

**The Bible (Unmuted) Transcript****Episode 30****Receive the Holy Spirit: An Interview with Dr. Dan Wilt****August 29, 2023****Teacher: Matthew Halsted****Episode Summary:**

In this episode, Matt chats with Dr. Dan Wilt, the author of the new book *Receive the Holy Spirit: A 70-day Journey through the Scriptures*. Dan shares about why he wrote the book, as well as fields some questions about how (and whether) God speaks to us today, the contemplative life, and how we can use our Spirit-wrought gifts in our various contexts. In this fascinating conversation, Dan offers a plethora of wise thoughts on Scripture, life, and ministry that you'll find immediately encouraging and eternally beneficial.

Buy Dan's book, *Receive the Holy Spirit: A 70-day Journey through the Scriptures*, here: [An Invitation to Receive the Holy Spirit - Seedbed](#)

**About Dan:**

For the past 30 years, Dr. Dan Wilt has served as an author, educator, worship leader, pastor, songwriter, and conference/seminar leader in the US and abroad. He is the author of the books, *Receive the Holy Spirit*, *Jesus in the Wild*, and *Roots: Advent and the Family Story of Jesus (Seedbed)*, as well as being the co-author of two books of prayers inspired by the Psalms, *Sheltering Mercy* and *Endless Grace* (Brazos Press). Dan teaches on the topics of the Holy Spirit, worship, spiritual formation, and creativity in university and seminary settings, as well as in churches internationally. He has a longing to see God's people awaken to the love of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit in everyday life, and has invested decades mentoring artistic leaders as they influence from their vocational center in Christ. Dan works with Seedbed, a resourcing network that has the mission to "gather, connect, and resource the people of God to sow for a great awakening." He lives with his wife Anita outside of Nashville, TN, and they have three grown children.

You can connect with Dan's weekly spiritual formation email at [Bio & Contact | DanWilt.com](#)

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**Transcript:**

0:00 Hey everyone. Welcome back to another episode of The Bible Unmuted. I am so excited about today's show, because you're going to get to hear a conversation I had with the one and the only Dr. Dan Wilt. Now, this is Dan's first time on the show, and at the end of our conversation, I just wanted it to keep going. I didn't want it to end because it was just fabulous. I just loved hearing his thoughts and listening to what he had to say about the subject of our conversation. He's recently written a book called, *Receive the Holy Spirit: A 70-day Journey Through the Scriptures*. And we were talking about his book and just some topics that he discusses in that book. And

again, it was just such a treat. I'm so excited to share this episode with you and I hope you will enjoy it. I know you will. It's just it was super, super cool.

You can learn more about Dan from his website. DanWilt.com and I'll just read a little brief bio on from his website so you can kind of get an introduction. He'll introduce himself and share more about his life and ministry in just a moment. But I thought I would read this quick bio before we jumped into that.

Dan Wilt is the co-author of *Sheltering Mercy: Prayers Inspired by the Psalms* and *Endless Grace: Prayers Inspired by the Psalms* with Ryan Whitaker Smith. Dan is a writer, speaker, worship leader, poet, songwriter and encourager of Christians in many streams of the church. Over 30 years, Dan has encouraged thousands in the US, UK, Canada and Northern Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Brazil and other nations with his unique blend of spirit formation teaching in ancient-future faith. Drawing from many traditions of the Church, Dan explores topics such as finding our identity in the love of God, following the way of Jesus in times like these, worship and the spirit responsive life and creativity.

He's part of the Anglican and Vineyard communions of the church and has taught in conferences, university settings, seminaries and churches across the world. Dan holds a doctorate ministry degree from Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky, as well as degrees from Messiah University and St. Stephen's University. He has also studied at the Tantar Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem and the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies.

So yeah, I mean, he comes with just a little bit of experience. He comes with a lot of experience. Well, join me in welcoming the one and the only Dr. Dan Wilt.

2:35 **MH** We have a special guest with us today. Dan Wilt, the author of *Receive the Holy Spirit: A 70-day Journey Through the Scriptures*. Dan, welcome to the program.

**DW** Thanks so much. So good to be with you.

**MH** Yeah. It's a privilege for us to be able to glean some wisdom from you and hear about your new book about the Holy Spirit. Before we get into that, though, I thought that it would be cool to just have you introduce yourself. Tell us a little bit about what you do and where you're from. And just the background on you.

**DW** Sure sounds good. I'll start with where I'm from. I was actually born and raised in a very small town in Pennsylvania called Middletown, PA. It's the home of the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster. If you, if anyone remembers that. But yeah, born and raised in a small town. In my high school years is when I came to faith and that was connected to a Methodist and Wesleyan world. So grateful for that fellowship of Christian athletes. There a real transformation began in my life that continues to and through this day, right?

So my wife Anita is my life companion. She's an amazing woman with a great heart to follow Jesus and to love her husband through all the ups and downs. And three amazing children too. I have a daughter in her early 30's, Anna, and another daughter Abigail, and a son Benjamin all are in their late 20s early 30s range. And it's really a delight to do life with them. They're great human beings.

So now I live and work South of Nashville in Thompson Station, TN and that was after 20 years in Canada. I've worked in various ways with the Vineyard movement over the years and a number of other denominations have always been a part of my heart and life's work. I'm doing a lot of

writing these days. A lot of just encouraging communities of faith to really take seriously the call to Christ-likeness in thought, mind, heart, and to live in such a way that nurtures union with God and Christ; that sort of fullness in that. And so that's my world. The 30 years or so in the Vineyard family of churches were great years for, I would call it, a practitioner's journey with the Holy Spirit. And I'm so grateful for so many insights and stories from those years. Now I am in an Anglican community as well and that's great for a local community. And I work with Seedbed and New Room. Seedbed is a resourcing agent basically to gather, connect, resource the people of God to sow for a great awakening. And New Room is a gathering place for us.

