IN CHRIST TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST

By

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Christ Jesus, The Vine of Life

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Eph 1.3).

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman (John 15.1)

The LORD Jesus is the Blessed One. Christians are blessed in Christ. Apart from Christ, there is no other spiritual blessing. The will of the Heavenly Father is for His children to be spiritually rich. All spiritual wealth is in Christ Jesus. He is the Helper. He is the wisdom of God. He is the truth. He is the Life. He is salvation. He is the strength and power of God. He is the prince of peace. He is the joy of the earth. He is the Holy One. In Christ, there is knowledge. In Christ, there is peace (Eph 2.14) and joy. In Christ, there is eternal life. In Christ, there is healing for the soul and body.

The Heavenly Father has given us Jesus, the vine of life, for all spiritual nourishment to grow us to His complete image.

In Christ, there is fullness of His Spirit
In the Vine, the branches receive the fullness of the life of the vine. In Christ, His disciples are filled with His Spirit.

The word of God brings spiritual life to a dead spirit, but only the full presence of Jesus Christ brings the infilling of His Spirit.

The word of God is Spirit and Life. When a sinner receives the word of God in faith, his spirit comes alive. Suddenly, he begins to feel connected to God. He begins to be interested in God (his word, works, kingdom).

The word of God received in faith causes a dead man (spiritually dead) to come alive, but this does not mean he is filled with the Spirit of God. For a person to be filled with the Spirit of God, he must be grafted into Christ. For a person to be grafted into the Vine (Christ), he must be purified to become God’s dwelling place. A person is purified by continuously obeying the words of Jesus Christ. A person receives the fulness of the Spirit of Christ, only when Christ indwells him. If He lives in you, then you also live in Him.

…”If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. Then my Father will love him, and we will go to him and make our home within him (John 14.23).

**In Christ, there is the Power to do same works as He did**

The full presence of God is power.

The LORD Jesus did many mighty works. Yet it was not Him who did the works. It was the Father in him doing the works (John 5:19,30). He depended and trusted on the Father for divine strength on earth. It takes heavenly life to meet God’s demands. The Lord prayed before making his choice of the twelve. He prayed and sweated blood on the eve of His crucifixion. He knew that without the Father’s life and strength, He could do nothing. He trusted in the Father, and the Father never forsook Him.

Many believers are not filled with the Spirit of Christ because they do not keep His teachings nor are they submitted totally to His headship.
The Holy Spirit of the LORD enables His followers do all things. The demands of God are spiritual. We cannot satisfy God’s demand without the supply of spiritual life and strength. Jesus Christ is the life and strength of believers. He is the manna God sent to man to eat and not perish. His flesh and blood is spirit. We enter His life through the faith of obedience. The life of the Vine flows to the branch each day.

There is power in the life of Christ. Christ Jesus is the anointed one (Isaiah 61.1-3). It is His Spirit who heals the sick, casts out devils, and raises the dead. Because our Lord is the anointed one, only Him can baptize anyone in the Holy Ghost and power.

In the OT, a person was anointed with oil poured on his head. The oil will run from his head to his feet (Psalm 133.2). Christ Jesus is the “head” of the church and He is the anointed one. His anointing flows from Him (the Head) to the members of His body (his followers) (1 John 2.27). This anointed life, life of Christ, is the spirit of truth, teaching us all things.

We do not need to rely on natural strength to do divine tasks. We should rely on the divine strength of Christ. Self-reliance and self-righteousness are like woodworm eating deep into the wood and rendering it useless. In the kingdom of God, self-strength is useless and even destructive. Self-righteousness is the path of the Pharisees and it leads to death. If your righteousness does not exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, you can not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Christ Jesus is the life and salvation of man. It is only with His life that we can live the spiritual life on earth.

*I no longer live, but the Messiah lives in me, and the life that I am now living in this body I live by the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me* (Gal 2.20).

His life enables us to serve him and do mighty works (John 14.12, Mark 16.17).

He is the river of life. He is the well of life that wells up to eternal life.

*In Christ, we must remain children, always needing him, and never growing into maturity (self-reliant) and independence.*
Without Christ, man is powerless. We are nothing and we have nothing. In Christ, there is power to do all things. His power flows through us to do mighty works if we believe in Him and doubt not.

Prayer and fasting do not release the power of God, but they put us in position to receive grace: grace to believe and do exploits, grace to know and obey Him, grace to receive Him.

In the Kingdom of God, there are no formulas and methods to power. There is only Christ. There is nothing that we have that we did not receive.

