

## *The Fruit of the Spirit (Part 4)*

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**Introduction:** Who is a Christian?

- A. There are several ways we can answer this question.
  - 1. We can describe the elements of the New Birth. **(Jn 3:3-5)**
  - 2. In this we see both the inward and the outward elements of becoming a Christian.
  - 3. The New Birth is only the start! **(Mt 28:19-20)**
- B. Jesus must continue to reign in our hearts.
  - 1. The real test comes in how we are transformed over time. **(Rom 8:29)**
  - 2. Here is the growth chart! **(Gal 5:22-23)**

### ***I. The fruit of the Spirit – Self-Control***

- A. What is self-control?
  - 1. **ἐγκράτεια**, ἡ, *mastery over* a person or thing, *self-control*,
  - 2. Self-control must begin in the heart! **(Mt 15:18-19)**
  - 3. This is so consistent with Jesus' teaching in His ministry. Is there a continuing testing and growing with each of us?
- B. What if we do not have self-control? **(Prov 25:28)**
  - 1. Imagine a very powerful jet airplane with sophisticated weapons and engines. What would those things be worth if there was no assurance of control? (Ex. My new bike!)
  - 2. Do you find yourself consistently admitting what you should do but finding a lack of control of your thoughts defeating you? Seek self-control.
  - 3. Most of my friends who fell away took this lightly. **(Prov 16:32)**
  - 4. Sometimes it is reinforced in associates! Some are always railing against brethren ("COC"). **(Prov 22:24)**
- C. We have to humbly, consistently work on this! **(2 Pt 1:5-8)**
  - 1. It is easier to consistently look and talk about others.
  - 2. Do you surround yourself with people like this?

### ***II. The perfect example of the fruit of the Spirit – Jesus Christ***

- A. We find out the true character of a man when he is under pressure. Look at the Spirit of Christ in the events surrounding the cross!
  - 1. The very essence of *love* is seen at the cross. **(Rom 5:6-8)**
  - 2. Imagine angry people lying about you and then falsely condemning you to death in a farce trial. Imagine the suffering of scourging and even crucifixion. Now see your loved ones in great pain watching this scene. **(Mk 15:40)**
  - 3. Why did He not come down from the cross? **(Mt 26:53; Jn 3:16)**
- B. Jesus experienced great *joy* in His suffering on the cross!

1. He understood His purpose and rejoiced in it. **(Heb 12:2)**
  2. He wanted His apostles and each of us to find this same joy in our lives. **(Jn 17:12-13)**
  3. We can only find joy by completely committing to the “name of the Lord.” Do you know your purpose and would rejoice in accomplishing it?
- C. Jesus spoke of the cross being the ultimate example of *peace*. **(Jn 16:32-33)**
1. This absence of conflict is a product of confidently knowing the path of God. We do not need to be doubt filled.
  2. Jesus through His resurrection and then the revealed words of the Holy Spirit through the apostles can give us a certainty that brings peace. **(Jn 20:19-22)**
- D. Rather than striking out at the weaknesses of others, Jesus consistently tried to help both friend and foe at the cross. He was *longsuffering*.
1. Jesus gently tried to help the apostles know that they did not yet know! **(Jn 16:31)**
  2. The apostles disappointed Jesus but He knew they would later learn. **(Mt 26:40, 45-46)**
- E. Jesus was *kind* to those who were causing Him great hurt!
1. Look at how He responded to Judas! **(Lk 22:47-48)**
  2. What do you say to a man who openly admits you are guilty but will ultimately sell you out? **(Jn 19:11-12)**
- F. Jesus actively showed *goodness* to all at the cross.
1. Consider the servant of the High Priest. **(Lk 22:50-51)**
  2. Now consider His prayer for His enemies! **(Lk 23:34)**
- G. Jesus showed faithfulness to his disciples at the cross.
1. He thought to protect the Apostles though they disappointed Him. **(Jn 18:7-9)**
  2. Jesus was not a “one and done” person that casts you away when you let Him down. He also will stand up for us!
- H. Jesus had a remarkable *gentleness* to all surrounding the cross.
1. He prayed for those who killed Him and mocked Him.
  2. He was pleased to extend mercy to the penitent thief. **(Lk 23:40-42)**
  3. The example of Christ opened this mans heart!
- I. Jesus showed a remarkable *self-control* by never striking back.
1. It is very hard not to give back in kind what people do to you. **(Rom 12:21)**
  2. Self-control comes from committing yourself to God. **(1 Pt 2:21-23)**

**Conclusion:** Are you and I Christians?

- A. If we are not being molded by Jesus and producing fruit, we need to look at the heart of the problem. **(Rev 3:20)**
- B. What do our thoughts and tongues reveal?