Purity, Unity, and Using Our Spiritual Gifts
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This is our last study in the series on spiritual growth. We've entitled it "Keys to Spiritual Growth" because we feel there are some very specific things that unlock the treasures of God along the path of Christian maturity. At the very beginning of our study, we shared the fact that there is a master key to all the locks along the way, and that is the concept of the glory of God. That's the master key involved in spiritual growth. And then there are some specific keys that really involve glorifying God in a very practical way, and we've been looking at these, as you know.

Now we've suggested to you, then, that basically spiritual growth is merely a commitment to living to the glory of God. And as you live to the glory of God the Spirit of God then energizes the process of spiritual maturity, and you become more and more and more like Jesus Christ. You move from spiritual infancy to maturity, you grow in grace, you grow up into Christ, as the Bible says.

So spiritual growth, then, is a process. It is not something instantaneous and it'll go on all your life. And it is a process that needs for its growth, and its development, and its fulfillment, a glorifying-God mentality. We have to commit ourselves to glorifying God in order to be growing. And that's just another way, as I said in our last lesson, of living the Spirit-filled life, walking in the Spirit, obeying the Word of God, letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, being conformed to His will, yielding our bodies as instruments of righteousness. In other words, all of those things really are different ways to say the same thing.

I've discovered in my Bible study through the years that basically there are just simple spiritual principles in the Bible repeated many ways in many different forms. Any good Bible teacher learns something. There are two things to remember when you teach. One is forgetfulness. People tend to forget what they've heard. So you have to continue to repeat it. But the second is familiarity. You can't repeat it in the same way or people think they already know it and they don't hear it. So you have to repeat things over and over and over, but always doing it in a new and a fresh way so that there's an exhilaration and an excitement about a new dimension of truth.

Now that's exactly what the Bible does. It takes some basic spiritual principles that you are to grow as a Christian, and it hits that same concept from many, many angles. The most pervasive way to look at it is that spiritual growth is going, as 2 Corinthians 3:18 has told us, from one level of glory, to another

level of glory, to another level of glory, as we are more and more conformed to the image of Christ.

Now we are, then, to live to God's glory. How do we do that? So far we've shared ten ways to glorify God. Let me run them by you very rapidly. Number one, we glorify God by confessing Jesus as Lord. That's where it all begins. Philippians 2:11, when we "confess Jesus as Lord, to the glory of God." You have to be born to grow. You have to come into the family. You have to come under the lordship of Christ to begin the process of spiritual maturity.

Secondly, we give glory to God by aiming our lives at that purpose. You'll never glorify God unless you aim at it. You must have that as a goal, and that is what is meant in 1 Corinthians 10:31 when it says there, "Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink - " that's as mundane as life gets " - do it all to the glory of God."

Thirdly, we learned that we glorify God by confessing our sin. Joshua 7:19 says, "Give glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession of your sin." You see, we glorify God when we admit our sinfulness, and confess it and turn from it, repent of it. And that keeps us moving in the path of maturity. You can't mature unless you're dealing with sin and eliminating it from your life.

Fourthly, we learned that we glorify God by trusting Him. Romans 4:20 tells us Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." As you believe God, and you follow His leading in confident faith, that gives Him glory, because that says in effect, "God, You are to be trusted." And that gives Him glory.

Fifthly, we learned from John 15:8 that we glorify God by bearing fruit. We glorify God when there's a product to our lives, when there's something visible about what God is doing in us. When our good works show and glorify our Father who is in heaven, as Jesus put it. We are to be fruitful. "Herein is the Father glorified - " said John 15:8 " - that you bear much fruit."

And then sixthly, we said that we glorify God by praise. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." As we recite the attributes of God and His wonderful works, and say thanks for both because they both are operative in our lives, that also keeps us along the path of growth.

And then seventh, we said we grow by being obedient out of love, by loving Him enough to obey what He asks us to do. And we saw that, didn't we, in John chapter 21, where Jesus tells Peter he's going to die, and it's going to cost his life. And He says, "If you love Me, Peter, if you really love Me like you just said three times, then you'll be willing to die." And then He says, "Follow me." And when you're willing to follow even if it means death because you love Him that much, then you're living to His glory.

