

# The Spirit and new creation

What changes when someone receives the Spirit?

Paul describes the Spirit as God's presence giving believers life, belonging, and power for holiness. New creation begins in Christ now while bodily redemption and the renewal of creation remain a future hope.

## Life and adoption

Romans 8 connects the Spirit with belonging to Christ and being received as God's children. The Spirit is not a technique for controlling spiritual experiences. Paul's picture is relational: believers address God as Father, receive assurance, and learn a new allegiance. Their confidence rests on God's action in Christ rather than the intensity of a particular emotion or an ability to produce extraordinary experiences.

Biblical references: Romans 8:1-17

Sources: rom-8

## Character is visible fruit

Galatians 5 names habits that damage community and contrasts them with the Spirit's fruit. The list includes patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control alongside love and joy. Spiritual maturity therefore concerns everyday relationships. A spectacular gift or persuasive personality cannot substitute for character. Paul's call is active: believers are to keep walking by the Spirit rather than treating changed behavior as either self-salvation or unnecessary effort.

Biblical references: Galatians 5:13-26

Sources: gal-5

## Already renewed, still waiting

Second Corinthians 5 locates new creation in relation to Christ and reconciliation. Romans 8 also describes believers and creation as still groaning. These themes belong together. Christian hope does not demand pretending that illness, injustice, grief, and ecological damage have disappeared. The Spirit's presence sustains faithful life within an unfinished world and anticipates the redemption of the body, not contempt for material creation.

Biblical references: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 · Romans 8:18-27

Sources: 2co-5, rom-8

## Discernment within the community

Christians differ over the continuation and practice of particular gifts and over how to describe subsequent experiences of the Spirit. Those disagreements should be named when relevant. Paul's shared tests remain useful: does a practice honor Jesus, build up others, and express love? The Spirit distributes gifts for shared benefit. Claims to spiritual power should remain accountable to Scripture and the wellbeing of the people affected.

Biblical references: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 · 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

Sources: 1co-12, 1co-13, ag-prophecy, gty-doctrine

## Sources

- [rom-8] Romans 8, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/ROM08.htm>
- [gal-5] Galatians 5, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/GAL05.htm>
- [2co-5] 2 Corinthians 5, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/2CO05.htm>
- [1co-12] 1 Corinthians 12, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/1CO12.htm>
- [1co-13] 1 Corinthians 13, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/1CO13.htm>
- [ag-prophecy] Assemblies of God (USA), position paper. Primary statement of a continuationist position. <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Position-Papers/Modern-Day-Prophecy>
- [gty-doctrine] Grace to You, doctrinal statement, section on spiritual gifts. Primary statement of a cessationist position. <https://legacy.gty.org/about>

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