5:40 **MH** Wonderful. That's great. So tell us a little bit about the genesis of your book. What led you to write a book on the Holy Spirit? What prompted you to do that?

**DW** That's a great question. Probably we both know in our work and worlds that, you know, there's a reason that the Holy Spirit is often spoken of in the language of metaphors and mystery throughout the scriptures, because it's really a way of God's revealing of his heart and his self that captures themes that really we take in in our everyday at the sense of the Spirit's movement and the sense of the Spirit's empowering, a sense of the Spirit's comfort and guidance and all those kinds of things. And I think that the core of the reason for the writing of the book was not that there aren't amazing books out on the Holy Spirit; theological works and practical works but it was something in me that wanted to take a journey in myself after you know decades and decades of walking with the Holy Spirit. As we know we are in this constant discovery process. I love to call the Holy Spirit the Surprising Spirit where you're learning more and more about the nature of God as you experience his nearness, his activity. And I came to a place just in the writing of this that wanted to take a journey from Genesis through Revelation through into our time and even through our time, or the Eschaton looking for, "what is this grand narrative about?", and how is God's self is revealed in the person of the Holy Spirit, the *ruach*, the wind of God, the energizing life and sustaining life of God? And I wanted to do it in such a way that... so many people that I know in my worlds are not diving first into theological works on this. And I wanted to take stories and use a narrative theological approach, fill it with metaphors and other ideas that would maybe not de-mystify, but in fact in some cases, I want to re-mystify just the mystery of how the Spirit works and let us keep the Holy Spirit out of these boxes we just quickly create. We seem to love to do it. But to, in a sense, re-mystify but also make very practical; what does it mean to hear the voice of God? What does it mean to... and using again metaphors and stories to just invite people into this place of permission to be on a journey with the Holy Spirit and be leaning in, listening. I love one of the metaphors that I used in here was what I call sails up where it's this idea that the wind is always moving around us. It is Jesus saying, it comes and goes. You don't know where it's going. The thing about a sailboat is it's got the architecture and design to receive it. To be sensitive to it. It's always, you know, sails up. And then we move. But if our sails are down just in bewilderment, you know, we're not going to catch those moments that are true gifts of the Spirit in our in our journey. But really, it was so that someone could take a 70-day journey - it was actually written initially during Pentecost, you know, it's a 70-day kind of path to go from Genesis through the Scriptures and explore different aspects of the Holy Spirit.

9:34 **MH** One of the things that led me to the Anglican tradition, just on a very personal (though multiple things), but one thing was just the need that I felt, the conviction that started growing in me and has been for a long time actually, but just the need to make Christianity contemplative again. And that right there though requires a vision of God that is mysterious. That is capable of contemplation for eternity, in fact. And it's interesting because you mentioned sometimes we have this idea that we sometimes we put God in a box. And I know that it seems like (this is just my observation), but when it comes to the Spirit, the work, the Spirit, the person of the Spirit, he gets boxed a lot. And I think that, you know, you talk about him being a Surprising Spirit and that right there opens up the idea of we can't put God in a box. We can't control him. And we'd like to make God in our image all the time. We like to know that we can predict his works in his ways and things

like that. But I think that's what's so good about your project of thinking back to the Spirit and asking really important questions about the Spirit. Because it goes back to like you said, re-mystifying which I think is healthy because I think some traditions, and even at time in my own life where I didn't leave room for that. I didn't say like this, but I wanted to put God in a box, right? I would never admit that or never even recognize that, but that's what I was doing. And what that does is really stunts my growth as a Christian. My sails are not up, right? Anyway maybe you could, if you don't mind, share a little bit about how or why do you think Christians tend to neglect that aspect of the mystery of God? Like what is it about us that wants to put him in a box all the time?

**DW** There's so many thoughts in what you just said there that I think, you know, we could linger on for a long time, but I'll start with that last question, or at least my perspective on it. I'd love to hear yours too. I do think we are people of the known. Knowing is very important to us. Predictability is important to us. Stability. And we come through times like 2020 for example, and onward, I mean here we are; and we realize we don't like surprises. We don't like to be caught off guard. We like to plan. We like words like *tame* rather than *adventure*, or some of us do at least. We tend to want to control our worlds in such a way that can move into a lack of health. Now, there's a side for me, and then, you know, just to touch on what you said, that the contemplative traditions, the sacramental, liturgical traditions; one of the gifts of those is, I like to see it as there's a constant creation that we get a chance to do in our lives of opening windows for the wind of the Holy Spirit to blow through a house. And we know that if I open one window, I may get a breeze. But this is my window. I build a doctrine around it. This all works for me. I know where that window is, you know. But what happens when you open another window? Cross current begins. You start to experience the Spirit in different ways. We open up just to take it right into the metaphor, we open up many windows in our house, from silence, stillness, to solitude, the contemplative traditions. We open up the windows of, well, the Spirit may actually want to move me to pray something particular for someone, or to say something to my neighbor. And there might be this moment that comes, and now we're opening another window and different traditions, I think keep us aware that God is a person who wants to be interactive in our lives, interactive with others through our lives, but not to always be marked by fireworks, explosive, and "this was crazy". And, you know, "yes, thank you, Lord, for all those stories in our lives and through history", and this sense of guidance and orchestration. "I didn't think that this thing that happened 10 years ago would come around to this." And we see all those things. And I think we are reasonably rigid, but we recognize that if the Holy Spirit is going to do things in us and through us, the *familiar* can't be our sort of watch guard on all things. That this is comfortable, I can do that. That's comfortable.

