

The Fruit of the Spirit: Jesus' Qualities for Good Relationships

Prayerfully read Galatians 5:13-26. Welcome the Holy Spirit as your Advocate/Counselor/Partner for growth in holiness. Galatians 5 tells us to crucify the flesh and live by the Spirit. Let the Spirit reveal to you what areas of the flesh (self-centeredness) that need transformation. As you give these areas to the Spirit, they will be crucified through the power of the cross of Christ: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Pray with each of the fruits of the Spirit allowing the Holy Spirit to form these qualities of Jesus in you. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how each fruit is needed in your heart, and in your practical life situations (family, work, relationships, recreation, ministry). Spend time welcoming the Holy Spirit's presence in you, so that he can fill you with the presence of this fruit. He will fill the places that have been emptied of the works of the flesh (crucified), and now can be filled with the presence of the fruit of the Spirit.

- 1) **Love**: Like Jesus, laying down your life for others; heart to serve; compassion; seeking to bring the best out of others; overcomes selfish and lustful acts.
- 2) **Joy**: Inner positive energy; energized happiness; ability to delight in life, people and God; a positive spirit that overcomes negativity and depression.
- 3) **Peace**: Inner calm; tranquility; not controlled by anger or anxiety; Jesus' peace is not an absence of difficulties, but an inner calm even in the midst of them.
- 4) **Patience**: Allowing events to unfold in their own time; not rushing, hurrying or angry when events go slower than I might like; trust God's timing.
- 5) **Kindness**: Offering encouraging, supportive, helpful words or actions; caring words or actions; overcomes jealous acts and rivalry.
- 6) **Generosity**: Willingness and readiness to give, share, or help others; sharing time, talents and finances; goes beyond the minimum; overcomes greed and focus on things.
- 7) **Faithfulness**: Follows through with commitments; true to one's word and promises; people can depend on you; faithfulness in marriage.
- 8) **Gentleness**: Careful treatment of people as something precious; not harsh, violent, rude; able to meet people where they are at, rather than impose myself on others.
- 9) **Self-control**: Being aware of your emotions, thoughts, past experiences (etc.), but not controlled by them; ability to not just react to things, but to make choices based on your deepest convictions; steadiness; overcomes greed, lust/impurity, hurtful words/gossip, angry outbursts, etc.