We also said that we glorify God by prayer. We glorify God by prayer. John 14 says that if we ask anything in his name, he will do it, “that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” We are to pray so that God can be on display when He acts. That gives Him glory, so prayer is a very essential way in which we glorify God.

Then we said ninthly, we glorify God by proclaiming His Word, proclaiming His Word. Second Thessalonians 3:1 was our verse, and it talked about giving the Word “*free* course,” that God might be glorified.

And then the last one which we discussed in our last study was that we glorify God by bringing others to Him. And we saw that in 2 Corinthians 4:15, the Bible says that God is glorified when we add another voice to those saying thanks to God. When you win somebody to Christ, you double the potential for glorifying Him.

Now I want to give you just a few as we close our study in this particular session that will sort of round out and sum up what this tremendous area of spiritual growth must say to us.

An eleventh point - and this one very, very essential - we glorify God by moral purity. We glorify God by moral purity. And this is an absolutely essential truth. You cannot be growing spiritually with an impure lifestyle. Let me show you 1 Corinthians chapter 6, and I want you to turn to it because we’re going to dwell on it for some time. First Corinthians 6:19, and it says this, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom ye have from God, and ye are not your own?”

Now what Paul is saying is this. You must recognize that the Spirit of God dwells in you. You’re the temple of the Holy Spirit. “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Now here we are commanded to glorify God in our body and spirit. Both internally and externally, we are to live to the glory of God.

Now what Paul precisely has in mind here is the area of personal morality. To show you that I want you to back up to verse 12, 1 Corinthians 6:12. And I want us to flow through this text a little bit because this is so important. And frankly, today it, it’s as essential as anything we could talk about, because we live in such an amoral kind of society. Even in the church of Jesus Christ there is a tolerance for sin - particularly sexual sin - that has not been true of past days in the church’s history. And we seem so permissive in this society, and Paul has a very good word for us in that regard.

Look at 6:12. Paul says, “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Then he says, “Foods for the body, and the body for foods: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for fornication, but for the Lord.”

Now you get the idea of what he's talking about. Fornication is a Greek word, porneia [???] - from which we get "pornography" - that means "sexual sin." It is a big word, like a blanket, covers every possible sexual sin. Paul is saying we are not to be engaged in sexual sin. And he gives three reasons in this text and I want you to see them.

Number one, it harms. Number two, it controls. And number three, it perverts. First of all, notice verse 12, which I just read to you. And here Paul tells us that "All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful, but I will not be brought under the power of any." In other words, he is saying, "As far as Christian 1iberty goes, we're free to do certain things. But if we were to do those things, they would harm us. They would not be for our good."

He uses the word "expedient." This is the word symphero [???]. It literally means "to bring together." And from that literal meaning, it came to mean "to profit." And what he's saying is there are things which are okay, but they're not profitable. Now, Aristotle used the word, for example, in connection with the pay of sailors, and the booty of soldiers. He was talking, then, about the profit they make, and that's basically what it means. It means "to be profited by."

The English word is very interesting, "expedient." The middle part of the word, P-E-D, is a word that has to do with feet. We talk about "peds," and refer to our feet. There is, in the English language, putting this word together, a very interesting meaning. "Exped" means "to be free feet." Now the concept of "free feet" means this in its root. It means that your feet are free from any entanglement. In other words, there are certain things that I might do, but if I did them I wouldn't have free feet, I'd get tangled up. There are things that would harm me.

So that all things are permissible in a sense within God's grace, but not all things help us. Some things entangle us, some things hinder us. I'm a Christian, right? I'm redeemed, I'm redeemed eternally. I'm free to do what I want. I have liberty, and God is going to redeem me because His love is eternal. But even though I have that freedom, there are some things I don't do because they'll tangle my feet up. They'll bind me. They'll harm me. And immorality is one of those things. Immorality never helps, it only harms.

Look 1 Corinthians 6:18, "Flee fornication." Why? Well, because you're sinning at the end of the verse "against your own body." It's going to harm you. Flee from it.