**In Christ, there is power to have a Christlike character**

The LORD was without sin.

The Adamic strength is unable to obey God perfectly. Nobody was found perfect by obeying the law of Moses. Even the Pharisees who claimed to be strict adherers of the law of God were found wanting.

The life of Christ stirs our hearts to God. His life enables us to worship the father in spirit and truth. His life enables us to grow in perfect holiness.

“So be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mat 5:48).

It is the life of Christ that transformed the fearful Peter to a bold Peter. Flesh and blood cannot produce this life. The life of Christ was strength to the early church to face death with courage.
Grafted In Christ The Vine

The Lord Jesus is the vine. His disciples are the branches. A branch is lifeless except it is grafted to a vine.

*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing* (John 15.5).

**How to be Grafted In Christ**

*If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him* (John 14.23)

When a branch is grafted into Christ, the branch becomes part of the vine. When Christ makes a man a member of His body, that man becomes God’s home. To be grafted into Christ, we must accept and keep the words of Christ. The only way the devil keeps a man from being grafted into Christ is by making the man to believe errors. If man believes a wrong “gospel”, then man cannot keep the words of Christ. If man does not keep the words of Christ, then man cannot be grafted *in Christ*. The fallen man can easily embrace a “gospel” of wealth, success, unconditional grace, health, eternal life, free and unshakable salvation, even if the “gospel” is false. Except for parables, the words of Christ are simple and plain for all to understand.
It is by stern obedience to the words of Christ that we overcome the evil one. Make no excuse for the flesh.

What did Jesus Christ teach? Are we ready to receive His words even if they are hard? Are we ready to know a Jesus who does not fit into the world’s picture?

**Repentance**

*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Mat 4.17).*

*And they went out, and preached that men should repent (Mat 6.12).*

*Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance (Mat 3.8).*

Jesus Christ demands that all men should repent. Repent means to turn away from sin. Repentance is evidenced by its fruit.

Sin is any act that breaks the commandments of God irrespective of societal norms and culture.

Greed is sin. There are diverse kinds of greed. Greed is cheating, stealing, stinginess. Greed is storing more than you need. Greed is fighting over material things, Greed is sharing only an insignificant portion of your wealth. Greed is desire for plenty (wealth). Greed is lack of contentment.

Sexual immorality is sin. Sexual immorality is adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, and masturbation.

Idolatry is sin. Idolatry is loving man more than God. Idolatry is loving money or any earthly thing. Idolatry is bowing down to any man or thing, dead or alive apart from God.

Sorcery is sin. Sorcery is magic and witchcraft. Sorcery is all spiritual mediums apart from God.
There are diverse kinds of sins. The above sins lead to death. We must repent from sin.

**Discipleship**

One day, a crowd was “following” Jesus Christ, but they were not His followers. Jesus taught them on discipleship. He told them about the cost and risks of being His disciple. Jesus Christ turned to the crowd and said to them (Luke 14.25):

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, as well as his own life, he can't be my disciple (Luke 14:26)

Whoever doesn't carry his cross and follow me can't be my disciple (Luke 14:27)

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. He will first sit down and estimate the cost to see whether he has enough money to finish it, won't he? Otherwise, if he lays a foundation and can't finish the building, everyone who watches will begin to ridicule him and say, 'This person started a building but couldn't finish it.' "Or suppose a king is going to war against another king. He will first sit down and consider whether with 10,000 men he can fight the one coming against him with 20,000 men, won't he? If he can't, he will send a delegation to ask for terms of peace while the other king is still far away (Luke 14:28-32)

In the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions." (Luke 14:33)

"Now, salt is good. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can its flavor be restored? It is suitable neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. People throw it away. Let the person who has ears to hear, listen!" (Luke 14:34-35)

Let’s examine the above teaching of Jesus Christ below.

The faith of repentance is mandatory but not enough to find a place in the vine. To be grafted in the vine, a repentant sinner must become a disciple of Christ.
1) Love God more than man (Luke 14:26)

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, as well as his own life, he can't be my disciple

Love God more than any human being. You must obey God even if it displeases your mother, father, child, brothers or friends. Love God more than your life. You must stay true to the faith and choose to die for God at the face of persecution or death. The early disciples died painful deaths witnessing to Christ. Some were crucified. Others were stoned to death. Some were starved to death. Others fried to death. They embraced simplicity and dedicated their lives to Jesus. They did not cling to their lives at the face of death. The early church walked in the “Way of total Renunciation”.

