



Supernatural

Introduction

This article is about how we can co-labor with the Spirit of God in drawing people to faith in Christ. To be clear, salvation is totally dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit: **“Salvation belongs to the LORD.”** (Psalm 3:8) **“No one can by any means redeem another.”** (Psalm 49:7) But we are called to co-labor with the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 3:5-9) So, we need to understand how the Spirit works, so we can co-labor with, and not against, the Spirit.

We also need to understand the spiritual state of those still in need of salvation – and that is this reality: **No one can understand the things of God except by the Spirit of God.** (1 Corinthians 2:10-13) Until someone is **“born of the Spirit”** (John 3:38), they will have very little understanding of scriptural truths. I am a Bible teacher, have dedicated more than 50 years to the study of the Scriptures to **“understand and know”** God (Jeremiah 9:24), and people tell me my teachings help them understand the things of God. But when I came to faith in Christ, it was not through understanding spiritual truths. In fact, while I was intrigued by some Scripture passages which the Holy Spirit powerfully used to draw me to Christ, I can clearly remember that I did not understand those scriptures. The words hooked my heart, but my mind could not comprehend the spiritual realities.

The Lord draws us **“with cords of a man, with ropes of love”**. (Hosea 11:4) I have investigated this idea in detail in another article entitled, [“*The Drawing of the Holy Spirit*”](#). But suffice to say here that this phrase, **“with cords of a man, with ropes of love”**, is referring to *spiritual encounters and experiences with God* that unregenerate people can understand. I think it would be true to say that *these encounters and experiences speak more to the heart than to the mind*. We do need to experience sound doctrine, but that is not our initial experience of the Lord. The initial experiences leading to repentance and faith are more like: **Becoming convinced and believing “that God exists, and that He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.”** (Hebrews 11:6)¹ In His drawing, God gives experiences to convince the unregenerate of such. And He may choose to employ believers in this drawing process. How would the Spirit use us? With His fruit and gifts – what are known as **“the fruit of the Spirit”** (Galatians (5:22-23) and **“gifts of the Spirit”** (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

¹ I have dealt with the topic of this believing in detail in an article entitled, [“*Coming to Faith in God*”](#).

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It has been my experience in ministering to the un-converted that **they expect God to be supernatural**. This is ironically insightful. Jesus said, “God is Spirit.” (John 4:24) Even the unregenerate are very aware of that. They intrinsically know that, if there is a God, He is going to be **supernatural** – that’s just the nature of the case. I am not saying that we believers don’t also know that, but I believe as we grow and mature in the Lord, we tend to focus on the doctrines and spiritual truths contained in Scripture. Please understand I am **not** making a case for “*anti-intellectualism*” or wanting to demean the necessity of sound doctrine in any way. Far from that, Scripture has been the primary tool the Holy Spirit has used in my personal spiritual growth and maturity. We need to both experience sound doctrine and always be consciously aware that **God is a Spirit – He is supernatural**. And while He most definitely works through human beings, He never-the-less does supernatural things. But, again, my main point is this: **Those who do not yet know God are expecting encounters and experiences with God to be supernatural**. And God will reveal this “*supernaturalness*” through human experience and through human beings. How? Through the manifestation of the fruit of His Spirit in human beings, and through the operation of the gifts of His Spirit through human beings. Jesus said His Spirit would

confirm His message to the not-yet-believer “with signs following”. (Mark 16:20)² To co-labor with God as evangelists to these not-yet-believers, we should be open and sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s working supernaturally in situations in their lives and using the fruit and gifts of His Spirit in and through us.

² Also: Hebrews 2:3-4; Acts 5:12-16; 8:5-7, 9, 13; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5

Fruit of the Spirit

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

(Galatians 5:22-23)

The Beatitudes Jesus taught³, and the character traits of Christ’s divine nature⁴ are characteristically similar to the fruit of the Spirit: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.**

<u>FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT</u>	<u>BEATITUDES</u>	<u>DIVINE NATURE</u>
love	poor in spirit	moral
joy	mournful	godly knowledge
peace	meeke	self-control
patience	righteous	perseverance
kindness	merciful	godliness
goodness	pure in heart	kindness
faithfulness	peaceful	loving
gentleness	persecuted	
self-control		

The unregenerate may not be able to give Scripture references, or even definitions, but they can recognize the godliness of these traits in someone who claims to be a follower of Christ. And these traits are inherently desirable to all human beings. Thus, as the apostle Paul wrote, we can be **“living epistles of Christ to be known and read by all people”**. (2 Corinthians 3:2-3)

³ Matthew 5:3-12

⁴ 2 Peter 1:5-7

Gifts of the Spirit

⁸“For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing(s) by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another *various* kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

(1 Corinthians 12:8-10)⁵

Generally speaking, God’s gives spiritual gifts to edify, encourage, and comfort those in His household⁶, and as signs to attest to the reality of His existence and the truth of His word to those who are as yet still outside His household.⁷ As ministers of reconciliation, we should be open to operating in gifts of the Spirit such as a word of wisdom, or a word of knowledge, a gift of healing, or prophecy when engaged in ministry to the not-yet believer. This requires sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and faith to minister something the Lord desires to give.

⁵ I have written “[Spiritual Gifts: An Overview](#)” which may be helpful. For definitions and understanding of the specific spiritual gifts I suggest: “Know Your Ministry: Spiritual Gifts for Every Believer” by Marilyn Hickey (was most helpful on MOTIVATIONAL gifts). And also: “Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts” by Howard Carter; “Spiritual Gifts” by Donald Gee; “The Gift of Prophecy” by Wayne Grudem.

⁶ 1 Corinthians 14:3

⁷ 1 Corinthians 14:22; Cf. John 10:37-38, Mark 16:20

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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Bill & Frances Furioso
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Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, discipled many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet... www.AtChristsTable.org

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