You know, people say, "Well, you know, I can live anyway I want. I'm a Christian, and I am under grace, and God forgives everything, and I've been set free. I'm free from the power of the law because Christ bore my penalty. I'm free from the power of sin because He paid the price. I'm free from eternal judgment because He bore the judgment of God in His own body. I'm free." But Paul says, "Yeah. That's right. But you are not free to do things that will harm you."

You know, the book of Proverbs has a lot to say about how immorality harms us. In the 5th chapter of Proverbs, in the 6th chapter of Proverbs, in the 7th chapter of Proverbs, and in the 9th chapter of Proverbs, there is quite a long list of very practical things to show us that fornication is harmful. In 1 Corinthians 10:8 it says, “Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them - ” that is, the Israelites “ - committed, and fell in one day, three and twenty thousand.” Paul says, “Don’t commit fornication and find yourself in the same situation Israel was when 23,000 of them died in one day.”

In the 12th chapter, I think it is, of 1 Corinthians, there’s another word about this same thing. Well, we won’t take the time to look it up at this point. I’m not sure that’s the right one. That was a good guess. But anyway, there’s another place somewhere in 1 Corinthians where Paul talks about this. But sin has a devastating effect, particularly the sin of immorality.

I think back and in this one in, and Psalm 51 comes to mind, of David, who had committed the sin of immorality with Bathsheba. And in that very, very terrifying and terrible situation that resulted from that, where the man Uriah, her husband, was killed and David lived with this incredible guilt. Psalm 51 says he became sick, and he became weak, and he became lonely, and he became sad, and he became guilty, the horrible harm that came to David. You even have it in Hebrews, where it says that “The marriage bed *is* undefiled: but adulterers and fornicators God will judge.” There are some things that harm us, and so we are to avoid it.

Secondly, sexual sin not only harms, it controls. The second part of verse 12 says, “All things are lawful for me, but I’ll not be brought under the power of any.” One of the things that this particular sin does, like all other sin, is that it makes people a slave. Someone was telling me in our church that there’s a person who’s come to our church who made the statement that he comes every Sunday for the sermon and then he leaves and goes to pornographic movies in the afternoon. Because he just can’t seem to free himself from the bondage of that terrible lust. It’s a very enslaving thing. The more you give into it, the more it controls you. “Enslaved” is a good translation of the Greek word, “to come under the power or domination of.” And what he’s saying is, “I’m not going to do anything that’s going to enslave me.” And that’s what sexual evil does. It enslaves. It becomes a terrible, terrible bondage.

Now we see then that just from the very beginning, sexual sin has a powerful effect on us, it harms us and it controls us. But there’s another thing, and that is it perverts us. Look at verse 13. Sexual evil perverts us. Just to show you this, there are three distinct purposes and designs for our bodies that get perverted by sexual sin.

First of all, our bodies are, as Christians, for the Lord. Let’s look at that in verses 13 and 14. “Foods for the body and the body for foods: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his own power.” Now Paul makes his point. He says, “the body is for the Lord.” In

fact, it ought to be obvious to you that our bodies are for the Lord because someday He will raise our bodies. Someday, as He raised His own body, He will raise our bodies to dwell in glory. That's how much our bodies belong to His plan. "The body *is* not for fornication, it is for the Lord."

But they had - he kind of mocks them because they had - a little phrase, and he uses that at the beginning of verse 13. "Foods for the body, and the body for foods." By the way, in the Greek, there are no verbs in it, it's just "foods, body, body, foods." You say, "Well, what does that mean?" Well, what they're saying is, "Well, that's a slogan. Food for the body, the body for food. That's a natural function." And it was a little byword that they could use to speak of sex. And what they really meant was, "Well, sex is just like eating, you know, the body for food, and the food for the body. The body for sex, and sex for the body. It's simply a natural phenomenon. It's just a function like anything else."

