

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is mentioned quite a lot these days, but some people seem to have significant misconceptions about Him. There also seems to be a lack of appreciation for the marvelous gift that God has given to the church. I'd like to spend some time talking about the Spirit and reviewing what the Bible teaches us about Him.

The first thing we need to understand is that the relationship we have with the Spirit in the church age is quite different from the way things were in the Old Testament. It's easy to forget the fact that the Spirit was given to the church by Jesus, and the reason He gave Him to us was because He was leaving to go back to Heaven:

John 16:7: “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.”

When Jesus left He promised to give His followers something new – *something they didn't have before*. (After all, if they already had it then there would be no need to send it again!) He was going to send them the Holy Spirit.

That's exactly what Jesus did. The Spirit was given to the church on the day of Pentecost:

Acts 2:1-4: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were

all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

This passage tells us that “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost”. That's continued to be the case throughout the church age. Whenever a person is saved they're immediately filled with the Holy Spirit. We can see this in the case of the centurion Cornelius, who was saved and filled with the Spirit while Peter was still preaching to him:

Acts 10:42-44: “And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”

The book of Ephesians tells us that not only have we been given the Spirit, but we've been sealed with it as well:

Ephesians 1:13-14: “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

Paul is saying that we've been promised an inheritance – one that we haven't yet received. The Holy Spirit is “the earnest” of that inheritance. That means He's something like earnest money. When someone makes an offer on a house they're usually required to put up “earnest money”. This tells the seller that the

offer is serious. The Holy Spirit is essentially “earnest money” from God, telling us that He's serious about giving us the inheritance that He's promised us.

Another key point in this passage is that it says “ye were sealed” with the Spirit. This means the Spirit is sealed within us! We can't lose Him and He can't be taken from us. We have Him with us *forever*. In fact, this is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a Christian. Anyone who has the Spirit is saved, and anyone who does *not* have the Spirit is *not* saved:

Romans 8:9-11: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

If we have the Spirit then we're saved and will one day be resurrected. If we don't have the Spirit then we're not saved and we won't be resurrected when the Lord Jesus returns. It's that crucial! The Holy Spirit is one of the great gifts that Jesus gave to the church.

I want to point out that this gift was given *only to the church*. The Old Testament saints weren't given this same gift. They lived in a different dispensation. Christ was clear that the gift of the Holy Spirit was a new thing, and the reason He was being given to us was *because Jesus was leaving*. This doesn't mean no one in the Old Testament had the Holy Spirit, because some of them definitely did. What it does mean is that the Spirit was given differently and operated differently.

The first person the Bible describes as being filled with the Spirit wasn't a priest or a prophet. Instead it was a workman

named Bezaleel. We can find him in the book of Exodus:

Exodus 31:1-5: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.”

God had just given Moses the plans for the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant – two very holy objects that were going to be used to worship God. However, the Lord didn't stop at just giving Moses the plans. God also selected the people He wanted to build them! The Lord chose Bezaleel and filled him with His Spirit so he could build the tabernacle and the Ark.

In other words, God wanted Bezaleel to perform a special and holy task, so He gave him His Spirit to enable him to accomplish the job. The Lord did this same thing in other places throughout the Old Testament. There were times when God would assign tasks to certain people and then give them His Spirit so they could carry them out.

That being said, few people in the Old Testament were ever given the Spirit. He was a rare gift – which is something Moses lamented:

Numbers 11:27-29: “And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord'S people were

prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!"

Moses longed for a day when all of God's people would be given the Spirit. That's exactly how things are today! However, that wasn't the case in the Old Testament. The situation was even worse than it seems because in those days not only was the gift of the Spirit a rare thing, but those who had the Spirit had to be careful because *He could be lost*. If a person sinned against God then He might withdraw His Spirit. He wasn't sealed inside us the way He is today.

A good example of this is the case of Samson. He was born to begin delivering the Israelites from the oppression of the Philistines:

Judges 13:5: "For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall **begin** to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

The passage doesn't say that Samson would *deliver* the Israelites. All it says is that he would *begin* to deliver them.

The Lord had a job for Samson to do so He gave him His Spirit:

Judges 13:24-25: "And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol."

Samson was able to accomplish mighty feats of strength through the power of the Spirit. God placed a special rule upon Samson: since he was a Nazarite he wasn't allowed to cut his hair. As long as he didn't do that the Lord would continue to be with

him.

Did Samson obey that rule? Not exactly. One day Samson told Delilah the source of his power and she had one of her servants cut off his hair. The Lord was displeased with Samson's disobedience and withdrew His Spirit from him. That caused Samson to lose his strength and be captured by the Philistines:

Judges 16:20-21: “And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.”