"Look!" Peter replied. "We have left everything and followed you. So what will we get?" (Mat 19.27).

2) Daily Cross of Self-Denial (Luke 14:27)

Whoever doesn't carry his cross and follow me can't be my disciple.

To deny self does not only mean to deny sin. It also means to deny carnal tendencies: the pursuit of self-pleasure, ambitions, fame, material success, self-glorification, power, etc. It is very easy to bring carnal tendencies in the Christian life. The desire to be seen and respected as a Bible Preacher. The desire to be powerful and highly ranked in the gathering of believers. The selfish ambition to make your thing called “ministry” to grow.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me (Mat 16.24)

In the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions (Luke 14.33)

A rich person cannot be grafted in. To be grafted, a rich man must first sell his wealth and give to the poor, and then he will be able to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus told him (the rich young ruler), "If you want to be perfect, go and sell what you own and give the money to the destitute, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come back and follow me" (Mat 19.21).

The call of the LORD to the rich young ruler is a call to every repentant believer.

"Sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor. Make yourselves wallets that don't wear out—a dependable treasure in heaven, where no thief can get close and no moth can destroy anything. Because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Luke 12.33-34).

Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God (Luke 6.20).

Listen, my dear brothers! God has chosen the poor in the world to become rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who keep on loving him, has he not? (James 2:5)

It is difficult for a rich man or the person who loves wealth to accept this truth. As such, this becomes his stumbling block. It is difficult for a rich man to be grafted to Christ because it is almost impossible for a rich man to give away his wealth.

Then Jesus told his disciples, "I tell you with certainty, it will be hard for a rich person to get into the kingdom from heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to squeeze through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to get into the kingdom of God." (Mat 19:23-24)

If you have plenty money in the bank, then your heart is in the bank. There is no way you can have plenty wealth and set your heart on God. You cannot have God and riches.
"Stop storing up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moths and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.
But keep on storing up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal,
because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Mat 6:19-21)

It was possible in the old testament to have God and wealth because the way of the kingdom of Heaven was not yet open. In the new covenant, Jesus Christ demands total renunciation as a prerequisite to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The kingdom of Heaven are a line of Kings and Priests in service to God almighty. Together with Christ, they will rule God’s earthly Kingdom. No man can serve both God and money (Mat 6:24)

3. Submission to the LORD Jesus (Mark 10:15)

I tell you with certainty, whoever doesn't receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it (Mark 10.15)

Submission means to surrender yourself as a sheep, child, pupil, trainee to the Lord. Submission is submitting and not taking the glory for submitting. A childlike heart is difficult to become. Submission is knowing very deep within yourself that self-strength and will power are not only useless but stand as a barrier on your journey to Heaven. Jesus Christ is the only Way. In Christ, the only way. Submission is rejecting self-confidence, justification and pride. Many are trying to go to heaven following different ways, but few have followed the WAY. Few have followed Jesus Christ, the Way.

Only children can find Him. God reveals Himself only to children.

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes (Mat 11:25)

The LORD is the head. He is the only head. If you are your own head, then you do not need Christ. You must be ready to submit and obey his words no matter how hard it is. You must be ready to hear the truth even if it displeases you. You must be ready to lose
your life. Church attendance, bible reading, praying and fasting, preaching, are not the way. It is Jesus you need to win the Christian race. Seek to be grafted in Christ so that He can fill you with His Spirit. Many believers claim that they are filled with God's presence, but they are not. False baptism, fake speaking in tongues, and other fake and demonic spiritual manifestations, abounds in our time.


It is a shame to start building a house and never finish it. It is a shame to go to war unequipped. Do you accept the words and demands of Jesus Christ? If yes, before you decide to follow Jesus Christ, you must calculate the cost of following Him. There is a cost to pay. Can you pay it? Can you love God more than any man? Can you deny yourself each day to follow Him? Can you give away your possessions and live a simple life? Can you submit to Him as a Child? If you decide to pay these costs, can you maintain that choice till the end? If there is a 1% chance of you giving up on the way, it is better never to start. Do you know why? You become like tasteless salt, only fit to be thrown away. Anyone who lays his hand on the plough and looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. If you can’t pay the price, it is normal. All of us can’t by nature, but with His grace, we can pay it all. You need Christ from the difficult start through the difficult road to the difficult end. Keep asking, seeking, and knocking. He will surely answer. None is strong. The strong man is the weak man who acknowledges his weakness and lean on Jesus for divine strength. It is the “weak” who wins the Christian race because they cling to Jesus from start to finish.
Like Christ, The Fruitful Vine

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit* (John 15:1-6).

