

Grace Bible Church
Pastor Teacher
Robert R. McLaughlin
Tree of Life
Weekly Review
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You Have a Spiritual Gift and You Must Learn How to Utilize it for HIS Glory.

We begin with this term: Cross Bearing. Cross bearing refers to the time when we die daily (1CO 15:31) and it is when the OSN is dead to sin.

IPE 4:10-11, As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Notice that **each one** has received a special gift, and we are to employ it in serving one another. We are all given a special gift; not just an ordinary one, but a special one. Also notice that each one of us has received a special gift, that is to be employed only through the local assembly. Therefore, the issue is that grace is always to be the motivation behind the spiritual gift. Grace is always the power behind the grace of God and the spiritual gift.

The term: Cross bearing, refers to being willing to suffer persecution because of your ambassadorship! In MAT 5:13-14, your spiritual gift is also related to salt as a preserver, and light as guidance and direction.

MAT 5:13-14, You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Your spiritual Cross is to prepare you for a life filled with both blessings and trials.

PHI 1:29, For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

MAT 7:13-14, tells us that it is a different life when you pick up your Cross with a joy and accept the sorrow that comes your joy when you fail. **“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.”**

The Lord wants everything we do to be for His sake. Cross bearing consists suffering in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him but also to suffer for His sake. We are all bought with a price and therefore, we all belong to Him; 1CO 6:19-20.

1CO 6:19-20, Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body.

JOH 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

All of this now leads us to the communicational gifts.

MAT 10:35-38, “For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

Notice that he who does not take his cross and follow after the Lord is not worthy of Him. Because to bear His cross means that we are dead to sin, so we are able to be free from its bondage. This means that we are alive to God in Christ Jesus and dead to the sin nature; ROM 6:11.

Once we realize that we are truly dead to sin and alive to God, this is when we begin to enjoy the freedom that the Cross gives to operate in our spiritual gift. This also frees us to be available to serve and honor God and use our spiritual gift to serve the local assembly which the spiritual gifts that the Lord gave us to serve one another in the body of Christ.

And so, as we continue learning about the importance of serving one another with our spiritual gift, it's important to accept the fact that we should prepare ourselves for a life that can handle pressure. This is why we are told in **JAM 1:2-4, Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have {its} perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.**

It is a privilege to experience the life of God in the soul of man as the principle of Theandric Action which is the life of God serving man with his spiritual gifts. No matter what we face God's provisions for our problems are given in a two-fold way - through the cross and through other believers. This is what is meant by denying ourselves. You will recall that one day our Lord said in MAT 16:21 From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

MAT 16:22-28, And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “God forbid {it,} Lord! This shall never happen to You.” But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan!

You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds. Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Notice that there are some very important principles of doctrine that are mentioned in this section of the word of God that apply to the spiritual gifts and picking up your cross. Notice them:

MAT 16:21- We will suffer many things.

MAT 16:23 - We will set our mind on man's interests.

MAT 16:24 - Deny himself.

MAT 16:24 - Take up His cross, and follow Him.

MAT 16:25 - Save his life shall lose it.

MAT 16:25 - Loses his life for My sake shall find it.

MAT 16:26 - Gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul - what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

All of these principles apply to living the spiritual life and operating in your spiritual gift. There is also the principle of learning how to bear your cross by adjusting your life to the Will of God. Most believers reject their spiritual gift because of ignorance and not willing to submit and honor the will of God. This all goes along with the principle of what the apostle Paul said when in 1TH 4:4, he said everyone must know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.

1TH 4:2-4, For you know what commandments we gave you by {the authority of} the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification; {that is,} that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

As we operate in our Spiritual gift, we will keep ourselves in sanctification or being set apart for our Lord. This is revealed by submitting to God's will even though our emotions and volition may rebel at times. This is really when we consider ourselves to do absolutely nothing to preserve ourselves or our rights and consider it an honor and privilege to serve each other in the body of Christ. In fact, we love to do so for the other members of the body of Christ and we consider it a privilege to serve. When a believer operates in this way, his spiritual gift functions just as it should, caring and loving those who we are serving. This is the grace of God in operation. This is when other believers see the spiritual gifts not only serving one another but loving to do so.

