

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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Eagerly-Expecting The Disclosure of Jesus

by Dan Trygg

“...I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you might test-out-to-discern what is the beneficial, pleasing, and mature will of God.”

Romans 12:1,2

“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, ⁶ even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, eagerly-expecting the disclosure (‘uncovering’) of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

1 Corinthians 1:4-9

“The one having My commandments and keeping them is the one loving Me; and the one loving Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself (cause Myself to be seen in – ‘making-visible-within’) to/in him.” ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to disclose 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 abode with him.’”

John 14:21-23

Now what? We have been talking about spiritual gifts, and we have seen that **everyone in Christ has been given a dominant, consistent spiritual gifting, or function, in the body of Christ** (Rom. 12:3-6; Eph. 4:7,8; and 1 Pet. 4:10), **and that there may be times where the Spirit will give us a temporary gifting to meet a specific need** (1 Cor. 12:4-11). If that is true, **what do I do next? How is this supposed to work, and what is my part in it?**

Paul presents three very important principles to introduce this topic in Romans 12:1,2. You are to **(1.) Present yourself to God.** This is a conscious act, ...a decision and commitment of availability for service. It is saying, “Here I am, Lord, use me.” **(2.) Renew your perception.** The world system is trying to shut you down, to keep you within the “norms” of what people typically do. It is trying to keep you from trusting in God, or seeing His activity in your life. This is more than academic theology, ...this is *practical theology* – the study of God at work in your life. It is learning to discern what He is doing, and how He works in your own experience. **(3.) Try things.** The Greek is “test-out-by-trial-to-discover the will of God”. You find out what your gifting is by discovering what you are “good at”, ...what seems to be your area of strength. You can’t discover that, just by reading or thinking about it.

You are looking for your spiritual gift, ...not just your natural ability. You may be able to do any number of things, but **your spiritual gifting will be something that you do that is empowered or energized by God.** For you, it may seem natural, or “second nature”, ...but **others will see it as an unusual capacity or ability. They will comment about it.** Or, it may be that you will also know quite clearly that this is from God, because it is obviously *not* you. It is something from God. **It will be something that benefits others in the body of Christ.** That, too, is often reported by feedback. You will be inspired by service to God, or love for others, or *both*. **You will experience unusual satisfaction or fulfillment in doing this, ...and you may even feel the empowering of God as you are engaged in this activity.**

In the first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul wrote more about spiritual gifts than in any other letter. There is more in this letter than all of the other material on spiritual gifts in the NT combined. **The Corinthian believers were not necessarily the most spiritually mature group of believers.** They seemed to have a lot of problems that Paul attributed to living according to the flesh (3:1-3), **but they apparently had a well-developed ability to function in the spiritual gifts.** (This is an important observation to make, spiritual giftedness and spiritual maturity are *not* the same thing. We start out with spiritual gifts, as new born babes in Christ. We may, or may not, discover and develop that capacity right away, ...or it may lay dormant for years. Spiritual maturity is developed over a time-tested walk, where we learn to listen to and be led by the Spirit, and disregard the selfish desires and upheaval of the flesh.) So, it is only fitting that, as Paul began his letter, he would mention this fact. He gave thanks for them, and especially for this reality, the grace of God that was given to them that resulted in their full complement of spiritual gifts. **The phrase, “the grace of God that was given” was used by Paul ten times in his writings, and nine of those times he was referring to spiritual gifts.** He used it in reference to himself, how he was given grace by God for his ministry and function in the body (Rom. 12:3; 15:15; 1 Cor 3:10; Gal. 2:9; Eph. 3:7,8), and he also used the same language to describe the spiritual gifts given to each one of us in the body of Christ (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 4:7). So, we can be fairly certain that spiritual gifts were the focus of his comments in 1 Corinthians 1:4-9. Of course, this is made very clear by the language in the next three verses. **“In everything they were enriched in Him [Christ], in every word and in all knowledge..., with the result that they were not lacking in any gift.”**

Notice that Paul referred to this as a “witness or testimony of Christ”. The function of the spiritual gifts in them was evidence that confirmed that Christ was *in* them. Paul saw that the gifts of the Holy Spirit could, and did, provide valuable proof of the reality of Jesus in their lives.