The Lord is the vine. The disciples of Christ are the branches. The work of the branch is to bear the fruit of the vine. The disciples are *in Christ* to become *like Christ*. A disciple that is well trained becomes like his master. It is the will of God that the disciples bear fruit in plenty (to become more and more like Jesus Christ). It is the will of the Father to fashion many after the pattern of the first-born son (Rom 8.29). The father wants many sons who are exactly like Jesus.

**Like Christ, In Character**

"*Those whom he knew beforehand, he has also predestined to be like his Son, similar to him, so that he may be the Firstborn among many brothers and sisters*" (Romans 8.29).
Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you… (John 15:16-17)

What is the nature of Christ? What kind of a person is the Lord Jesus? If we do not know who he is, how can we become like him?

1) Christ is a Sheep

Place my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest for your souls (Mat 11:29).

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love (John 15:10).

A sheep is gentle, humble and obedient. A sheep always follows his lord. Jesus Christ is meek, obedient, and lowly in heart. He bore the shame of the cross (the beating, spitting, insults, mocking, rejection, misunderstanding, unbelief, nakedness and crucifixion) without any form of retaliation. He was afflicted yet he did not open his mouth to curse anyone. Yes, Jesus was obedient to the Father even unto the painful death on the cross.

His disciples must be obedient and loyal to Him even at the face of death. His disciples must always bow at his feet in submission. His disciples must always be humble to learn.

2) Christ is a Lion

The LORD did many mighty works on the earth, yet not Him, but the Father in Him. His total faith and trust in the Father made it possible for Him to perform great signs.

He preached the good news of the kingdom and salvation to the poor Taught the word of God in synagogues and public places.
He forgave sins (Mat 9.6).
Performed Signs (multiplication of food, turning water into wine) (John 5.19-20; John 4.46-54; John 5.46: John 6.28-33; John 9.3; John 10.31-38; John 11.16).
Healed the sick (John 5.1-17)
Freed the captives. He casts out devils from people
Raised the dead

The Lion is not the strongest, fastest, wisest or biggest animal in the jungle. Yet He is king of the Jungle. The Lion is king of the jungle because He is courageous and strong. It takes both courage and strength to rule. The Lord Jesus had complete faith in the Father, and He was bold, fearless and courageous. Everything is possible to him who believes. This is power.

It takes courage and faith to do exploits in the kingdom of God.

And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell you about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. Through faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice, received promises, shut the mouths of lions, put out raging fires, escaped death by the sword, found strength in weakness, became powerful in battle, and routed foreign armies. Women received their dead raised back to life. Other people were brutally tortured, but refused to be ransomed, so that they might gain a better resurrection (Heb 11:32-35)

Cowardice is not a virtue in the Kingdom of God. The kingdom of God suffers violence and the violent take it by force. The apostles preached the gospel with boldness (Acts 4:13).

3) Christ is a servant

“…because even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people.” (Mar 10:45)

The Lord Jesus commands his disciples to be servants to each other both in spiritual and earthly matters.
If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet (John 13:14)

To wash one another’s feet means to serve one another in earthly matters. His disciples are admonished to carry each other’s earthly burdens and serve each other physically as would do a slave, a nanny, or house helper.

Jesus called his disciples and told them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers among the gentiles lord it over them, and their superiors act like tyrants over them. That's not the way it should be among you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be a slave to everyone, because even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people (Mar 10:42-44)

3) Christ is Love

God is kind to the wicked and ungrateful. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him will not perish (John 3:16).

The LORD is gentle and humble (Mat 11.29), patient and persevering (2 Pet 3.9, Rom 2.4), merciful and kind (Luke 6.36), Self-giving (John 10.11), just, holy, true, obedient, faithful, not worldly. He cares for the poor. Love and faith are the greatest of all Christian virtues (1 Cor 13:1-3, 13). Love is the foundation of a godly character while faith is the foundation of kingdom works.

What is Love?

Love does no wrong to a neighbor, so love makes the law complete (Rom 13.10). Love sanctifies because it covers many sins. One who loves perfectly sins not. Love is contentment. Love is not jealous or covetous. Love is selfless. Love forgives. Forgiveness is humble love. Love has no high opinion of itself nor is it proud. Love does not repay evil for evil. Love is kind to others. Love gives to everyone who asks (even
enemies). Love is patient with others. Love patiently bears with the weaknesses of others. Love serves God perseveringly. Love is always fair, takes no thought for itself, serves the other (Gal 5.13, John 13.2-16), polite, gentle and self-controlled, believes in God. Love is slow to anger. Love is not deceitful (Romans 12.9) nor envious. Love takes no account of evil. Love is not rude.

