

If we are living now by the Holy Spirit,  
let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading  
in every part of our  
lives.

*living by the*

*Spirit*

Galatians 3:25 nlt

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# *Spiritual Things*

## **BECOMING A SPIRITUAL PEOPLE**

SMALL GROUP & INDIVIDUAL STUDY



Redcliffe Uniting Church  
*At the heart of the Peninsula*  
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# WELCOME

Research shows that while organised religion is on the wain, spirituality is as popular as ever.

Christianity has a long history of what's called the mystical stream; Christian mystics who sought transcendence by spending years in isolation or in prayer.

The Pentecostal movement is arguably one of the biggest movements in human history, yet unrecognised by secular historians.

Scripture uses some amazing words for our spiritual life. *Dunamis* – where we get dynamism and dynamite! [Mark 9:1] “some will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God come with power [dunamis]”.

There is a sense that, the Christian life without the Spirit lacks power.

How do we connect with the spirituality of Christianity? Is it all about mysticism or is there something more?

This study is written to make 'spiritual things' natural.

We have called it '*Spiritual Things*' as we quickly realised, that Scripture itself is not so focussed on spiritual gifts as much as *being spiritual*, of which gifts is one part.

How you use this study is up to you. If your group has some usual ice-breaking activities, excellent. If you talk in pairs, or as a whole group that doesn't matter so much. This is a skeleton on which you can add flesh!

We pray that you will feel confident after this study, in *Spiritual Things*!

Paul Clark, Donna Hamill, Mark Millard

# STUDY ONE

## What is the Purpose of 'Spiritual Things' in our life?

**Aim:** To gain an appreciation in the direction of a 'spiritual life'.

**Opening Question:** Share with one another one of your most 'spiritual' experiences in life so far.

**Why** seek the spiritual life? What is the group wisdom?

**Look up** all, or some of these passages. What do they add to our understanding of the purpose of spiritual things?

1 Corinthians 12:7

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

1 Corinthians 14:12

Ephesians 4:11-16

1 Peter 4:10

*[More on the next page!]*

Matthew 25:14:30

Philippians 2:3-4

**How** could you summarise all this in one sentence?

What are spiritual things, or spiritual gifts NOT for?

It's amazing how spiritual things are intricately linked to being in community. [*That's amazing when you consider lots of mystics spent years on their own!*] How is this counter cultural in today's world?

It seems the one key thing you need when you want to develop spiritual things, is a group of loving people. Spend some time agreeing to be that for one another over the coming weeks.

Share with each other your concerns for life, and pray for one another.

**“A mystic is a believer who practices  
the presence of God.”**

A.W. Tozer

# STUDY TWO

## What are 'Spiritual Gifts'?

**Aim:** To gain an appreciation of the biblical idea of spiritual gifts.

**Opening Question:** Share with one another your 'amazing' talent? What is something you can do that is a bit unique?

**OR –**

What is your 'amazing natural superpower'. ie. it's a normal thing, but it changes the world. ie. 'I can see the positive side to every situation.' 'I notice people who are unnoticed in a crowd.'

**Spiritual Gifts** have been over-done in some churches and under-done in others. What do you think spiritual gifts are?

What do these bible verses tell us about spiritual gifts?

Ephesians 4:7

1 Corinthians 12:7

We talked about 1 Cor 12:4-6 in worship. It breaks spiritual gifts down into three parts; [Read it]

*Charisma – Spiritual Gift*  
*Deaconia – Service*  
*Energama – Work, Power*

How does this help your understanding?

Some have identified in these three words common patterns...

|                    |       |        |        |        |        |
|--------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Charisma - Gift    | Heart | Spirit | Talent | Wonder | Spirit |
| Deaconia - Service | Hand  | Christ | Skill  | Work   | Body   |
| Energama - Work    | Head  | God    | Wisdom | Word   | Mind   |

Which 'style' gels best with your personality?

I believe we all have a natural affinity with a certain type of spiritual thing. Can you see how 'birds of a feather flock together' in churches?

Give examples?

What does this lead to?

Can you see how we get in our cliques and believe that our 'style' is better or more spiritual, or the *real* Christian virtue? [eg. sometimes we say some gifts are spiritual, other gifts are just natural abilities or skills.]

