

# 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:** Galatians 5:25-26 “If we live in the Spirit, let us also *walk in the Spirit*. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”

**Quote:** “To those whose faith is in Christ alone, the message of the gospel brings the fragrance of eternal life and rewards. To those who are not placing their trust exclusively and entirely in Christ, it is a stumbling stone of offense that brings eternal death and punishment.” J. MacArthur [See II Cor. 2:14-17]

**H**ave you ever seen artificial fruit that looked so good that you picked it up to take a bite only to be embarrassed or amazed that you were tricked by its similarity to the real thing? Usually imitation fruit that is realistic has a big price tag and is available only in stores that feature “high-end” accessories. Unfortunately, no matter how much you pay, or how “real” it looks, the fruit’s only value is visual. It looks good, but it provides no nourishment and can actually be a source of frustration to someone who is genuinely hungry.

The motto on The Great Seal of North Carolina— “*Esse Quam Videri*”— is Latin meaning “To be rather than to seem.” Like artificial fruit, there are “artificial Christians” who profess to be “the real thing.” The truth be known, the reality of their spiritual lives is more like “To seem rather than to be!” Like the imposter Judas, they know enough facts in their head to give a surface impression that runs from passable to convincing, but that is as far as it goes. There has been no assimilation of saving truth into their heart through the avenue of faith. When their habits are observed closely, what seemed to be genuine fruit in their lives is in fact artificial. There is no spiritual life, just the resemblance of it that can come with attending church as “the thing to do,” “talking the talk” to fit in, and mimicking politically correct conduct when around “the Christian crowd.” If their history could be read as *God reads it*, with a comprehensive overview of the thoughts and intents of their hearts, as well as their actions and speech at all times and in all places, the tragic essence of their true state of being would be shocking.

The reality of the Christian life flows from God’s grace that enables those who were spiritually dead to acknowledge that any “manufactured spirituality” is like putrid, rotten fruit in His “eyes” and “nostrils.”<sup>1</sup> In mercy, they are brought to see their need of forgiveness for who they are in their flesh and for their offenses against Him. They are enabled to embrace by faith God’s provision of righteousness in Christ, to confess their sins, and to wage a constant battle against the remaining beachhead of who they were prior to trusting in Christ alone. They have a growing understanding of how desperately wicked their hearts are apart from God’s grace. They have a humble appreciation for the long-suffering of God Who hears their confessions of sin and faithfully forgives them of all unrighteousness. Although far from perfect, they *are* what they seem to be—sinners saved by grace with the genuine fruit of the Spirit becoming progressively evident as they become more like Christ.

## The Spirit’s fruit, summary

Genuine Christians who sincerely seek to line their lives up with the Word of God acknowledge Him in all their ways. They realize their dependence upon the grace of God to enable them to be a living sacrifice, to be transformed by the renewing of their mind, to throw off the attempts of the world to press them into its mold, to reject the carnal pride that can accompany God-given ability.<sup>2</sup> “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>3</sup>

We all have plenty of room for growth!” In fact, growth is not an option for any true Christian; it is a God-given, Spirit-enabled command that is accompanied by all that we need to develop and display Christ in us, the hope of glory!<sup>4</sup> Can others see growth and change in your life?

1 Matthew 7:21-23 2 Romans 12:1-3 3 W. Wiersbe 4 II Peter 1