

Examination
of Conscience
Guided *by the*
Holy Spirit

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CONTENTS

Introduction	5
The Fruit of Love	10
The Fruit of Joy	12
The Fruit of Peace	14
The Fruit of Patient Endurance	16
The Fruit of Kindness	18
The Fruit of Generosity	20
The Fruit of Faithfulness	22
The Fruit of Gentleness	24
The Fruit of Self-Control	26
The Fruit of Communal Peace	28



INTRODUCTION

What does it really mean to be a Christian?

If we are living authentic Christian lives, we should be the “aroma of Christ” in the world. That is, wherever we are, whatever we do and say, people should feel in our presence what they felt in the presence of Jesus.

Paul says that through us Jesus “spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him. For we are the aroma of Christ” (2 Corinthians 2:14–17). If we are not the “aroma of Christ,” we are not living authentically Christian lives, no matter how perfectly we keep the Ten Commandments or how frequently we plunk our bodies in the pews. How do we know whether we are the aroma of Christ? It is simple. We ask whether the “fruit of the Spirit” is evident in our lives.

When we evaluate our lives as Christians, we should not begin by looking for our “sins.” Our first question should be, Is the fruit of the Spirit visible in my life? Do people see me, above all, as loving? Do they sense a deep, underlying joy in me, even when things are not going well? Do I give the impression of being at peace with myself and seeking peace with everyone around me? “The fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace....”



The
FRUIT
of **LOVE**

On a day-to-day basis,
how do I show
the fruit of love?

“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love....This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” JOHN 15:9, 12

When I wake up in the morning, do I remind myself that I am getting up to love?

Do I know that God loves me? Do I understand why?

Do I discriminate against anyone? Treat anyone as less important than anyone else? Do I show the same respect to the janitor that I show to my boss?

Do I fulfill all of my religious obligations, not as “obligations” but as loving, personal responses to Jesus and to the Father, in conscious union with the Holy Spirit?



The
FRUIT
of **JOY**

On a day-to-day basis,
how do I show
the fruit of joy?

“I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.”

JOHN 15:11

Would most people who know me call me a joyful person?

Aside from temporary disturbances, is there anything deep and abiding that diminishes my joy?

Do I know how to find joy in Christ when there is suffering in my life? When I am frustrated?

If I made a list of the things that take away my joy, could I match each one with something from the gospels that gives me joy in spite of them?