

The Spirit God Blesses

An Excellent Spirit

An excellent spirit attracts people. When found in a young lady, it attracts a young man. When found in a dad, it attracts his children's loyalty. When found in a wife, it attracts her husband's heart. When found in a believer, it attracts an unsaved person's attention and time. When found in a church, it attracts repeat visitors. Simply put: an excellent spirit is attractive. The prophet Daniel had such a spirit, and it even attracted a heathen king: "*Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm*" (Daniel 6:3). How could we define an excellent spirit?

1. The spirit of humility (1 Cor. 10:12, 1 Peter 5:6)

Humility is not a matter of thinking less of ourselves, but of thinking of others before ourselves. Humility recognizes the privilege of serving others, while pride tires of service and feels entitled to be served.

A man once worked for a gas company whose motto is "glad to be of service." This should be the expression of each of our hearts. Christian servants should always be willing and happy to perform basic (even menial) tasks, regardless of their position. Serving the Lord is a privilege.

2. The spirit of gratitude (Luke 17:11-19)

Missionary Rick Martin of Iloilo Baptist Church in the Philippines challenged his people to give that others might hear the Gospel. While I would have hesitated to ask these people to give from their \$5/week budget, Dr. Martin reminded them of their financial resources compared to other countries, such as Haiti and Cambodia. He taught his people a lesson we all need to learn—to focus, not on what we don't have, but on what we can do.

God does not expect us to feel guilty for His blessings, but He does expect us to be grateful: "*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you*" (1 Thess. 5:18). A grateful spirit will show through a giving spirit. "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving." - Amy Carmichael

3. The spirit of faith

There is something about a person who always believes **God can** that encourages others to press on for God. The work to which we are called is a "work of faith": "*Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father*" (1 Thess. 1:3). "The life of faith is not always comfortable." - John Goestch

4. The spirit of flexibility

The early Christians demonstrated incredible flexibility even through persecution. Acts 8:4 records this: "*Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.*" When one door closed, they moved on, continuing to do the work of the Lord. Flexibility can be a tough quality to develop, but it makes a world of difference in a Christian's spirit!

5. The spirit of commitment

1 Cor. 15:58 admonishes us, "*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*" Stick to a job, stay even when it's difficult, and be faithful until the Lord rewards your labor. What if Christ was as committed to you as you are to Him?

6. The spirit of compassion (Matthew 9:36-38; 14:14, Jude 22)

God blesses ministries that demonstrate the spirit of compassion in reaching out to those who cannot reciprocate. God also blesses individuals who remember the griefs and burdens of others and express their care.