In the church age we're sealed with the Spirit. The Lord will never take Him from us. However, losing the Spirit was a genuine concern in the Old Testament. When Samson disobeyed God, the Lord departed from him. God withdrew His Spirit and Samson lost his strength. Even King David was troubled by this very same problem. After he sinned with Bathsheba he begged God not to withdraw His Spirit from him:

Psalm 51:11: “Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.”

Since we're part of the church, the Holy Spirit can't be taken from us. But before this age that was a very real concern – and sometimes it did happen! The church has been given an astounding gift. In fact, *only the church* has been given this particular gift of the Spirit. Once the Lord returns for His church and takes us out of this world, things will change – but I'll get to that a bit later.

What does the Holy Spirit do? Quite a lot, actually. One of the big things the Holy Spirit does is convict people of their sins and draw them to Jesus to save them. No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws Him:

John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Everyone who's ever come to Jesus has done so because the Father has drawn him. This is done through convicting people of their sin and their need for a Savior. God won't save anyone who hasn't repented, and before people can repent they must understand that they've sinned and are guilty in the sight of God. Only then will they cry out to God for forgiveness and mercy. In order for people to be saved the Father must draw them to His Son, and the Father uses the Holy Spirit to do that.

Salvation depends upon conviction. One of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of its sin:

John 16:8: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:"

The word translated "reprove" is the Greek word *elegcho*, which means to convict, convince, or admonish.

The Holy Spirit also teaches us:

John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

This is why Christians can understand the Bible, and why those who aren't saved find the Bible impossible to understand.

The Bible tells us that its truths are spiritually discerned. In order to understand them we need the Spirit! Since we have the Spirit we can understand what the Bible is saying. The Spirit teaches us all things, and in key moments of our lives the Spirit brings things to mind.

Did you ever wonder why Christ's disciples found it so hard to understand what He was saying? Well, consider this: they didn't receive the Spirit until *after* Jesus was raised from the dead! That means during His life they were trying to understand Him *without* the indwelling of the Spirit.

Another way to look at this is that God has given us a companion. When we're sitting by ourselves reading the Bible, we're not alone because the Holy Spirit is within us. As we read the Word He will teach us things and guide us into the truth.

The Holy Spirit is our tutor. He's the one who reveals truths to mankind and knows the deep things of God:

1 Corinthians 2:10-11: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

I'm not saying that it's impossible to learn things from human teachers. In fact, God has actually blessed some people within the church with the gift of teaching for that very reason! God *wants* you to learn from other people. If He didn't then there would be no teachers. But the point is that you can understand the Bible *yourself*. You don't have to solely depend on other people to tell you what it says.

This is a very important point. The Catholic Church teaches that only priests have the power to properly interpret the Bible. Throughout history they've claimed that lay people should avoid reading the Bible and should believe whatever their priest

tells them. However, the Catholic Church is wrong. *Everyone* should read the Bible! God commands everyone to study it, believe it, and obey it. We don't need a priest to interpret it for us because we have the Spirit! Over time He will teach us all things, provided that we actually sit down and study the Word. It's actually *our job* to critically examine the things that our teachers are telling us. Instead of blindly accepting everything that we hear, we should read the Word and verify the truth of what we're being taught.

The Holy Spirit also intercedes for us:

Romans 8:26: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

This part of the Spirit's ministry isn't visible to us but it's still very important. Satan is more than just our adversary; he's also our accuser. The Bible tells us that he's attacking the saints and accusing them before God *day and night*. Job wasn't the only person that Satan has brought accusations against. The devil is still doing that today. (If Satan is the prosecuting attorney then the Holy Spirit is our defender.)

Another thing the Spirit does is lead us:

Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

This is something we see quite a bit in the New Testament. One manifestation of this is the way the Spirit sometimes gives specific counsel and guidance. For example, in the case of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, the Spirit came to Philip and gave him a command:

Acts 8:29: “Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go

near, and join thyself to this chariot.”

Philip obeyed and went up to the chariot, and there he met an Ethiopian who was confused about an Old Testament prophecy. When Philip explained it to him, the Ethiopian was saved and went away rejoicing.

The Holy Spirit also sanctifies us:

2 Thessalonians 2:13: “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:”

Titus 3:5: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”

Sanctification means “becoming more like Christ”. When Christ saves us He makes us a promise to perfect us, but that perfection doesn't take place at the moment of our salvation. Even though our sins have been forgiven and we've been made right with God, we still struggle with sin and temptation. Although Christians have a new nature, there's still a sinful nature within us that puts up a fight and makes our lives difficult.