And that's what people are saying today, "Oh, why do you get upset about sex? I mean, we're all sexual beings, you know. Big deal. We just go out and express ourselves. We eat, we drink, we sleep, we walk, we run, we do these things. Why not have sex? It's only biology." Like Hugh Hefner says. He says, "Sex is a biological activity like eating or drinking, and there's no reason to get prudish about it. Find yourself a girl who's like-minded and let yourself go." By the way, I read that quote in *Eternity Magazine*, where he was quoted. Just want you to understand that.

But, Paul says, "Your little byword - 'Food for the body and the body for food,' it's only biological - misses the point. God's going to destroy food and your body. God's going to destroy sex and the body. The body is for God. Food is temporary. Sex is temporary. That isn't the reason God redeemed you. That isn't the plan God has for your body. If you're a Christian, the plan God has for your body is not sex, it's resurrection, it's glorification. And why would you adulterate that body that has that marvelous and special purpose?" And that's essentially what he's saying. So the body is, first of all, for the Lord.

Secondly, it is one with Christ, even here and now. Look at verse 15, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" Don't you know that your body, right now, is a part of the body of Christ? "Shall I, then, take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot?" Oh, no, no, no, me genoito [???], the strongest negative in the Greek language, "God forbid." You can't do that. "What? know ye not that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

Do you know what happens here? You are one with Christ. You hook up with a harlot, you've made Christ one with that harlot. That's what he's saying. You can't act like that. And by the way, you want to know who a harlot is? That's anybody who has sex outside of marriage, even if they're engaged. You prostitute God's purpose for sex. That's all it means.

So our members are members of Christ, our bodies are part of His body, and we are one with Him. And we cannot drag Him into some vile relationship without affecting the purpose He intended. And that's why, in verse 18, he says, "Flee fornication. For every sin that a man does is outside the body; but he that commits fornication sins against his own body." Every other sin approaches from the outside, but this sin rises up from the inside, and reveals a corruption internally. So Paul is really hitting hard. He says, "You can't do this sin because you're one with Christ. You can't do this sin because God has another purpose for your body."

And then thirdly, he says, "You can't do this because your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." Verse 19, "Don't you know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, whom you have of God, and you're not your own? You're bought with a price." So you see, because the Spirit dwells in us, because we're one with Christ, and because God has planned a glorification of our bodies, we have absolutely no business getting involved in this. "Therefore - " verse 20, and here's the key for our study " - glorify God in your body and in your spirit." Internally and externally, don't do it and don't even want to do it. That glorifies God.

You know, from time to time I meet people who are having an illicit relationship morally and they have the gall to say, "Well, the Lord has brought us together." I sometimes meet young couples who are engaging in premarital sex and they think the Lord has His blessing on their relationship. It isn't true. There are people even in a marriage situation who may be married to an unbeliever, and they found a Christian and they're having an affair, and they try to say that the Lord is in. Listen. That isn't the case at all. You're not glorifying God. And I'll tell you, if you or I or anyone else is living in a state of immorality, there is no way we can glorify God. Thus, there is no way we can grow spiritually. We grow in purity, not impurity. So as we glorify God in our bodies, we grow in His grace. Then what are we saying, in our eleventh point? Spiritual growth involves glorifying God by purity in our lives.

Let me give you a twelfth, and maybe we'll have time for just a final one at the very end. We glorify God by unity, and this is very important. We glorify God by unity. Here's another very important element in spiritual growth, another key, and it's this. We grow - now mark this - faster when we don't have to grow alone, when we are stimulated, as it says in Hebrews that "we are provoking one another to love and good works."

We have in the Body of Christ spiritual gifts, right, to minister back and forth to each other, to stimulate growth. Let me show you this in Romans chapter 15. God is glorified in the unity of the saints. In Romans 15:5 it says, "Now the God of patience and comfort grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus." In other words, "I want you to get along with each other. I want you to feel the same about each other. I want you to have the same likemindedness in the Body of Christ, a wonderful unity." Verse 6, "In order that - " and there's that purpose clause again " - that ye may with one mind - " think alike " - *and* one mouth - " talk alike " - glorify God."