Because I know people, and you know this, I've spent a lot of time in the kind of wild edges over to the very quiet. And you know, I look and I think, some of these people need some years in the contemplative tradition. Just still the soul. To learn to hear God speaking. Lexio Devina through the Scriptures. Just whispering to us, guiding us, learning the rhythms and patterns of thankfulness. You know, the Holy Spirit is in the development of virtue. You know, we saw that in the book. Just the explorations. This is about that deep ethical formation that is, I don't know if you're familiar with the term *habitus*; there are a few writers who talk about that: James K. Smith gets into this and Alan Kreider and others. There's just this idea that we have to be reformed. Our bodily dispositions are learning. That's part of the Holy Spirit's work. It's not just "wow, this happened" or "wow, that"; there's the deep, there's the long, there's the surprising, there's the consistent and steady. It's all about windows being opened. And we need to open more than just one from our tradition.

15:50 **MH** I think that's, that's powerful. And just to carry that further, we need interaction with, you know, other Christians outside of our own little tribe. We need to have more dialog and conversations with people. And that's, unfortunately, not what happens. Often, because we stick to our tribe and we stick to our group. And I totally get that because, I mean, you can't spend time

with everybody, right? You need a home. You and I welcome that. I actually think that denominations are good in many respects, that they give us that home. But it's important, though, that we don't, well... it's an old pastor once said, you have a choice. You can either be rooted or rutted. And, you know, sometimes we get rutted in our own sort of ways of thinking. But, like you said, some need to contemplative tradition to help. And of course, it works through the way round too. Sometimes we can be so contemplative that we don't get a passion to help our neighbor across the street. So anyway, so there we need all of that together.

So there's a great story in your book. I have it here on page 17. It's a story about the stallion. I'd love for you to share that a little bit. We will get more into... how does God talk to us? I want, I definitely want to jump into that, because you know, a lot of times Christians have this idea that the Trinity is God, the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Scripture, right?

**DW** Right. Yeah. Of course.

**MH** But OK, what about the Spirit? And how do we navigate all of that relationship with the Spirit and the text? But we'll get to that later. But I guess I just. I want to address it a little bit the allergy that sometimes we have against the miraculous and against when God might have a word to speak to somebody through us. Do you want to share a little bit about that? This story of your conversation with that person?

**DW** Yeah, this is just so important what you're saying, that we recognize if we're going to let the Holy Spirit be the Holy Spirit, then Holy Spirit is going to do what the Holy Spirit has been doing since the beginning of time. Not only in us, but also through us in the world. That if we're going to become people where heaven and earth meet; if we're going to become those who actually have the mind of Christ; it doesn't say we will have the mind of Christ, it says we *have* the mind of Christ. That we are we are listeners, we're perceivers of the Spirit's presence, of what the whispers of the Spirit might be, of guidance. If we're going to partner with the Spirit in that, then we have to recognize I think a few things.

One is that in Genesis we have the Spirit first showing up on the scene to speak God's loving order into creation. In the midst of the chaos his loving order comes and the fullness of creation emerges. That as we know, is that he speaks meaning into the meaninglessness. You know, it's his purpose into the void. And here we are. We move all the way through the scriptures, and it was just fun exploring some of that in the Old Testament in the book, but we move all the way through the scriptures and Jesus is saying, what has he come to do? He's come to undo the worst evil one. What does the evil one do? It's chaos. It's heart chaos. It's mind chaos. It's so many aspects of the things that we hate and wrestle most within this world: division and bitterness between people, and the taking of life, and whether its psychologically, or emotionally, or physically. You know these things that war against the human life moving through time that God has breathed into life. These are the things that Jesus came to undo. He came to speak right in the middle of it.

20:01 Well, you know there's the whole narrative of Jesus in the wilderness, that he's led there by the Spirit, he has this calling foraging, I like to think. And then he comes out in the power of the Spirit, and we move then into the New Testament. He immediately goes into that by *Isaianic* proclamation that *this is fulfilled in your hearing*. Then we move into the New Testament and we start to see this unique thing happen. People who are living in union with Christ, John, 17 you know, through the Epistles; they're living in union with Christ, the Spirit now is undoing the works of the evil one through them. And in them. Honestly, it's hard for the Spirit to do things, to allow the Holy Spirit to undo the chaos within us; to address the shame, the fear, the brokenness, all the things. To change our habits from old habits into these new Christ-like ones, the fruit the spirit.

And at the same time, sometimes it's harder for others to get away from the outward sides. We just want to get out there and be all this, and they're putting a door up that's impervious here; just don't get at this issue. And we see Jesus creating these whole-people. There's ethical transformation, there's emotional transformation, there's mental, you know, transformations that go on in people. They learn new virtues. The Spirit gives that impetus, or the encouragement of the church, you know, the Spirit gives gifts. Lavish gifts for the, you know, the common good. And then we see that there's something to be done in the world. And so, you know, we see these gifts that we call, you know, these charisms of the Holy Spirit happening. And it's my deep belief and I think church history bears it out, that the spirit is going to continue to move through the body of Christ all the way until we see it face to face and all things are made new. And all of that. So in this moment...