Love is not just a feeling. It is an act of the heart. Love is any virtuous act that springs from a selfless heart. Motive defines love. A man can give his entire body to be burnt without the motive of love. A person can give away all his goods to the poor without love as the motive. The fruit of the spirit is love Galatians 5:22-23. Love can be known by various names: Loving kindness, faithful love, enduring love, patient love, merciful love, humble love, gentle love (1 Corinthians 13:1-8). The children of God are known by the works of their love (Mathew 5:14-16). Faith without works of love is dead (James 2:20).

The Lord Jesus commands His disciples to love one another.

*This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you (John 15:12).*

**Like Christ, In Works**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it (John 14.12-14)*

Faith is the foundation of doing good works in the Kingdom of God.

**What is Faith?**

Faith is complete trust in God without any fear or doubt. Faith is courageous. Faith does not come by hearing the word with your head, rather, it comes by hearing the word of God with your heart. Faith comes by knowing the truth. When faith comes, doubt goes
away. When courage comes, fear goes away. God helps our faith. He is the author and perfecter of our faith. When he speaks to our hearts, our hearts respond in faith. Except he speaks, the written word profits little.

**Our Work In Christ**

The Heavenly Father wants the followers of Christ to continue with the work of their Lord to conquer the earth. The Lord did only that which the Father showed him. Jesus commands his disciples to do that they have seen him do. He commands his followers to heal the sick (Mark 16.19), free the bound (Mark 16.19), preach the good news (Mark 16.15, Mathew 28.20), forgive sin (John 20.23), lay down our lives (John 15.12-13), to believe in him (John 14.10-12; John 6.28-29, John 14.9-12).

*Truly, I say to you, the one who believes in me will do the same works that I do; and he will even do greater than these, for I am going to the Father. Everything you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. And everything you ask in calling upon my Name, I will do*” (John 14.12-14).

The Lord Jesus commands his disciples to continue in the work of the kingdom (the same works that he did). His life as the “Son of Man” was an exemplary life for every son of God on earth. Those who have the spirit of Christ are in the son and the Father.

When the LORD was on the earth, the Heavenly Father performed all His works through him. Without the Father, he could do nothing. The Father was the one doing all the works.

"*I can do nothing of myself*” (John 5.30).

“All that I say to you, I do not say of myself. The Father who dwells in me is doing his own work” (John 14.10).

"Truly, I assure you, the Son cannot do anything by himself, but only what he sees the Father do. And whatever he does, the Son also does. The Father loves the Son and
shows him everything he does; and he will show him even greater things than these, so that you will be amazed (John 5.19).

As the Lord Jesus could do nothing without the Father, so too his disciples can do **nothing** without Him. All works done in human strength and wisdom is substandard. Self-confidence, self-reliance and wisdom must be dealt away with before any meaningful work can be done. The disciples of Christ must realize the secondary role they play in the work of God and the utter uselessness of self-strength.

The work is done by His Spirit through his disciples. The Holy Spirit enables the followers of Christ to work miracles, heal, prophesy, to preach the good news of the kingdom and teach the word of God.

Every disciple of Christ is called to serve in spiritual matters in the Kingdom. Every disciple of Christ is called to serve in **all** spiritual matters in the Kingdom, but not everyone can serve in all spiritual matters because not everyone is fully grown to maturity. Each person serves in his capacity, according to the grace he has received from God. The perfect will of God is for all believers to become disciples, for all disciples to serve in the Kingdom, and for all disciples to grow to full maturity and serve in the full capacity of the “Son of Man”.

Once a person filled with the Spirit of Christ, he begins to grow at any rate. As he grows, his spiritual abilities grow. No need searching for your abilities. It will be evident when the ability is there. Whatever you have been enabled to do at any point, do just that while praying earnestly to be enabled to do more. Apostle Paul was enabled to do much.

"Of course, I would not dare to speak of other things but what Christ himself has done through me, my words and my works, with miracles and signs, by the power of the Holy Spirit - so that non-Jews may obey the faith. In this way I have extended the Good News to all parts, from Jerusalem to Illiricum" (Romans 15.18-19)

A natural talent is not a spiritual ability (gift of the spirit). The work of the Lord does not need our natural talents. When the tabernacle of God had to be built in the desert, God
chose Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah and filled him with His Spirit for the ability of every craft work.

