

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; in *all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** I John 3:24 “Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, *by the Spirit whom He has given us.*” I John 4:13, 14 “By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because *He has given us of His Spirit.* And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.”

**Quote:** “When the Spirit produces fruit, God gets the glory and the Christian is not conscious of his spirituality; but when the flesh is at work, the person is inwardly proud of himself and is pleased when others compliment him. The work of the Spirit is to make us more like Christ for His glory, not for the praise of men.”<sup>1</sup>

**W**hat distinguishes the redeemed from the defiant and the deceived is the indwelling Spirit of God. Paul wrote, “Now we (believers) have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, *that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God....* But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned.*”<sup>2</sup> The term, natural man, is a description of every person prior to God graciously making him or her a new spiritual creature in Christ.<sup>3</sup> Without the indwelling Holy Spirit, an individual will not desire, nor truly understand the things of God. Paul said, “Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, *if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.* Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, *these are sons of God.... The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*”<sup>4</sup> “Putting to death the deeds of the body” means refusing to practice anything that God forbids, either by specific prohibition as in ‘You shall not steal’, or by general precept as in

‘Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.’<sup>5</sup> Spirit-enabled effort in this battle with our flesh is one evidence that a person is spiritually alive and being led by the Spirit as he or she reads and heeds God’s Word.<sup>6</sup> Paul instructed the Ephesian believers to be “filled with the Spirit.”<sup>7</sup> In the Greek language, this command denotes a regular pattern of life and not a one-time event. We are to live continually under the influence of the Holy Spirit by acknowledging and obeying the commands of Scripture out of love for Christ.<sup>8</sup>

Having the peace of God’s indwelling Holy Spirit is not like having a clear conscience on steroids! Evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit is the fruit that He produces in the lives of those who have been given spiritual life through faith in Christ. “Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”<sup>9</sup> will not be developed on a spiritually dead “branch” no matter how hard that “branch” may try to manufacture it! Jesus said, “Abide in Me, and I in you.

## The witness of the Spirit

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, *neither can you, unless you abide in Me.* I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”<sup>10</sup> The absence of spiritual fruit in a person’s life is cause for great concern. Saving faith in Christ alone will *evidence itself* through practical works of righteousness that the Holy Spirit encourages and enables in true Christians. This does not mean that those who indeed have God’s Spirit dwelling within their heart never sin;<sup>11</sup> however, the underlying “bent” and pattern of their lives reflects a mindset that is focused on pleasing the Lord, battling their flesh and serving others rather than pleasing self. It behooves all who profess Christ as Savior to be “fruit inspectors”—to examine themselves to see if there is clear evidence of the authentic, abiding and abundant fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit demonstrated and developed in their life.

1 W. Wiersbe 2 I Cor.1:2 ; 2:12-14; 1:18-31 3 Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Job 15:14; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; II Cor.5:17 4 Romans 8:8-17 5 Exodus 20:15; Matthew 7:12 6 Psalm 119:9-11 7 Ephesians 5:18 8 John 14:15, 23 9 Galatians 5:22, 23 10 John 15:4, 5 11 Romans 7:14-25