Sorry, I have a habit of making a long story long. And sometimes my kids say, you know, I don't say anything unless it takes a long time to say (laughing).

**MH** It's okay. I tell people, do you want a short answer or you want to good answer? And I always want to the good answer so you're in good company. You keep talking, you're good.

**DW** That's right...Nuances are important.

And so in this moment, I was with someone at a conference, and there was a call, an invitation to stand if you wanted prayer. And I was in my own *early days*, again, I'd come for many different traditions in the church and I wasn't sure even fully of my perspective on how's the Holy Spirit work in us and through us? How does this work? And I stood up and went over to pray for someone who was near me. There were a lot of people, hundreds in the room, many were standing to receive prayer. And this dynamic happened where, you know, I usually ask, do you mind if I put my hand on your shoulder? And it was a man, and he said, "sure, go for it." And so I put my hand on his shoulder. And as soon as I did in my mind's eye, we could say imagination, impression, I saw a black stallion running down a beach. And what I've been learning is that if the Holy Spirit is living and active, then what if we assume if we're pursuing Christ and we're aware of our belovedness that we're cultivating this relationship. What if we begin to assume that those flash moments are not just random 'what we had for lunch' moments? What if we begin to assume I have the mind of Christ? And I don't just have the mind of Christ, I believe I'm gaining the heart of Jesus. I think God has always been looking for people who love why he does what he does more than what he does. Love the motives of the heart of God. And in that moment there was the sense of I felt God's love in my heart for this man. And I just said, you know, "Lord, let me pray something for him." And I'd been learning to instead of immediately beginning to pray just out of my own thoughts and feelings and wanting to be an encouragement as a brother, to actually pause and listen. Just quiet my heart. Let some impressions come. And I think over time and experience you learn to shake off some. And some feel like a needle kind of pointing. And I saw this impression immediately as soon as I touched him, and I just said "you know, I'm going to pray for you out of a picture that I'm getting. And I just submit it to you." Because I really believe that I could be wrong, you know. I've had moments where people say, I don't see that now. But then two years later, they say, hey...helpful! Anyway, in this moment, I just saw this picture. And so I began to pray for him out of this picture. Well, as soon as I began to pray for him I said, "I see a picture of his black horse running on the beach." He begins to actually, visibly weep. Tears begin to come. And that isn't always an indicator that you're on to something. But it is an indicator that the Lord's doing something. There's something important going on. And I prayed and I don't know if I even wrote down how long, but it went for some time and I just kept praying. And as I was praying in it, sometimes I say you have to get in the mode to get in the mood. I don't know everything I'm going to pray, but as if unfolds you're listening for more. You sense the Lord saying this, and it's about strength, and it's about being set free to be a little wild, and not this taming everything, you know for the sake of whatever. Anyway, we had this long prayer time and he

looked at me at the end, he looked at his eyes and we just kind of smiled knowingly like it was just good to be together before the Lord and he just said, "you you'll never guess what I do for a living." And I said, "what?" He said, "I work with horses." And then I got the chills, and he had chills. Then he said, "hey, you know, my favorite movie of all time is *The Black Stallion*."

26:20 And in that moment, there were two things that happened, I think. One is this tremendous, (and I think we should talk about this more), this tremendous humbling. Because the fact is, I could have bypassed that and just gone with something else, and pray something nice, and he moves on and etc. But there was a lot of chaos undone that day. Because he knew the Father saw him and named him, and saw his life for some stranger praying for him. And that tips the scale in someone's life. They go back to moments like that and say, you know, I might doubt God in this storm I'm in, but I look back on that moment and God knew something I needed to hear and be prayed for through. And there was just release and freedom. And there was a lifting of his countenance and so many things. I think, well, Lord, we don't want to miss that. I don't want to out of my background or personal discomfort or whatever, miss participating in someone being set free that other layer, in the way that I've been because someone obeyed the Holy Spirit, called me out of the blue, or encouraged me over attacks. Maybe something happened around me or these circumstances were orchestrated. We don't want to miss those things for him to work in us and through us in the world.

Those are just... it's that *first* story. And I really do believe we're in this idea of being a royal priesthood. We are now, you know, I like to think of it as, we are kind of walking signs and wonders. We've been loved by God. And it's, you know, it's... we don't see him, yet we love him. We're filled with this inexpressible joy. Not everyone in the street in my neighborhood is feeling that today, or has experienced that. And here we are, placed in a situation. It's not random with that coffee shop person who's serving. It's not random that I'm there because now I'm sails up. I'm listening, I'm perceiving, saying, Lord, is there anything you want to do with me today? Anyway I could partner in what you're already doing in someone's life? And that will lead to other moments.

I remember another moment where I was getting served by a waitress in a restaurant with my daughter. And I just saw her in a cap and gown as she walked over. I just had this mind. The Lord speaks to me in kind of these visual impressions, or a scripture typically will come. But I saw this and I just felt like the Lord was saying all I want you to do is encourage her. There's no mysterious, (inaudible) way to say this. And I said, "I'm curious? You think you're getting further education?" And she said, "actually, I've been really weighing whether I could go back to school right now." And instead of, well, here's a great evangelistic moment, I felt like one sows the other reaps. I just said, "can I encourage you? I believe that, you know, sometimes I can perceive something. You're going to be a great student. You should go for it. There are dreams ahead for you. And God knows what you care about." And I did, I kind of capped it off with that. You could just see your face light up. And it's not only what we say, it's in how we say it. Who knows if she had a really difficult faith background and didn't need someone coming hard at it, you know. Just this was the whisper of God come a little further, a little further on, you know, further in.

