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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
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Spiritual Gifts

By Joyce C. Lock

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I was minding my own business, the other day, or at least, I think I was ... just getting a few chores done. I'm not sure if I was listening to a Christian radio broadcast or not, or what else would have even prompted this thinking. But, this verse came to mind ... love one another, as I have loved you. John 15:12.

I already knew however God has loved us is the way He wants us to love and that doing so is our way of thanking Him for how He has loved us.

Though, the thought came to mind that, except for the ways God has loved us, it is impossible for us to know how to love. I think I already knew that. However, somehow, the word 'impossible' stood out and, suddenly, it dawned on me ...

If it is impossible to love, other than how God has loved us (and that does seem logical, as love is who God is) that would also mean that (in the area of Spiritual gifts) we would have first had to receive a Spiritual gift before we would have the ability to share that gift with others.

And, I thought, duh! Will we never be done learning that we don't know as much about God as we think we do?

Then, God showed me this verse. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, I Peter 4:10. And, right there it is, in black and white! You aren't just given a gift. You actually have to receive one and with it comes the ability to give it again.

So, that tells me that, in order to have the gift of miracles, for example, you would have first had to receive the gift of miracles. And, if you have received a miracle, you have the gift of miracles ~ whether you know it or not.

Spiritual Gifts

Many of us have likely taken Spiritual Gifts Discovery Tests in attempt to determine our Spiritual gifts. But, this is a sure test in which we can 'know' our gifts and is also a measure by which we can determine if we are being good stewards, using those gifts, or not.

So, you just might want to think about it. You could have abilities you haven't yet discovered!

Joyce C. Lock is a published author, poet, and columnist. In addition, she founded and maintains the e-mail ministries "Heavenly Inspirations" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HeavenlyInspirations/> and "Share a Smile" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/smilesaring/>. Joyce's writings encourage us in our relationship with God and each other.

A Prophet is Rarely Recognized in His Own Family

By Laurel Aiyana

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Spiritual gifts are still looked upon by far too many in the world with some reservation, more so in Western civilization. Such is the case in my family. Raised Catholic, my parents believed in the Augustinian theory of cessation of the gifts after the days of Jesus and his apostles shortly after his death. At age 36, I was born again, and departed from Catholicism for empowered Evangelicals. As with Jesus, whose own brothers, at first anyway, thought He was a nut. My own family treated me like an outcast, regularly mock me, and don't value my spiritual gifting.

Spiritual gifts are blessings from God to be used to bless others as an instrument of the Lord. My gifting is more in healing and intercessory work, but in working within these gifts, the Lord will give me prophecy to share with people. I pray for increased spiritual gifts as a regular part of my prayers.

Gradually, as members of my family have come to the Lord, these people have come to embrace me for who I am. Jesus' brother James was thought to be the author of the book of James in the bible. One saved member does infect the rest of the body. I keep prayer that it further infects my own family, but some of the hearts have been difficult to penetrate. They won't outrun my prayers though. God can penetrate the hardest hearts. He got through to me, and my hide was pretty thick.

As I've grown in spiritual maturity, I have learned to forgive my persecutors, even those in my family for all the poisoned darts that flung my way. They far more easily roll off my back. I take suffering for my faith as a sign that I'm on track spiritually. The devil doesn't need to attack those he already calls his own. The harder the attack, the better I must be doing. That thought gets me through the hard times. I know blessings must be over the next hill, or I'm ready to come up to a new spiritual level. As many preachers say, "new level, new devil." How true that phrase is. I want to thank everyone who persecuted me. You've made me that much stronger in the Lord, as for a while, He was all I had, and He is my sufficiency.

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At age 41, I have begun the process of reinventing myself, and follow my life-long passion to write. For years, I held what I thought was the responsible job as an IT administrator to pay the bills, but I sacrificed a piece of my soul. Now I hope to fulfill my real dream.



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