

## Fruit of the Spirit Introduction

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What does it mean to be a Christian?

Part of what it means is transformation. To be made new. To become dead to sin and new to and alive to grace. One way to think about it is to contrast it with the ways of the flesh. The ways of the flesh are sexual immorality, impurity, idolatry, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, drunkenness and the like.

The ways of the Spirit are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

What is the point of all this? Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh...Since we live by the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:24, 25). In other words, if we are truly born anew in Christ, elements of "the flesh" will begin to wither and die, and life in the Spirit will flourish.

SPIRITUAL LIVING requires SPIRITUAL FITNESS

SPIRITUAL FITNESS requires SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

Just like being physically fit requires discipline in nutrition and exercise, being spiritually fit requires discipline as well. The major disciplines of our life are REPENTANCE, FAITH, and OBEDIENCE. One difficulty many Christians experience is that they tend to view things in isolated compartments. When the cross is the object of our glory, there is no possibility for compartmentalization. It opens up every area of our life before God and puts it to death. How does a dead man compartmentalize anything?

Galatians 2:20 teaches us an amazing truth. We move from death to life IN CHRIST! In our new life we begin our new disciplines.

Sin + Repentance = Faith = Justification = Sanctification (positional) + Obedience

The ways of the Spirit are really the first step, the middle step, and the last step we take in our journey after justification.

Anesthetize the sense of sin, weaken the heartfelt sorrow for sin, trivialize the nature of faith, and the inevitable result will be sorrow to the Spirit and a weak walk. Discipline is so critical because it enters at numerous points in the link. What drives discipline more than a goal? Our goal is nothing less than walking with God.