You see, God is glorified in the unity of the church, in the unity of the believers. This is an essential thing. We glorify God in our unity, a great, great thing. God doesn't expect us to struggle along the path of spiritual maturity all alone. But He expects us to move along in the company of one another. That's how we glorify one another. Therefore, he says in verse 7, "receive ye one another." Don't bar anybody. Don't have any cliques. Don't hold anybody out. Don't keep anybody at a distance, but "receive one another." After all, "Christ has received all of us," hasn't He? Are we better than He? Do we have a higher standard for our group than He does? Why? "To the glory of God."

Now this is very important. We are to be interacting. Nobody grows in a vacuum. We desperately need each other. We grow by unity. You know why? For example, an illustration. In my life, I have found that the closer I am to the circle of people around me, the easier it is for me to live a righteous life. You know why? Because that circle holds me accountable, right? When I have a circle of godly friends that I love, who are close to me, they make me accountable. They keep my life in their perspective, in their view, and if something isn't right, they point it out, and that forces me into the line.

I'm so glad that God's given me a family. I'm glad that God's given me children and a wife who have high spiritual expectations, and that family forces me to walk in a righteous path. And if I stray out of it, one or another or sometimes all five of them will chime in to inform me that I'm out of line. That's very helpful. If I don't have that, I'll just drift away. And it's very easy for a person who says, "Well, you know, I'm going to live my spiritual life the best way I can. I'm not going to get involved in a church, or I'm not going to have some close friends. I'm not going to say a whole lot. I'm the quiet type. You're going to have a very difficult time because where there is no accountability there is no real pressure to conform.

We need the provocation of Hebrews 10:24-25 to force us into spiritual patterns and paths. And so God is glorified when there's a real loving unity, when we grab arms with each other, and love each other, and serve each other, and hold onto each other, when we have one-mindedness.

You know, when Paul wrote to the Corinthians in the very beginning of his first letter, he pointed to this problem in their midst. He says, "I beseech you, brethren, - " 1:10 " - by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, *that* there be no division among You; but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." And then he goes on to say, and cut out all the contentions, and the factions, and the little cliques, and all the rest of it, and get together, you all need each other. And so I say we grow faster, we grow stronger, we grow more mature, as we commit our lives to fellow brothers and sisters. Grow in a group, not alone. This is the strength and the impetus that you need.

Now the last point I want to give you ties into this one. It's part of the 12th, or it could be the 13th, if you choose so. But I would like to have you look with me for just a brief moment at one other passage

of Scripture, and that is at the end of 1 Peter, in chapter 4. And it points to one other way we glorify God, really related to this concept of unity. It is this. We glorify God in the use of our spiritual gifts. We glorify God in the use of our spiritual gifts, 1 Peter 4:10.

Now he says, “As every man has received the gift.” I believe that every Christian has received the gift. And what gift is it? It’s that giftedness that the Spirit of God has given you. It’s that combination of spiritual gifts that are boiled down to that unique gift that you receive. I really believe that all Christians differ. I think we’re like spiritual snowflakes. None of us is like any other of us. And I think that the Lord takes the categories of giftedness such as are listed in Romans 12 and First Corinthians 12, and out of that category of, of gifts - some number it somewhere between 11 and 19, depending on which ones are in or out of it – out of that brief listing of gifts the Lord will pull a combination that’ll become the unique gift of an individual believer. And then in the unique manifestation and the unique place of service, that special gift is a gift all its own.

And as you and I minister that gift, we apply to the body of Christ a unique ministry that is unequaled by anyone else. That’s why we’re strategic. So he says, “As you’ve received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the multi-colored grace of God.” If God has been so gracious to give you a gift, use it.

Now verse 11. “If it’s a speaking gift, *then speak* as the oracles of God; if it’s a serving gift, *then do it* with the ability that God gives.” Don’t just give human wisdom if it’s a speaking gift, and don’t do it in the flesh if it’s a ministering gift. Why? Why should we speak the oracles of God, why should we serve in the power of God? “That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” In other words, use your gift not for your own glory but for God’s.

So one other way that we glorify God is in the use of spiritual gifts, and as we use our spiritual gifts, ministering to one another, that brings about the unity of the body, and in that unity of mutual ministry we are stimulated to spiritual growth, you see?