29:51 That's so beautiful. I love it. I think that as human beings and I'm just saying this off the cuff here, and I thought about it, I guess, quite a bit through the years. But I think what we need most is not so much answers, but we need most is to be known by God, right? And so in that moment, and again I'm speaking hopefully not out of turn here, but for that young lady is maybe what she needed to know is not just merely, 'hey, go, go pursue education', but she needed to know that she was known by God in a sense the same way of the stallion story. I think that could be the case that what he needed to know is that he was known by God in a way that you had no idea what he needed, you know. And I just in my own experience as a Christian even recently. I mean I'm thinking of three instances the past two or three months where people have said things to me

and they didn't know. There was no real way they knew what they were saying. You know what I mean? And how it would be meaningful to me. And I won't get into all that, but it was just beautiful because in the sense I felt known in that moment by God. And you mentioned the humility piece. I think what a lot of Christians today are afraid of when it comes to the things we're talking about, the works of the Spirit, the super natural elements, if you called in that, we're afraid of it because of the abuses that we've seen. And I think it's very important for people to know at least in my experience, when God has spoken to me through people and then the experiences you've mentioned, there's always that deep sense of humility. That it's never about the person speaking to you it's about the God who's speaking through them. Like in that moment when you're talking to the gentleman about the horse, you know, the image that you saw, what was meaningful to him is not you. I mean what you did I'm sure was meaningful, but ultimately his eyes were on God in that in that moment. Am I on the right track here? To say that some of the abuses that we've seen in the past are that at the heart of it what's wrong with some of those abuses is that they were centered on the person. In the sense of, look at what that person is doing, look at that person's ministry, and he's got a platform now or she's got a platform. And so is the key here humility? Is that one of the signs that this is a legitimate movement of God when we experience these things?

**DW** I think so. You know, there might even be another thought here with that. I do think humility is there. I do think even what we experienced in the... I don't know if you're familiar with what would happen at Asbury University, it was such a humility overall that it was such an unknown-ness and not in an unhealthy way. It was just beautiful. So clear the Holy Spirit was doing things and people were trying to get out of the way, just so that people could have this exchange with God. And even in ministry, it wasn't about personalities and celebrity and all the things. So I think there's this humility because it's... you said something there that I think is so important. We don't need to be afraid of how the Holy Spirit works because the Holy Spirit has the exact same characters the Father and the Son. If we love the way the Father loves us and moves in gentleness and yet in, you know, incisive ways and all that - we love the way Jesus moves, well, we're going to love the way the Holy Spirit works. And I think there's this dynamic where you have this one side where there have been abuses, or it's in personality centric, or the Holy Spirit is treated like a plasma or a force rather than the very person of God. And then there's this other side where something in us says, I'm not like that. And if that's the way the Holy Spirit works through people and that's not my world. And I think after even after taking this journey in the book through the Scriptures it looked to me like what the Holy Spirit invites us into, is to be more of who we truly are.

**MH** Truly human.

**DW** That's it. Lord of God is a human being fully alive...like it's truly human who we are. And in humility allowing us there to work through that because I think there's this thing we do too. It's like, "I'm just a conduit, it's all God, it's not me"; and I think God's saying, "actually I'm using you as well, in your personality. I'd like you to find joy in this. I'd like this to change you, bring some humility, sure, but also to delight you. Isn't that sweet how I love other people just like I've loved you?" And we go, "this is so good!" You know? And we get to delight in all that God does and gives. So I think what you're saying there is so true. And I think if we can just get comfortable in who God has made us to be - we don't want it to ever be a cop out. Well I'm quiet and reserved therefore God must always do things in a quiet reserved way through me. And you say, well it's definitely an option and he loves your personality, but if we're actually people open to his movement he might actually surprise us and invite us to a new *who we are* that we haven't previously seen in the mirror or defined ourselves as. And over a lifetime that new *who we are* is becoming more like Jesus. It's becoming more *people of the Spirit*. I think Gordon Fee put this in so many good ways. He said, "We are people of the eschatological Spirit. The end is breaking into the now and if we'll say yes it will heal us, and it will heal the world. It will undo chaos in us."



It will undo chaos in the world.” And we’ll participate in un-doing the work of the evil one. As lovers of God, and as the beloved of God.

36:05 **MH** That’s so beautiful. So good. Well, I want to get to a passage of Scripture here that is a great text. It’s from Romans 12:6-8. And I’ll go ahead and read it, and I’ll have a kind of a question about this and would love to hear your answer. And I’m just trying to think of questions that I think, you know, maybe the listeners are wanting to ask, or just honestly, just based on my own background, that that I know that Christians around me would be interested in hearing. But anyway, let me read this text in Romans 12:6-8. It says and this comes from the ESV. It says, *6 having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*

We have this tendency, if we just look at this, that short, little list of gifts prophecy, service, exhortation, teaching and whatnot. They’re all grouped together as if, you know, being products or gifts from the One Giver, the Spirit. But we had this tendency to separate the spiritual gifts from the so called non-spiritual gifts. And I think perhaps that might lead to some who would say gifts in this category are no longer available today. The supernatural gifts. The natural gifts, they are like teaching and that’s still enforced today, giving generously, and mercy, acts and mercy. That’s their viewing. But prophecy; no, that’s outside of the realm here. That’s a spiritual gift or a supernatural gift; these are natural gifts. And I remember Craig Keener saying...I love Craig Keener’s work on this topic.