One day that will change. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns and brings us home (whether that happens at our death or at the rapture) we will be changed. Our days of struggling with sin will be over once and for all and we'll finally be like Christ. However, until that day comes we'll still have to wage a war against sin and temptation. The process of defeating that sin and choosing holiness over depravity is called sanctification.

Sometimes people think that sanctification is something that *we* have to make happen. They believe it's entirely up to them

to learn how to do better, and it's just a matter of trying harder until you finally make it. But that's not how it works!. We don't sanctify ourselves; instead that's something the Spirit does. He's the one who regenerates and renews us. When we conquer sin and achieve victory, that victory was achieved by the Spirit, not by us. He's the one driving our sanctification. When we give in to temptation, our response shouldn't be "I'll just try harder next time". Instead we must pray that the Spirit would wash and regenerate us, that God would change us, and that Jesus would live His life through us. We can't sanctify ourselves! Only the Spirit can do that. Victory over sin is something that only God can provide. If we try to overcome sin using our own efforts and strength then we will fail time and time again. We can do all things through *Christ* who strengthens us – not through our own willpower (Philippians 4:13).

The Holy Spirit also rebukes the world, which is something that was touched on earlier:

John 16:7-11: “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”

There are also the gifts of the Spirit, which is a subject that's far too large to discuss here. What I can say is that the Spirit has given different gifts to people within the body of Christ so that they might minister to one another:

I Corinthians 12:8-12: “For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the

word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.”

There's a lot more that can be said about the gifts of miracles, tongues, and so forth. Some people believe that these gifts have ceased while others believe that they still exist. I don't want to get into that debate right now because it's a complicated discussion that's outside the scope of this paper. The point I want to make is that the Spirit has given different gifts to different people, and He intends those gifts to be used for the good of the church. God gave each of us different abilities so we can minister to one another's needs. We're not an army of clones where each person is exactly like everyone else! Instead we are a body, and a body has different parts that perform different functions.

There's also something called the fruit of the Spirit, which is mentioned in Galatians:

Galatians 5:22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

Some people view this as a task list. They read it and think “Here's a list of character qualities I need to develop. I'd better get started right away!” But that's not exactly how it works. These are *fruits* of the Spirit. That means these are things that happen in our

life as a result of having the Spirit dwelling in us. The Holy Spirit is the one who will accomplish these things in us! As we follow Christ we will begin to see these things manifested through us. When we do we must remember that they weren't accomplished by our efforts; instead they were the work of the Spirit.

There are a few people who want to believe that *they* are personally responsible for their holiness, and that they made themselves who they are. "Just look at me! Look at all of my great character qualities. Aren't I a wonderful person? I made myself this way through my own hard work and willpower. I'm holier than you because I'm *better* than you." Although they might never say these things out loud, it's easy to fall into the trap of believing these things. It's tempting to believe that we're responsible for our spiritual growth, but that's not the case. The Holy Spirit is the one who sanctifies us, draws us closer to God, reveals the truth of the Word to us, and works in our lives. We're the *recipients* of God's grace, *not* the ones who made it happen. Christianity isn't a do-it-yourself religion! Our life isn't the story of the great things we've done. Instead it's the story of the great things that God has done for us (and through us).

As we've seen, the Holy Spirit does quite a lot. He teaches us the truth, He reveals the deep things of God, He intercedes for us, He guides our lives, He sanctifies us, and He gives us gifts so that we might minister to one another. That's quite a list!

There is one thing that's absent from that list: there's no mention that the Holy Spirit restrains evil. Nowhere in the Bible do we find the Spirit tasked with that particular role (or performing it, for that matter).

The reason I bring this up is because many people believe that the Holy Spirit is preventing the antichrist from appearing. This idea is based on a passage from 2 Thessalonians:

2 Thessalonians 2:7: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way."

In the King James Version of the Bible, that verse is difficult to understand. What does “he who now letteth will let” even mean? Well, the phrase “letteth will let” is the Greek word *katecho*, which means “to restrain, hinder”. The ASV translation of this passage is much easier to understand:

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7: “And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way.”

This verse is saying that someone is acting as a restrainer and preventing the antichrist from appearing. The antichrist won't appear until the restrainer is taken out of the way. Many people teach that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit, but the problem with this view is that *nowhere* in the Bible does one ever see the Holy Spirit restraining demonic activity! This passage says there's a restrainer but it doesn't say who it is.

However, there is a class of beings who spends a great deal of time restraining demonic activity. Those beings are *the angels*. The book of Daniel gives us a glimpse into the warfare between the angels of light and the demonic angels. For example:

Daniel 10:12-13: “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.”

