Spirit-filled church. Join us as we learn about Pentecost and how the overlay of the Spirit's coming in Acts 2 interplays with a Hebraic understanding of Pentecost historically."

What are the Fruit of the Spirit?

Crosswalk article: <https://www.crosswalk.com/fait/spiritual-life/what-are-the-fruit-of-the-spirit.html>



Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Make sure to read the article before taking the assessment. <https://mintools.com/spiritual-gifts-test.htm>

How Gifts Of The Spirit Overshadow The Fruits Of The Spirit

SEPTEMBER 21, 2018 BY JACK WELLMAN

Every believer has at least one gift of the Spirit, but why do gifts often seem more important than the fruits of the Spirit, even though we can produce neither without God's help?

Gifts of the Spirit

The Bible teaches that each one of us have a gift from the Spirit, and likely more than one gift. The Apostle Paul said, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ" (1 Cor 12:12), however, just "as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function" (Rom 12:4). The body of Christ would not function well if many members all tried to do the same thing. It would not function well because other parts of the body would be absent and others would be doing what they are not equipped for. If everyone wants to be a particular member of the body, what happens to the function of the body? It becomes dysfunctional, so even though we "are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Rom 12:5), each of us have different gifts and consist of differing members of the body. We know "there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor 12:4), so to one it is "faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:9), but these gifts are "for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7b) of the church, not for the individual. They are not to be flaunted before others. We have nothing that we did not receive from God, so what right do we have to boast about it (1 Cor 4:7), and it is not we who decide which gifts we receive but "the same Spirit who apportions to each one individually as he wills" (1 Cor 12:11b). It is God's choice, not ours. It is for God's church, not us. It is for His glory, not ours.

Fruits of the Spirit

The Apostle Paul mentions that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal 5:22,23). These are all fruits of the Spirit. They are not human fruits. We know what they look like, because "the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal 5:19-21). Humanity produces sinful fruits while God's Spirit produces godly fruits. In fact, one way to identify false prophets is by their carnal fruits, as Jesus said, "You will recognize them by their fruits" (Matt 7:16a). Even nature proves to us that "healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit" (Matt 7:17), because "A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit" (Matt 7:18). The fruits reveal where the roots is at.

Abiding in Christ

When Jesus was speaking to the disciples, He reminded them that they could do nothing without Him, and that's exactly how much fruit we can produce without Him...nothing! Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit" (John 15:1-2). We cannot bear fruit apart from Christ, which is why He says, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me" (John 15:4). His point is that abiding in or dwelling in the Lord and His Word, is abiding in Him, and nothing of significance can be done without Him. He says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). I would remind you (and myself) that "nothing" is not a little something. It is zilch! To produce fruit, we must abide in Christ...or bear no godly fruit for God.

Overshadowed

I think it's easy to put more emphasis on the gifts than it is the Gift Giver. For example, two churches I visited, believe that unless you speak in tongues, you are not filled with the Spirit. Some even go so far as to say, you are not saved if you've never spoken in the tongues. Then there are miracle healers who are quite different from Jesus. Jesus would tell the person who was healed to tell no one about it, but today "miracle healings" are on TV, posted on You Tube, and flaunted by some ministries, but most say nothing about the gospel of the kingdom of God, which Jesus said includes repentance and faith (Mark 1:14-15), or about the fruits of the Spirit. Jesus said there are at least two ways we can know who is and who isn't His disciple; by their love for one another (John 13:34-35) and by their fruits (Matt 7:15-20). James said that a faith with no works is a dead faith, or not genuine saving faith at all (James 2:14-16). Even though we're not saved by works (Eph 2:8-9), we are saved to do works (Eph 2:10), but even these works are from God and to His glory, so why would we ever put more emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit than the fruits of the Spirit? Why are gifts of the Spirit often elevated over the fruits of the Spirit? In a few cases, they overshadow the giver of those gifts, and that is God Himself, from which all good things come (Psalm 107:9).

Conclusion

If we put more emphasis in our walk with Christ in our gifts and not in our fruits, then we'll be focusing on the exterior or external, while God is concerned with the heart, and these fruits of the Spirit and from the Holy Spirit, and so all glory goes to Him. Fruits and gifts are essential to the body of Christ, but one should not be elevated over another, or be focused on to the exclusion of the other. Balance is the key. But most of all, the source of these gifts and fruits must be acknowledged, and we must say what the psalmist wrote, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness" (Psalm 115:1).

In these verses being filled with the Spirit is contrasted with being filled or drunk with wine. The idea is one of being controlled by God's Spirit rather than by other forces. When we are filled by the Spirit, we see a resultant attitude of joy and thanksgiving. We also see a relational posture of humility toward God and of submission to one another.

So how can a person be filled with the Holy Spirit? To be clear, there is an important difference between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the filling of the Holy Spirit. All believers in Jesus Christ have God's Spirit living within them, or dwelling within them (John 14:16, Ephesians 1:13, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 4:30); but not all believers live filled or controlled by the Spirit's power. Some Christians describe this distinction by saying believers have all of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit may not have all of them. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the time of our salvation but we are filled by Him when we submit to Him.

The filling of the Holy Spirit, then, can vary in the life of each believer. Negatively, a believer in Christ can "quench" or "grieve" the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19; Ephesians 4:30). Sinful actions can hinder the work of God's Spirit in his or her life. In contrast, when a believer in Christ lives in obedience to God's will and commands, he or she should expect to see God's Spirit living through them.

Some suggest that the filling of the Holy Spirit is an emotional experience that takes place at certain moments, but the concept of "filling" in Scripture is one of being controlled or influenced by the Holy Spirit. At times living a Spirit-filled life may include emotional or mountain-top experiences. But the idea of being filled by the Spirit is more about an ongoing sense of God's Spirit working in a person's life, not a one-time experience. As the believer lives out his or her faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit increasingly controls or fills his or her life; this leads to joy, thankfulness, and right relationships.