**DW** Craig Keener, of course.

**MH** Yeah. He’s a gift, isn’t he? So good.

He made the comment, he said, well, no, I mean all gifts are spiritual gifts. All gifts are supernatural gifts. So you can’t just divorce one, exercise the one out of the group. What would you say to that? Can you give us your thoughts on that?

**DW** Yeah, I love, this conversation. The Spirit - it says in the Nicene Creed that Spirit is the Lord, the giver of life, right? So when we think of all the gifts of life, that person who, for some reason, when they show hospitality, or they bake those cakes, or they knit those....we had a gal who had this gift for knitting slippers for people, and skill. And you go all the way back and you start to see people, you see Bezalel and a holy act. And they’re selected because the Spirit is on them to do things they learn how to do over a long period of time. But there were natural gifts that.... but how does that work? Well, what I think we see, and what that quote from Keener really kind of illuminates is that the Spirit is at work in all these things, in us and through us. The more we’re yielding the Holy Spirit and becoming more Christ-like; there’s an amplification at times of gifts. Though a teacher is a teacher, but sometimes the Spirit breathes and there’s a gift of teaching that starts to take on some momentum and impetus, and it feels a little beyond the person. And hopefully it breeds humility in them increasingly, rather than some sense of arrogance that comes with it as they grow in skill and natural gifts are there.

And so I love the way we’re framing this. When we look across the Scriptures when we see these various lists of gifts, which for me personally I can’t live in the Scriptures and say there’s only this many, or only this many. It feels to me like they’re all windows and indicators into natural gifts that are amplified by the Holy Spirit, specific charisms that are for a moment. He will actually talk about it as ethical transformations, fruits of the spirit; which to me should be at the very center. They’re the litmus test, if you will, for the heart of God being expressed even through surprising prophetic gifts or other things that might be in play. That we should be seeing the nature of Jesus in and

through them and behind them as well. Though gentleness actually is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit that should characterize as something coming. And I think that there is this understanding of spiritual gifts that we can hold as believers that says the Spirit is the Lord, the giver of life in me as well. And he's given me certain pensions, certain ways I like to do things, certain loves, certain affections.

41:00 I know someone is a chef and is a really, really good one. And their sensibilities with those things seem a little bit uncanny to us, or a little bit beyond us. This is something beyond them. Sometimes I think even in the world, people are operating in natural gifts and the Holy Spirit uses their giftedness to woo them back to him, to show them this is beyond you. Don't just take pride in this. This is also my gateway to get you back to me. And I think we see some conversion stories historically. Great minds like the CS Lewis. But the Lord just said, this way, come through, you know. And I just agree with that statement. I think we are, you know, our friend (Keener) used to always say, naturally supernatural. We are people who are moving as who God made us to be, always yielding so that we are becoming even more who were made to be in the prize. So they were becoming more like him, not just less like ourselves, if you will. I think there's an amplifying of being fully alive and learning how to die to ourselves. I think it's both. And then we step in with confidence and boldness.

Just one other thought here. I don't know. I hope it's OK, you can just cut this out if it doesn't fit. But I'm thinking about, it's just coming to mind. Bernard of Clairvaux's *The Four Degrees of Love*. And he says, it's love of self for self's sake. And then you move into love of God for self-sake, right? It's just so normal. And then we move really into the big one. Love of God for God's sake. And we're like, OK, just stop there. We've arrived. Welcome to heaven, right? But he says one more. He says, love of self, for God's sake. And he wasn't using the language of self-absorption of me, myself and I-ness. He was moving into, what if you got really good at dying to yourself in Christ? And you got really good at coming alive to all that God made you to be, as a humble vessel, becoming Christ-like with his character; but when you're invited to go to this thing, you step into it with confidence that the Spirit is going to work with you and through you. And you are delighted to move in that direction, rather than shy and "oh no please, it's not me." And Jesus is like, "yeah, we both know it's not about you. I want you here. Fully alive, giving your best." And I think if we begin to see that, then we're open to you know, Fee will talk about those as worship gifts, that the things that are more surprising and unique and aren't always personality connected, or natural gift connected. But then there are these other gifts that are just skills we've developed in accord with affinities and desires and the Spirit just goes, "here, now, I'm gonna amplify this." And just puts smiles on the faces of everyone in the room, you know? When someone operates in a gift, it's not always about a miracle happening or some evidence, it's about the Lord loving people like you were saying and encouraging. And people walking out having sense that they met with the love of God in the room and not just you. Or the love of God in that hospital room. Or the love of God in that... they're connecting with more than just you.

**MH** Well, that's good. Any you mentioned Bezalel and Oholiab in Exodus. You have a chapter on that on Day 19, I think it is. And it's really important here too, because I was trying to think how we could contextualize that in the life of a Christian in their church today. Because I think, you know, most churches, and I might be getting this wrong, but I think there's like a funny rule that, you know, 20% of your church congregation does 80% of the work, or something like that. So we have a lot of Christians in the church who aren't contributing with their spiritual gifts in some way. And that may, you know, that's not necessarily because they're wanting to be rebellious. It might just be fear. Like, what do I have to contribute? What can I do?

Can you flesh out just, I don't know, just ways in which the people can begin to ask that question. Like, OK, here I am, day in, day out, sitting in the pew; I'm not really doing much. But what can I

be doing to contribute? And could you speak into that? And maybe expand a little bit on, Bezalel and Oholiab?