There is a little “nugget” hidden away in the translation of verse 7. The translators ran verse 7 together with verse 8, which speaks of “the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”. Unfortunately, by doing this, they missed a key part of Paul’s argument, and they obscured a valuable piece of information, ...something that would be helpful for us as we are learning to operate in our spiritual gifts. If we take verse 7 by itself, for a moment, what it says is “so that y’all are not lacking in any spiritual gift, *eagerly-awaiting the disclosure of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” If we take this as a *practical insight*, not as an eschatological mindset, then what Paul is saying is that they were practicing the art of watching for, anticipating and eagerly-awaiting for when Jesus would be uncovered in the circumstances of their surroundings, or even within themselves. They were watching-eagerly for Jesus.

This sounds very much like what Jesus said about how He operated in His own life. He said that He did nothing from Himself, but He did what He saw the Father doing. *The Father showed Him what He was doing, and He joined Him in like manner* (Jn. 5:19,20). Jesus responded to revelation from His Father. He had learned to anticipate, identify and respond to what the Father was doing in the setting He was in, or within Himself. And, of course, *the miraculous signs Jesus was doing* when He joined with His Father, were called “works from My Father” (Jn. 10:37,38), and *were evidence that the Father was in Jesus, and He was in the Father.*

Just a few chapters later, Jesus brought this up again. “Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I speak to you I do not speak on My own. The Father who lives in Me does His works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. **Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.** ¹² I assure you: the one believing in Me will do the works (miraculous signs) that I do, because I go to the Father” (Jn. 14:10-12). **What would happen when Jesus would leave, and go to the Father?** Just a few verses later, Jesus said, “**In that day you will know that I am in My Father, you are in Me, and I am in you.**” ²¹ The one who has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father. **I also will love him and will reveal Myself to him.**” ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You’re going to reveal Yourself to us and not to the world?’ ²³ Jesus answered, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and *We will come to him and make Our home with him.*’” **The outward works were evidence of the inward indwelling. The works were initiated by Him. Jesus, and His followers who learn to operate in this way, will eagerly-watch for the revelation of God's activity.** God will be faithful to confirm the evidence of Christ’s indwelling, right up until the end, when He returns.

It is God who has called us to a sharing with His Son, Jesus Christ. **The Greek word, *koinōnia*, ...translated as “fellowship”..., means much more than what that English word conveys. *It means a common-sharing*, ...in the case of Jesus-in-us, it is meant to be a shared-life, a “life in common”, ...Jesus in me and I in Him. **God has invited us into this relationship, ...and it is from that relationship of shared life that the spiritual gifts spring.****

What does this mean for us? It means that we ought to pray for and expect God to reveal His activity and prompting in our lives. We ought to be eagerly-watching for God to disclose Himself to us. When He does, that is the initiation of His Spirit at work within us, and we ought to somehow join with what we see Him bringing about, in a way congruent with what He is doing. In other words, we should follow *His* lead, and not change directions, just because we are not used to doing things the way He seems to.

There are three different words for “reveal” used in today’s study. (1.) The example from 1 Corinthians 1:7 says that we ought to be eagerly-expecting the “disclosure, uncovering, or revealing” of Jesus in us, or in our circumstances. The word implies that He is there, but hidden, covered over, or obscure. **God will lift the cover, remove the thing that obscures so that we can see Jesus in that circumstance, or recognize what He is doing in us. (2.) The word in John 5:20** says that the Father will “show, point out, make apparent, indicate” by outward signs, inward thoughts or feelings, by words, gestures or other means. The word implies indication that requires follow-up action on the part of the one receiving direction. If they don’t follow-up, they will not necessarily know what they missed, ...and if they *do* respond, there may be further indications to follow. (3.) **The third word, in John 14:21** is to “make visible or evident within; or to show oneself, appear or make one’s self known”. **It is used of Jesus either making Himself known to us, or in us, or in making Himself visible through us so that others can see His presence in our lives.**

It is what the spiritual gifts are all about, ...the making of God’s presence within us to become clear and evident to others. **The Corinthians were able to create a culture whereby they were mindful of and watchful for what God was desiring to do.** They prayed for revelation and were eagerly-expectant that He would somehow work to make Jesus evident in their midst. ***Be mindful, prayerful and expectant that God will call you into service, according to the grace-gifting and calling He has for you.***