So we’re really summing up our whole thought with this. All the way along we’ve been dealing with individual elements. We’ve been saying, for example, you grow spiritually by confessing Jesus as Lord. You grow spiritually by aiming your life at that purpose. You grow by trusting, by fruitfulness, by praise, by prayer. You grow by witnessing, by proclaiming the Word. You grow by moral purity. You grow by all of these things. But when it all comes down to this final thought, you don’t grow alone. You don’t grow alone. You need the environment of accountability and mutual ministry to bring about the kind of growth that the Spirit of God would see in your life.

And so the Bible tells us, then, that we are to grow. That’s where it all begins. It begins with a command, 2 Peter 3:18, “But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ." That's a command. We say either yes to that or we say no. If we say, "Yes, Lord, I want to grow. I don't want to be stunted. I want to mature. I want to know the fullness of blessing. I want to comprehend You as one who is mature and can conceive as much as is possible for my limited mind. Lord, I want to be as useful as I can be. I want to be seeing Your power in as great a display as is possible. I'm not content with the lowlands. I want to be on the peak." If we say that, then we say, "How do I get there?"

And the Bible comes to us and says, "Live your life to My glory," and gives us a path to follow. As we follow that path and are encouraged by fellow believers, we will come to the place of real spiritual maturity, and that's what God is after in our lives.

Now let me close our study with this thought. As you and I live to the glory of God, what is the residual? What is the result? What is the effect? What do we get out of it? Then we go right back to where we started. David said, Psalm 16:8-9, "I have set the Lord always before me." Now hang onto that. In other words, David said, "I live to the glory of the Lord." Then he said, "Therefore my heart is glad." Now what is the result of living a life to the glory of God? What is the result of spiritual maturity? It is joy. "My heart is glad."

That's what God wants to do in our lives. The catechism had it right. It says this. "What is the chief end of man?" The question. The answer says, "The chief end of man is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." God wants, according to Ephesians 2:6 [???], to pour out His kindness on us throughout all eternity. God wants to unload in our lives great joy. And I believe the joy is a by-product of a spiritually progressing life. I don't think you'll ever know joy unless you're growing, because that's where God gives that joy. And along with it, I think, comes a tremendous deep sense of contentment.

Let me close with a final verse. In Ephesians 3:21 is the summation of all that we've said, really. We are the church of Jesus Christ, right? All of us who believe are the church of Jesus Christ, and this is the sum of it all, "Unto Him be glory in the church." You see, God wants to be glorified. That's the mandate. God wants us living to His glory as His church. As we obey that, He fills our lives with joy. And we can even be stuck somewhere in a prison, in a terrible circumstance, and have a heart full of joy just like Paul, who in the midst of terrible circumstances, wrote to the Philippians, "Rejoice always, and again I say, rejoice." That's God's gift to a growing Christian.

And the end of it all? The words of the apostle John, in 1 John, the sum, the goal, the end is so stated. "Beloved, now are we the children of God - " That's right. We are now His children. "But it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be - " what? " - like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

That is the ultimate end of spiritual growth. Someday when we see Jesus, we will be like Him. And, says John, "Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself." If you really believe that someday

you’re going to be like Jesus Christ, it ought to cause you to put your life in line right now, and begin to live to His glory. Let’s pray.

Father, we thank You for these six lessons on glorifying You as the path to maturity. And Lord, we realize that in and of ourselves in the flesh, even though we may know these things, we cannot accomplish them. And so our prayer must ever be, “Lord, You energize in us these realities.”

We cannot obey the lordship of Christ apart from Your power. We cannot confess our sins apart from Your conviction. We cannot trust You unless You give us the gift of faith. We cannot be fruitful unless You produce the fruit in us. We cannot even praise You unless You fill our hearts with praise. And we cannot pray unless we’re prompted by Your Spirit.

Father, we cannot proclaim Your Word unless the Spirit of God teaches it to us. We cannot bring others to You unless You beget them with Your power. We cannot be pure unless You clean us. We cannot be one unless You make us one. And so, Father, we totally depend on You to fulfill all these good things in us, that we might be like Christ and know the joy that comes to those who grow. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

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