



Model Your Life after the Nine Fruits of the Spirit

The Fruit of the Spirit is???



MANY TYPES OF FRUIT ON THE TABLE. EACH ONE IS GOOD FOR YOU. VARIOUS NUTRIENTS AND VITAMINS IN EACH ONE TO HELP OUR BODIES (TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT) TO GROW AND MATURE...HELPING TO EXPLORE OUR ENERGIES TO THE MAX. THE FRUIT (LEFT OUT TOO LONG) CAN BECOME RANK, STALE, AND UNUSEABLE. WE HAVE TO THROW THEM AWAY OR FREEZE THEM AND MAYBE MAKE BANANA BREAD OR JELLY OUT OF THEM. MOST OF THE TIME, HOWEVER, LEFT UNUSED...THE FRUIT WILL BE UNEATABLE AND POSSIBLY CAUSES VARIOUS ILLNESSES...SOME EVEN TO THE POINT OF DEATH.

What kind of character traits should a Christian have?

Remember the guy who pulled out in front of you and called you a few names because you threw up your hands and responded in a negative way?

Maturity Always Starts With a Humble and Grateful Heart...AT LEAST FOR THE CHRISTIAN!

Galatians 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

"Fruit of the Spirit" is a biblical term that sums up the nine visible attributes of a true Christian life.

- We learn from scripture that these are not individual "fruits" from which we pick and choose.
- The fruit of the Spirit is one ninefold "fruit" that characterizes all who truly walk in the Holy Spirit.
- Collectively, these are the fruits that all Christians should be producing in their new lives with Jesus Christ.
- The fruit of the Spirit is a physical manifestation of a Christian's transformed life.
- In order to mature as believers, we should study and understand the attributes of the ninefold fruit:

Truth about the having the “fruit of the Spirit”:

You can't have the “fruit of the Spirit” unless you are part of His family. The Spirit of God does not live in you unless you have humbled yourself and asked for the forgiveness of your sin. When you do that, the Holy Spirit starts to reside in you when you accept the terms of the contract with the Holy God.

Terms of the Contract:

- 1. We have all sinned and deserve God's judgment.**
- 2. God, the Father, sent His only Son to satisfy that judgment of those who believe in Him.**
- 3. Jesus, the creator and eternal Son of God, who lived a sinless life, loves us so much that he died for our sins, taking the punishment that we deserve,**
- 4. Jesus was buried and rose from the dead according to the Bible.**

If you truly believe and trust this in your heart, receiving Jesus alone as your Savior, declaring, “Jesus is Lord,” you will be saved from judgment and spend eternity with God in heaven. This contract is open for your decision...that of accepting or rejecting it.

Facts about Life:

Not long ago, a seasoned marathoner had just crossed the finish line with an impressive time when he suffered a heart attack and died. From the outside, he looked to be the picture of health, but a fatal condition was hiding on the inside.

Every one of us need an occasional visit to the doctor for a checkup to make sure everything is working alright and that we don't have an unknown serious condition.

The same is true with our spiritual lives.

- As creatures of habit, we tend to go through life on autopilot.
- We often miss clues that indicate that our spirit is not enjoying the good health that God created it for.
- In the same way that the doctor puts us through a battery of tests to diagnose potential physical problems, God has given us a process of evaluating.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23).

Each of these is a characteristic of the Holy Spirit's active presence in our daily activities. Let's look at each one and ask some diagnostic questions to make sure we are healthy.

1. Love. This word for love doesn't refer to warm feelings but to a deliberate attitude of good will and devotion to others. Love gives freely without looking at whether the other person deserves it, and it gives without expecting anything back.

Question: Am I motivated to do for others as Christ has done for me, or am I giving in order to receive something in return?

2. Joy. Unlike happiness, joy is gladness that is completely independent of the good or bad things that happen in the course of the day. In fact, joy denotes a supernatural gladness given by God's Spirit that actually seems to show up best during hard times. This is a product of fixing your focus on God's purposes for the events in your life rather than on the circumstances.

Question: Am I experiencing a joy of life on a regular basis, or is my happiness dependent on things going smoothly in my day?

3. Peace. It's not the absence of turmoil, but the presence of tranquility even while in a place of chaos. It is a sense of wholeness and completeness that is content knowing that God controls the events of the day.

Question: Do I find myself frazzled by the crashing waves of turmoil in my life, or am I experiencing "the peace that passes all comprehension" (Philippians 4:6-7)?

