

May God Equip Us to Do Good According to His Will
Hebrews 13:20-21; 1 Cor. 12:1-11

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I. Historical Background & Biblical Context

Christianity is about having a relationship with God, Jesus Christ and our fellow believers. Paul's letter written while he was imprisoned for his beliefs points this out to his fellow believers and companions. Under the pressure of various afflictions, many of the Christian Jews were withdrawing from the church and returning to the safety of Jewish worship at the synagogue. Paul desired to show these Jewish Christians that the law of Moses itself pointed to Jesus Christ and His atonement as the true source of salvation.

When we pray to the Lord to know His will, then we as Christians will be equipped by the Lord and are able to do good according to His will. May we take this wonderful prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit to heart and pray that the Body of Christ, both individually and corporately, be indeed equipped with everything that is needed to do God's will, so that we become a people that are pleasing to the Lord in all the things that we do and in everything we are.

II. The Lesson: May God Equip Us to Do Good According to His Will

A. Hebrews 13:20-21.

1. Heb. 13:20.

After asking his audience to pray for him and his coworkers, the author in today's passage prayed for his audience. In so doing, he asked for God's blessings on them. The prayer was offered to the "God of Peace" who alone is this source of peace. Only God can grant this peace, for only He can reconcile us to Himself and to one another. We do not have a distant ineffective God but a God of peace who made peace with us through the death of Jesus. He gives us His own perfect peace as we remain in fellowship with Him.

Such peace came to us through the “blood” of the new, eternal Covenant and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (The Blood Still Works). Because of the shedding of the blood of Christ on the cross, God fully and finally cleansed us of sin, enabling us to stand before Him unafraid. God Himself is willing to undertake the task of shaping us into His obedient servants.

Neither do we have a vague, powerless God, but One who is our Good Shepherd Who works on our behalf, guides our feet into the way of peace and Who equips us for all that we need to carry out His plan and purpose in our lives.

2. **Heb. 13:21.**

The author prayed that the God of peace, through Jesus Christ , will give His people everything they need to do good works that were pleasing in His sight. With this request, Christians are reminded that they were enabled to do God’s will through God’s constant work of grace. We can do nothing pleasing to God in and of ourselves, but all good that we do in our thoughts, words and deeds is on account of the work of the Holy Spirit in us. God gives us the grace and faith to believe and to demonstrate that belief through doing good works that He prepared for us.

The Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts for service and to help people to produce good work in their lives. In whom the spiritual gift has been deposited, it must be used for the glorification of the Lord. When the Spirit of God is manifested in us, we want to do good, not only for each other, but for the Lord we serve as well. If we want to do good for God and others, we must show God in our daily walk: ”But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal” (all), 1 cor. 12:7.

The work of God in reconciling us to Himself through Christ and equipping us to do good as He works out what is pleasing in His sight within us leads to the glory of Jesus Christ, our Lord. To equip means to furnish whatever is necessary to perform the task at hand, to supply whatever is needed for an assigned purpose. Our calling and purpose in the will of God is to be engaged in a great variety of good works. God is willing to equip us “in every good work to do his will. God does not save us merely for our sake but so that He and His Son will be glorified.

Not only does this prayer ask that God carry out every good work that is pleasing through us, but also that He would carry out His good pleasure within us. It is a prayer asking God to do a good work that is pleasing to Him as well as asking Him to work in our outward actions and attitudes so that we will be pleasing to the Father in all we are, do, think, and say.

B. 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Here in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul reminded the Corinthians that God's grace produced a rich diversity of gifts among them so that everyone who called Jesus Lord had some special grace with which to serve Him. The Corinthians had been presented with many gifts but struggled with maturity in using them. Similar to the Corinthians, we also struggle with our own issues of immaturity in using the gifts we have been blessed with.

1. vv. 1-3.

Paul did not want the Christians of Corinth to feel proud about themselves, and so he reminded them that the church belonged to God. In Addition, the Corinthian Christians were given a reminder that is good for us today. We are ignorant of things regarding spiritual gifts. The Spirit always honors Jesus. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is not to promote Himself or mankind but to represent, honor and glorify Christ. Whenever a person gives honor to Jesus as their Lord and Master, the Spirit helps that person to do so.

3. vv. 4-7.

In this passage, Paul emphasized that the Father, Son and Spirit are the same God. Christ, our Lord and Master, gives each person different instructions about how to serve Him. Also, the Holy Spirit gives different kinds of gifts to God's people. No single Christian has all God's gifts, and no single Christian can carry out all God's work. The result is that Christians need each other to do God's work together, but the honor belongs to God alone.

4. vv. 8-11.

There is only one God, and He is working by His Spirit among His people. However, the Spirit does not work in the same way in every Christian's life. He gives different gifts so that each person can serve

Christ in a different way. The author listed nine different gifts of the Spirit. These are not things Christians can do by their own human skills or mere human effort.

Paul began the list with words of wisdom and knowledge, wisdom or knowledge that comes from the Holy Spirit. In addition, the Holy Spirit gives the gift of faith, trusting and depending on the Lord. God made many promises, and the persons with faith trusted Him to do what He promised.

God continues to heal the sick through the power of prayer and faith in the name of Jesus. He also works through medical discoveries and miracles that include the power to heal supernaturally.

By prophecy, Paul meant a message that the Holy Spirit gives. It is a call to people to live in a godly manner. In the Old Testament, prophets would warn those who were not obeying God.

The gift of discerning of spirits or the power to see the difference between spirits. God's Spirit would tell members of the church who was speaking the truth. All other spirits came from the devil.

The gift of tongues and the power to explain their meaning are sounds usually in no known human language. Someone with a special gift to explain the meaning was needed.

All the gifts mentioned are the works of God's Holy Spirit. The Holy spirit decides what gift or gifts each Christians should have to work together. Then they are authorized to spread or build up God's kingdom.

III. Conclusion

God commands us to do good, and so we must do good. However, we will never do what is pleasing in His sight unless He works His grace in us by His Holy Spirit. Let us remember to give Him praise and thanks when He enables us to obey, trust and serve Him.