What is a more holistic outlook?

We need each other! Can you name some ways you need people who are different to you to be 'whole'?

Could it be that any talent, skill, ability, inclination is a 'gift from God' to be used for his glory?

How could you develop the weaker area of your spirituality?

How do you feel about the more 'mysterious' gifts like tongues, and healing?

Could someone share about a 'miraculous' experience they have had with God and how that has been beneficial?

Pray for other another over these things.

The Holy Spirit gives...

liberty to the Christian,  
direction to the worker,  
discernment to the teacher,  
power to the Word, and  
fruit to faithful service.

He reveals the things of Christ.

Billy Graham



# STUDY THREE

## How do you discover your 'Grace effects'?

**Aim:** To begin to appreciate our giftedness and explore it further.

**Opening Activity:** Each person needs a piece of paper with their name on the top. Hand around the pieces of paper. Write on each person's paper a skill, gift, talent you see in them.

Hand the paper back to the person whose name is on it.

What surprises you on that list?

What is no surprise?

- We overlook our spiritual gifts because they seem normal to us
- We elevate 'mysterious' gifts at the expense of practical gifts.
- We can avoid 'mysterious' gifts because they are scary!
- We don't find our gifts because we're unwilling to have a go.

## Comment on the above

I [Paul Clark] have been brought up with the idea that, if there isn't anyone else to do it, then give it a go yourself! If no-one does it, nothing gets done. I have discovered a nice array of talents, and which things I shouldn't go near! Plus things I can do, without any talent!

Spend some time thinking about your own...

Passions Skills Aptitudes Abilities Dreams

...by asking these questions...

- *If money was no object, I would.....*
- *If I could do anything for God, what would it be?*
- *What do you find comes naturally?*
- *What do I love doing now?*

What have you discovered about yourself and your gifts?

Christian Schwartz, in his book, "SSSSSS" gives an outline on how to discover your gifts.

Step 1) **Open your heart** to God in prayer, ask God, "What is it that you want to show me?"

Step 2) **Be ready** to apply your gifts. Gifts are given to service others, so serve!

Step 3) **Get informed.** Study what the Bible says about spiritual gifts

Step 4) **Begin** with what you enjoy. Find some way to serve by doing something you enjoy.

Step 5) **Experiment** as much as possible. See a need, fill a need! You never know what you might discover. This includes the 'mysterious' gifts. Open yourself up to God using you in this way.

Step 6) **Verify** your effectiveness. Honestly reflect on how you go. Don't be afraid to practice. Gifts are given, but, it doesn't mean they are fully developed yet!

Step 7) **Seek** the opinion of others. Find a trusted friend who you will allow to tell you the hard truth. Maybe you really can't sing, even though you enjoy it!

Which one of these are you going to put into practice this week?

Pray for each other that you might discover what God has in store for you. If you are brave, pray for the Spirit to move miraculously on one another.

**“God never loses sight of the treasure he has place in our earthen vessels.”**

**Charles Spurgeon**

# STUDY FOUR

## Who are we?

**Aim:** To understand how being spiritually gifted people actually makes us interrelated and interdependent.

### Opening Activity:

Name the body part that you like most and why.

I'm not if you've noticed, but all this talk of spiritual things is surrounded by talk of being ONE.

The greatest sporting teams aren't created by individual players doing it all, but every team member playing their part, and trusting others to play theirs.

Scripture uses the metaphor of the Body of Christ

Read through 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

### What does this passage have to say about...

- Status in the Church?
- Honour
- Suffering
- Rejoicing
- Care
- Difference
- Unity

What do you think this looks like in a church?

What do you think that *feels* like in a church?

When have you most experienced the church acting like this?

Signs you are getting close

- When someone else getting credit, doesn't make you jealous
- When suffering is shared
- When status/honour is given not expected
- When the "most excellent way" is followed

**St Paul says**, *in the midst of all these discussions about spiritual things, I will show you the most excellent way.*

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

What is the most excellent way?

What is exciting about this?

What is difficult about this?

In your homework from last time what did you learn/discover?

What are you going to focus on this week in becoming spiritual people?