The demons were successful in keeping the angel at bay, but when Michael came they were forced to yield. The Bible describes Michael as a powerful being who's highly effective at resisting the powers of darkness:

Daniel 10:20-21: “Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.”

There's even one recorded case where Michael resisted Satan himself:

Jude 1:9: “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”

The Bible tells us that after the rapture Michael will lead an army of angels and evict Satan from Heaven once and for all:

Revelation 12:7-9: “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

Based on all of this, it seems clear that the *angels* are the ones who restrain evil in this world. The angel who seems to have the most power is Michael. Daniel 10:21 refers to him as “your prince”, and Jude 1:9 calls him “the archangel”. In my opinion I think it's more likely that the restrainer of 2 Thessalonians 2:7 isn't the Holy Spirit but is Michael. The Bible contains numerous accounts of Michael restraining evil (and even resisting the devil himself), whereas there aren't *any* accounts of the Holy Spirit doing that. In fact, Michael's entire ministry seems to be focused on that very point!

If this is true then for the past two thousand years Michael has been battling to keep the antichrist from appearing. One day God will remove him from the battlefield, and when that day comes the entire world will be plunged into a terrible time. But that's a subject for another time.

Regardless of who the restrainer is, the day is coming when the Holy Spirit will no longer be given to people in the same manner that He is today. That particular gift was only given to the church. Once the church is complete and the Lord Jesus returns to this world and brings us home (an event known as the rapture), *things will go back to the way they used to be*. People will still have the Spirit and He will still draw people to Christ to be saved, but people will no longer be sealed by the Spirit. Just as we saw in the Old Testament, it will once again be possible to lose the Spirit.

We find this taught in one of the parables of Christ – the parable of the ten virgins:

Matthew 25:1-13: “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

This passage is widely misunderstood. People often apply it to the church despite the fact it has nothing to do with us. The truth is it's addressed to the tribulation saints (the people who will be saved after the rapture).

First of all, Christ is referring to His coming *at the end of the tribulation*. At that point in history the church will be with Christ in Heaven. This means the church won't be watching for the Lord's return; instead we'll be *returning with Christ!* The only people who will be caught off-guard by His return will be those who are still on Earth – in other words, the tribulation saints. This parable is aimed at them, not at us.

Second, it should be noted that the Bible is consistent in its use of symbols. The church is always referred to as the bride, not as ten bridesmaids. The bride doesn't have to worry about missing her own wedding, and the bridegroom isn't going to forget his own bride and claim to not know her! That's simply impossible.

Who are the bridesmaids? They're the people who were

saved after the rapture. The church – and *only* the church – is the bride. Before the church came into being there were many Old Testament saints who were saved, but they weren't part of the church and they're not a part of the bride of Christ. After the rapture there will be many people who will be saved, but they won't be part of the church and they won't be a part of the bride either. They will still have a relationship with Christ but it will be different from ours. We have a special position that's not shared by members of any other dispensation.

The other key to remember is that oil is always symbolic of the Holy Spirit. In this parable we have 10 tribulation saints, 5 of whom were wise and had the Spirit and 5 of whom were foolish and lost Him. When Christ returned, half of these people were caught without the Spirit and when they tried to enter they were turned away. The reason Christ told them to watch is because if He returns and catches people without the Spirit, He won't accept them. They will be turned away.

This is a situation the church doesn't have to worry about. When we're saved we are given the Spirit and He is sealed within us. We can't lose the Spirit and we can't lose our salvation either! However, that's *not* the case for the tribulation saints. They won't be sealed with the Spirit. They'll have to watch and be careful lest Christ return and catch them without Him (at which point they will be lost forever). The tribulation saints will have to exercise great care, lest they be rejected as Samson was.

This doesn't mean they're saved by works! Far from it. They are still saved by grace. But the way the Holy Spirit works in the church age is unique. People in the Old Testament (such as Abraham) were also saved by grace and not by works, but there were still times when God withdrew His Spirit from them. Here Christ is making it clear that if He returns and finds the tribulation saints without the Spirit, He won't accept them. That's why it's so important for them to watch for His return! Their eternal salvation depends upon being ready when He arrives.

In the church age we've been given an astounding gift –

the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit intercedes for us, sanctifies us, guides us into the truth, draws us to Christ, and is forever sealed within us. Being sealed with the Holy Spirit is a very special gift that wasn't shared by the Old Testament saints, and which won't be shared by the tribulation saints either. Moses longed for the day when all of God's people would be filled with His Spirit, and we now live in that day! We should be thankful and praise God for His amazing gift.