"Yahweh spoke to Moses and said, "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom, understanding, skill, and ability for every kind of craft: for the art of designing and working in gold and silver and bronze; for cutting stones to be set, for carving in wood, for every kind of craft (Exodus 31.1-3).

When God’s work needs to be done, He gives divine enablement. All glory belongs to God so that no man would boast. Natural talents are not needed in the work of God, neither are they useless. Use your natural talent to help others. The use of your natural talent in kingdom is not useless, yet it is not needful. A natural talent is harmless, but it can be a stumbling block in the works of the kingdom if it does not remain its proper place.

The Holy Spirit empowers and enables the disciples of Christ for a variety of good works. He gives different abilities to anyone, but it is the will of God for all disciples to operate in all the capacity of the Son of Man. Our ability is determined by the measure of our faith. Our faith is determined by the measure of the grace of God we receive. There are diverse kinds of abilities or faith:

The ability to speak with wisdom
The faith to heal
The ability to speak and teach the word of God
The faith to prophesy
The faith to perform miracles
The ability to speak other languages
The ability to interpret other languages
The ability to discern spirit

Every function or ability in the body of Christ is important (1 Corinthians 12.12-23).
The aim of these good works is to bring the unbeliever to repentance and to build up the body of Christ.

Every work will be tested with fire. To him whose work is true, He will say to them, “Very well, good and faithful servant, since you have been faithful in a few things, I will entrust you with much more. Come and share the joy of your master” (Matthew 25.21).

**Why We Must be Like Christ In Character & Works**

"People who reap the harvest are paid for their work, and the fruit is gathered for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together" (John 4.36).

The Christian who bears the fruit of a Christlike character will inherit eternal life. The disciple who bears the fruit of Christlike works will receive wages. Eternal life for all who have a Christlike character. Kingship and Priesthood for all who have Christlike works. Eternal life and wages for all who are like Christ in character and works.

"Look!” Peter replied. "We have left everything and followed you. So what will we get?" Jesus told them, "I tell you with certainty, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne in the renewed creation, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, governing the twelve tribes of Israel.

In fact, everyone who has left his homes, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or fields because of my name will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life (Mat 19:27-29)

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth (Rev 5:10)

No servant of Christ should be lazy. (Luke 12.45-48, 19.11-27)

"But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time to come back,' and begins to beat the other servants and to eat, drink, and get drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he doesn't expect him and at an hour that he doesn't
Then his master will punish him severely and assign him a place with unfaithful people.

That servant who knew what his master wanted but didn't prepare himself or do what was wanted will receive a severe beating.

But the servant who did things that deserved a beating without knowing it will receive a light beating. Much will be required from everyone to whom much has been given. But even more will be demanded from the one to whom much has been entrusted” (Luke 12.45-48)

The servant who knows the will of the master but does not work, is the wicked and lazy servant. He will be given many lashes of the Cane. The servants who works for the Lord will be given great positions of authority in the Lord’s coming kingdom.

There are no wages for those who do not inherit life. A person needs to be alive to receive wages. Working for God without walking in love and obedience will profit nothing.

"Not everyone who keeps saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will get into the kingdom from heaven, but only the person who keeps doing the will of my Father in heaven.

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, we prophesied in your name, drove out demons in your name, and performed many miracles in your name, didn't we?'

Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who practice evil!'” (Mathew 7.21-23).

The disciple who bears Christlike fruit is both a servant and a son to God. As we behold his image every day, we are being transformed into his image day by day (2 Corinthians 3.18). The son, once matured, has the very nature of the father.

"My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit: it is then that you become my disciples" (John 15.8).

"May your lifestyle be worthy of the Lord and completely pleasing to him. May you bear fruit in every good work and grow in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1.10).
Remain Grafted In Christ

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned (John 15.1-6).

Why am I fruitless?

There is just one answer to this question. You are fruitless because you have not yet been grafted in Christ or you did not remain grafted in Christ. Struggle to enter the narrow gate. Do your best to be grafted into the vine of life. If you are grafted, do your best to remain grafted. If you are grafted in Christ and you remain in Him, you shall surely bear fruit. You remain in Him only by way of continual submission, daily self-denial and obedience to Christ.

We remain grafted in Christ if we remain in faith and obedience to His word. A life of continuous faith and obedience is possible only by the power of the Holy Spirit. Remain devoted and consecrated to God each day. He is the life vine. His life flows to his branches and they bear fruit. Cut off from him, the branch is fruitless. Abide in Christ and you shall bear much fruit.
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