45:25 **DW** Yeah, yeah, for sure. Someone recently (based on we were doing a study on the book), and they said, “I just don’t feel like I hear God, or God ever uses me, or I just don’t feel any of that, or experience that. This is all new to me.” And something came to me in that moment. It was, you know, the famous line from *Chariots of Fire* is “when I run, I feel that his pleasure.”

**MH** Yeah

**DW** And I asked the question, what is it that when you do it, you feel the pleasure of God and someone else is lifted somehow? They’re like, wow well, I love to bake and do things. So, to think so there’s something in you that rises, that feels like a more fully alive or whole; there’s something about that, the process where you feel connected with God. There’s a sense of community, there’s a sense of with-ness with God in this area. And when you do it, someone else is lifted and encouraged. Well, you’re getting right into the zone of probably some of the ways that the Holy Spirit’s using you right now and you just haven’t named it that way. What if we began to explore that? And I think that question alone: what is it that when I do it I feel his pleasure; it feels in accord with something he would want to do? And I just asked the question does the Lord want to lift hearts that are sad and weary, the bruised reed that the smoldering (inaudible)...? Does he want to lift someone in a (inaudible)? Well yes of course, that’s called the encouragement! That could that has a number of names: hospitality. It’s all the things. What if that’s actually the Spirit working through you as profoundly as if someone is physically healed when we pray for them, or something else is now, a teacher is in their element on a big stage with thousands? What if the Lord is saying yeah that’s great. Yeah, as long as they’re humble and being obedient. I want you to bake a cake. And lift a heart one by one, or three by three. Or it was just this sense of ownership. I think that’s the way we could maybe begin to discern how the Spirit has wired us to move, and then we make choices.

I really am a firm believer in human volition. The Lord does not compel us, as in I’m gonna force you now to go do this thing. He invites us though. I’ve had this long held belief that, and I think scripture backs this up, that we all have a one calling. It’s to be the beloved son or beloved daughter of God. That’s all I want to put on a business card, because everything else are little invitations. They’re callings, and they might show our strengths, but I don’t want those on my business cards. Because I don’t take those across the line with me. It’s just union with God and Christ, belovedness, all that. And I think sometimes we get these other things in that, “well I’m not as gifted in this and I’m not as called to do this,” etc. Well, if we’re focusing on our belovedness to God, and then we’re moving in as the love of God to others; then if we have a gift, something we do that when we do it, we feel the pleasure of God, and we know it lifts people, and the Lord says, “I want you to step into that in your church community or in your community for a season”, it doesn’t mean it has to be forever. It doesn’t even mean it has to be perfect or go exceedingly well, it just means the Lord is saying, “beloved one, I need you right here right now. I’m inviting you.” You will probably bless people. You will also learn something.

I love how business people, you know they have skills, gifts; and then they get into a setting where they have to discern and get beyond just their experience and wisdom, from all their experience, and actually need to hear the Holy Spirit speak beyond their wisdom and experience. It’s a very humbling process because you have to say yes to all my gifts and experience, but (you) can’t get in the way of the Lord saying, “I know, but I want to do something a little different this time and it’s beyond your experience.” There’s something in it for us in growth in Christ-likeness, serving others. So we’re saying yes not only to serve others, we’re also saying yes to our development. And so I’d say what is it that when you do it, you feel the pleasure of God, and it lifts others? And then asks the Lord what is the next way you are inviting me to serve in that?

50:02 **MH** One thing that we do sometimes as Christians is we equate the work of the Spirit with spontaneity. Could you speak a little bit about how spirit works through our preparation, through our gaining these skills that we need for whatever? Like, you know, you used the example of baking. And by the way, it really runs home to me, because my daughter loves to bake, and she's really good. And I love to eat it. And she gets so much fulfillment out of baking. And I literally get so much fulfillment from her baking (laughing). But you know, but just using my beautiful daughter as an example is, you know, I've seen her grow in her baking skills, right? And it's a beautiful picture of just our own calling. We need to give ourselves room to prepare and grow and to get training, even, to develop the gifts I guess you can say. Could you speak into that about that? That process? Because it's not all spontaneous. Not all, I mean, it can be like that, but it doesn't have to be.

**DW** Yeah, we know that things that last often take a long time to create, to build. That there's it's an iterative - life is an iterative process, isn't it? It's an ongoing and here's the me, that we look back 10 years ago and say, was that me? Was that really the same person? You know, we're growing, we're developing, and we also know that there is this, when we're working the muscles of virtue, so this is the year of learning patience. I'm going to learn patience. We know that it takes time and experiences in order for that to be forged and grow. We know that for someone to become a great musician, they have to practice a lot. And actually neuroscience tells us the brain is mapping neurologically with the instrument. There's a whole formation going on. And these things are all things that take time, skill building. It takes much obedience to say yes to doing a five-year degree program, or to learning a skill. I think it was Makoto Fujimura who talks about his roots in his training, moving to the kinds of work he does now; and his connections in his book, *Art and Faith* are beautiful. Just this this dynamic of what it means to become a maker in the world, as those made in God's image. And it takes a long process of relationships, and skill building, and tedium. I mean, being alone, in the monotony, and writing that paper because you have to, and zero emotions are involved. But it's the right thing to do and the Spirit is helping you get it done by 11:00 PM because it's due at midnight, or whatever it is. All these kinds of things that take time, we have great respect for; a mother and a father raising a child. These things take time. They're long stories, long obediences in the same direction, and the Spirit is moving in and through it all. And the sort of celebration of the spontaneous - I remember this isn't and I'm truly not intending to be name dropping, but it is the moment. I was sitting with N. T. Wright, back I think before he was really well known, in his home in Westminster Abbey. We were just doing an interview, just talking and he said, you know there is this (I can't remember how he said it) but this glorification of the spontaneous. If it's spontaneous, if it happens instantaneously, we think that that's more valuable than those things that are patterned rhythm, written over long periods of time. And it's a disorientation of the modern mind. And it really is. It's just a disorientation that we can break through in saying the long and the slow is as much the deep work of the Holy Spirit as the momentary and surprising. Even the long and predictable. That you and I, we're standing on these giants. You know, the Scriptures have come to us through long, slow historic processes, but they've all been leading somewhere that leads us to our moment. And here we are, the benefactors, enriched by books, and great works of architecture, and so many other things that have - liturgies that have taken time to create.

