

Life on the Vine

Love

July 6, 2014

*"Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them."
(Jesus in Matthew 7:20)*

General comments about the fruit of the Spirit

1. These characteristics do not grow and mature in my life because of _____.
2. The fruit of the Spirit is a byproduct of _____ to Christ.
3. The fruit of the Spirit is not _____ for _____.

Obstacles to avoid

1. _____ to _____.
2. The tendency to put a _____ on everything and everyone.
3. The tendency to view relationships _____.

Ways to cultivate the God's love in my life

1. Learn to _____ to _____.
2. Practice biblical _____.
3. Learn to _____ and _____.

"If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it."

(Jesus in Luke 9:23-24, NLT)

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Reflect and Respond

- Think about the proportion of time I devote each day to myself, my concerns, and my agenda. Compare that with how much time I devote to the needs and concerns of others. What am I noticing?
- I will begin each day by asking God to give me eyes to see the needs of others.
- How do I view the relationships in my life? Are there relationships in my life based more on “what’s in it for me” than “what do I have to offer?”
- What about my relationship with God? Has some of that kind of “what’s in it for me” thinking crept into my relationship with God?
- Think about my relationship with “my stuff.” What might happen if I began to think of “my stuff” as given to me as resources for furthering God’s reign in my home, workplace, neighborhood, or city?
- This week, intentionally seek out at least one opportunity to give something (time, money, other possessions) without the expectation of getting anything in return.

I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.

Ephesians 3:16-17

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