On the other hand, many believers take on responsibility in the church and yet they have no ability to do so because they lack the spiritual gift that is needed. There is nothing worse than someone who is a novice and is not qualified to function in the body of Christ with a spiritual gift that they think that they have.

The best way for them to function is to learn the doctrine and learn how the Doctrine and the Cross are to function together as the Lord said to do by obedience to the Fathers will. Remember in **HEB 5:8, Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.** That was one of the ways our Lord learned how to prepare Himself to function with His spiritual gifts in the beginning in the distribution of the spiritual gifts in EPH 4:11-13.

Be sure that you all understand that the spiritual gifts are given as your provision to use your gifts to build up and edify others with your talents and your spiritual gifts. The key word here is edification. To edify means to build a house which is what the spiritual gifts are given for. Now, there is no way we can really see the purpose of the spiritual gifts given to the body of Christ unless we understand the edification complex of the soul and the reason why the gifts are given.

So, we begin with **JOH 14:21-23, “He who has My commands and keeps them, He it is who loves Me; and He who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.”** Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, **“Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?”** Jesus answered and said to him, **“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him,”**

“My Father will love him” is the fut-act-ind of *agapao* which refers to God the Father being pleased toward us and totally relaxed with us. God the Father loves the entire world but this love is in the future tense because it refers to a God the Father revealing His approval of the system of thinking in our soul as the gifts in the body of Christ work together to build an edification complex in the body of Christ.

JOH 14:23, 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.”

The key here is the word “abode” which is the noun *monen*, which means a mansion, a place of rest and enjoyment, or a dwelling place. That is one of the reasons we are to build up each other with the spiritual gifts that God has given to us. When the body of Christ is being built up by means of the spiritual gifts, God is glorified. Remember that the Lord has gone to heaven to prepare a dwelling place for us while on earth we can prepare a dwelling place for Him in the body of Christ. And what is the dwelling place or the mansion we can prepare for them? The mansion is in the soul and it has to do with the structure of the soul or the edification complex.

Now, with this in mind I want to note the relationship between the altars of the Old Testament versus the altars of the New Testament. For example, HEB 13:9 says, **Do not be carried away by varied and strange doctrines; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, We have an altar [a reference to the soul], from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.**

Now, the altar for the Church-age believer is his very own soul being built up in the body of Christ. Remember that the altars in the O.T. were built for a place of worship.

In GEN 8:20, Then Noah built an altar **to the Lord.**

In GEN 12:7, Abram built an altar there **to the Lord** Who had appeared to him. This is a reference to

Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Notice the word “built” and the fact that they built the altar “to the Lord” themselves. The altars were not automatically supplied by God.

In GEN 22:9, the altar was also the place of **personal sacrifice**, Abraham built the altar and bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar.

In EXO 17:15, Moses built an altar, and named it “The Lord Is My Banner.”

In JOS 8:30, Then Joshua **built an altar** to the Lord, the God of Israel.

In 2SA 24:25, And David built there an altar to the Lord.

In all of these passages, note that each one was a visible hero and built their own altar to the Lord.

In the N.T., your altar is your very own soul structure or your edification complex.

In the O.T., there were also laws and regulations regarding the altars.

For example, the altar was the place of sacrifice to the Lord, **EXO 20:24**, “**You shall make an altar of earth for me, and you shall sacrifice on it.**”

Secondly, the altar had to be constructed according to the Word of God, **JOS 8:31**, “**As it is written in the book of the Law of Moses, build an altar.**”

Thirdly, the altar was to be constructed precisely and accurately, **EZE 43:13**, “**and these are the measurements of the altar by cubits.**”

Our altar is a very own soul or our edification complex which is developed in the body of Christ through the spiritual gifts. And that's why we have certain spiritual applications behind such passages as **MAT 5:23-24**, “**If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar [edification complex of the soul], and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.**”