54:40 You mentioned *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction* which is the title of Eugene Peterson's one of his books, and it reminds me he was a guy who was a very deep thinker. I mean you could read his book a million times and get something each time about a certain truth. He's a very deep thinker, a very well-trained person. But also, always with an eye toward practicality and living in the church, and in your context, and living out obediently to the Lord, and so forth. And I think I'd love to get your thoughts on this when it comes to the Spirit. I think you know, sometimes in Western Christianity and some traditions, it might seem all heady. You know, it might seem all cerebral and we can't have it. And someone who loves Scripture, I mean, I love Scripture that

that's one of my gifts is to teach Scripture. I love doing that. I have a high view of Scripture. But it can't all just be intellectualized. It has to be applied if you're going to understand it. You've got to apply it. And so I think - doesn't the Spirit by reacquainting ourselves with the work of the Holy Spirit - you get that because the Spirit inspired the text. But this Spirit inspires us to live out the text in creative ways, even in our lives. Does that make sense of you?

**DW** Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Go ahead, keep going.

**MH** Yeah, I was just to say, when it comes to a Christian faith, I think we have these two extremes, you know. And I think that's why I like just this conversation because I feel like you're the type of person who will, who understands the work of the Spirit enough to see it as a guardrail and not to fall into any of those extremes. Anyway, I don't know if that's just a comment, I guess, but just something I was thinking.

**DW** I love it. You know. I was just going to say, you're tapping into this thing of, I sometimes think we're a little bit fixated on our particular gifts. So those who are more *heady* tend to think that that we need to just live here and not explore to them. And those who are real, who I call *hearty*, right? And feely, touchy, or are emotional; and I tend to be very emotionally wired, that's the creative side of me and all that. But there's this sense of, no, it should all just be, it should all really be just a motive and (inaudible). And I think we're really aware that we don't just need great thinkers in history, we need great feelers, right? And these can look a (inaudible) at one another and go, ohh no, that's too much. One side of the horse. But that's actually the gift, is that we would be a mentor of mine used to say, we would have an inking hearts and feeling minds. There would be this, this great integration of emotion of thought, depth of thought. And we would become all of us even more holistic and not use those extremes as excuses for how we see the Holy Spirit work. You know, it really is we're natural box creators and those boxes tend to look very much made in our image. And the Holy Spirit's going: great thoughts and great feelings; look at all of creation. It is all the scope and scale to the Spirit of the creation is going to bless all of that, and we want to learn to be integrated again in the personality of Christ as we're forming the Christ-likeness.

58:20 **MH** That's good. Just wrapping up your like to ask it's kind of simple question, but it'll help give listeners your goal behind the book. But what if you could sum up your book with some thought, what is your goal with this book? What's the one thing, the one truth that you hope your readers walk away with?

**DW** I think I would say the Holy Spirit is in you, is with you, is transforming you, and moving through you to transform others. Say "yes" to being that dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Say yes. So that saying yes, I think is the line. It is: live a life that is that is open to the adventure of the long and slow work of the Spirit, of the momentary work of the Spirit, of the visionary work of the Spirit that invites us to do delightful things, and hard things, and it all be for our formation into Christ's likeness. Let's just keep saying yes. And if there are opportunities that appear in front of you, let yes be the first in word prayer. "Yes" Holy Spirit I'm available to you. And then know that he may say I want you to say something, or I just want you to pray something. I want you to walk into this. I want you to walk away from this. I want you to... because this whole thing is about us learning to walk in the Spirit as Paul said to keep in step with the Spirit. Not running ahead, not falling behind. Just being in the moment, in the present, with the Spirit saying yes.

**MH** That's good that's really good. Well, the book is called, *Receive the Holy Spirit: A 70-day Journey Through the Scriptures*. And Dan, where can people get the book?

**DW** Yeah, if they just go to [Seedbed.com/receive](http://Seedbed.com/receive). It'll take you to the book. *Receive the Holy Spirit*.

**MH** Perfect. And I'll put a link in the show notes for this too. It'd be easy to just click and go there. Dan, thank you so much for your time. I'm blessed having had this conversations. I am blessed just to having had this time.

**DW** I'm privileged.

**MH** I feel privileged just to pick your brain and learn from you. Thank you so much for being on the show.

**DW** My privilege. I'm grateful for you and everyone listening.

1:01:00 That's the end of today's episode. And thanks again for listening to The Bible Unmuted. If you like this podcast, consider rating it on your podcast platform, subscribing to it, and sharing with your friends. You can also support the podcast by becoming a Patreon member. Go to: <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted> - or simply find the link in the description of this episode. Thanks for listening. Until next time, friends.