4. Patience. Other words that describe this fruit are lenience, long-suffering, forbearance, perseverance, and steadfastness. It is the ability to endure ill treatment from life or at the hands of others without lashing out or paying back.

Question: Am I easily set off when things go wrong or people irritate me, or am I able to keep a godly perspective in the face of life's irritations?

5. Kindness. When kindness is at work in a person's life, he or she looks for ways to adapt to meet the needs of others. It is moral goodness that overflows. It's also the absence of malice.

Question: Is it my goal to serve others with kindness, or am I too focused on my own needs, desires, or problems to let the goodness of God overflow to others?

6. Goodness. While kindness is the soft side of good, goodness reflects the character of God. Goodness in you desires to see goodness in others and is not beyond confronting or even rebuking (as Jesus did with the money changers in the temple) for that to happen.

Question: Does my life reflect the holiness of God, and do I desire to see others experience God at a deep level in their own lives?

7. Faithfulness. A faithful person is one with real integrity. He or she is someone others can look to as an example, and someone who is truly devoted to others and to Christ. Our natural self always wants to be in charge, but Spirit-controlled faithfulness is evident in the life of a person who seeks good for others and glory for God.

Question: Are there areas of hypocrisy and indifference toward others in my life, or is my life characterized by faith in Christ and faithfulness to those around me?

8. Gentleness. Meekness is not weakness. Gentleness is not without power, it just chooses to defer to others. It forgives others, corrects with kindness, and lives in tranquility.

Question: Do I come across to others as brash and headstrong, or am I allowing the grace of God to flow through me to others?

9. Self-control. Our fleshly desires, Scripture tells us, are continually at odds with God's Spirit and always want to be in charge. Self-control is literally releasing our grip on the fleshly desires, choosing instead to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. It is power focused in the right place.

Question: Are my fleshly desires controlling my life, or am I allowing the Spirit to direct me to the things that please God and serve others?

Check #10. Walk by the Spirit. While not a fruit of the Spirit, the final item on the checkup produces all nine qualities listed above. When we

follow the Spirit's lead instead of being led by our self-focused desires, He produces the fruit.

- But even when we don't walk by the Spirit, He is the very one who convicts us that things are not in proper order in our lives.
- God promises that if we are willing to admit that we have been walking our own way and ask for His forgiveness and cleansing, He will empower us through His Spirit to live above ourselves and live the abundant life for which He has created us.

Question: Am I actively depending on the Holy Spirit to guide me in God's ways so I don't get wrapped up in myself? If not, am I willing to confess to God that His ways are better than mine, and that I need the Spirit's guidance to live above the fray?

The additional "fruits" of which every Christian should have in their character repertoire is found in:

2nd Peter 1:5-11, "For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

- *Righteousness* = Ethical and fair in His dealings with us so we can be fair with others. Also, *righteous* means *virtuous* and of *good character*.
- *Knowledge* = The fundamental saving knowledge we need in order to know whom Christ is before He can be our Savior (Matt. 11:27).
- *Godliness* = A synopsis of character that shows our attitude and moral fiber means living out our disposition with respect and reverence to Christ in all aspects of our life.
- *Faith* = *The assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen* (Heb. 11:1). Christ is what we hope for; Christ is what is to be seen! *Virtue*, in some translations, is *Goodness*, and refers to moral excellence, the engagement of love, and doing the right thing.
- *Virtue* = Moral actions, the engagement of love, and doing the right thing; the application of being good from both the conscious will to do what is right and from personal responsibility. (Galatians 5:16-21).

THE EVIL THINGS

Galatians 5:16-21, "I tell you, let your walk and conversation be dominated by the Spirit, and don't let the desires of the lower side of your nature have their way. For the desires of the lower side of human nature are the very reverse of the desires of the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are the very reverse of those of the lower side of human nature, for these are fundamentally opposed to each other, so that you cannot do whatever you like. The deeds of the lower side of human nature are obvious fornication, impurity, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft, enmity, strife, jealousy, uncontrolled temper, self-seeking, dissension, heretical division, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and all that is like these things, I warn you, as I have warned you before, that those who do things like that will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

No man was ever more conscious of the tension in human nature than Paul. As the soldier in Studdert Kennedy's poem said:

I'm a man and a man's a mixture
Right down from his very birth;
For part of him comes from heaven,
And part of him comes from earth.

For Paul it was essential that Christian freedom should mean not freedom to indulge the lower side of human nature, but freedom to walk in the life of the Spirit.

Romans 12:2, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."