

She Writes For Jesus Devotional



Fruit of the Spirit

9-day Devotional

M A R I A N N L O P E R A

“ But the fruit of the Spirit is love,
joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness,
goodness, faithfulness, gentleness,
self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23

Introduction

In Galatians 5, Apostle Paul reminded the church in Galatia that they ought to walk in step with the Spirit so that they won't satisfy the desires of the flesh or the sinful nature in them. He explained that “..the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.” (Galatians 5:17)

They don't have to fall again into the slavery of sin because they already have the freedom in Christ as they believed and received the Holy Spirit.

And the same reminder goes with us today. As we put our trust in Jesus Christ, our lives would change little by little, from glory to glory. Having the Spirit in us should naturally bear a fruit that is contrary from our usual sinful nature.

Know that God's Spirit produces something that He possesses. This is why as we live and walk with Him, He will work in us and will slowly transform us into His image. God is loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and always in control and these are the characteristics that we can also have because He dwells in us.

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In this 9-day devotional, let us reflect on the fruit of the Spirit and have a greater understanding of *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness* and *self-control*. May this 9-day journey gives us a deeper understanding of the characteristics that the Holy Spirit produces in us and may this inspire us not to be enslaved by the flesh but that we should walk as His child, reflecting His character in this fallen world.

Just as Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Day 1

LOVE

*He who does not love does not know
God, for God is love.*

1 John 4:8

Love is not only something God does, it is who He is. As 1 John 4 describes Him— God is *love*. This is why love is one of the by-products of His Spirit in us.

This love is different from the world's definition of love because in this world, love is usually centered on gaining rather than on giving. But the love that the Spirit produces is selfless, unconditional and it reflects the love that has been given to us. The moment we receive and understand God's love for us, it will overflow from us to the people around us.

We love because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

Today, be reminded of God's love for you. Love that He demonstrated in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8) This is the perfect love that He lavishes freely for you and me. Whenever you feel tired of loving selflessly, remember that God loved you selflessly when He sent His son to die in your place just for you to be forgiven. Be deeply rooted in His love.

May love be your motivation in doing the things that He called

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you to do. May love be so evident in you that people will wonder where it came from. May love be something that you offer– even to those people who seemed undeserving knowing that you are also a recipient of God’s grace.

Remember that the world needs this kind of love.

Thoughts to ponder:

*In what way you can display the overflow of God’s love?
Is this love the motivation of what you are doing for
Him?*

Day 2

J O Y

*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I
will say, rejoice!*
Philippians 4:4

This kind of joy that comes from the Spirit was so evident in the life of Apostle Paul. In his letter to the Philippians, the word joy and rejoice was mentioned 16 times that it became considered as the most joyful book in the Bible. What was amazing about that was when we looked closely in the context of that letter, Apostle Paul was writing it not in his most comfortable situation. In fact, he wrote it while he was imprisoned because of the gospel (Philippians 1:12-14)

Paul's joy was not dependent on the situation that he was in, his joy came from the security that he has in Christ. This is why even in the situation where he was not even sure when they would execute him, **Paul found himself rejoicing in God.** As he also mentioned in his letter "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ." (Philippians 3:7) For Paul, his greatest possession was Christ, everything else was loss.

I pray that we can have the same attitude as Apostle Paul has. May our joy always be anchored in Christ and not based on whatever situation that we are in. May we have the kind of joy that is *constant* and *lasting*.

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Remember that having this joy doesn't mean that we never have to feel any sadness or pain. We're human and those emotions are normal and valid. But this joy is something buried deep within. It is more of a security than a feeling.

Having this joy, you can look past your circumstances and say *"I still have Christ and that's enough."*

Thoughts to ponder:

Have you been feeling down lately? Remember to rejoice in the Lord. He is with you and He is for you.

Day 3

P E A C E

*You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind
is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*

Isaiah 26:3

Jehovah Shalom is one of the many names of God in the Bible.

It was revealed in Judges 6:24 to Gideon when he was called by God to save the Israelites from the hands of Midianites. Because even though the Israelites disobeyed God, out of mercy, God still heard their cry and He would save them. Gideon at first didn't believe that God was calling him because he is the least in their family and his clan is the weakest in Manasseh. So he asked God to reveal Himself to him and God did. That's when Gideon built an altar for God and called it *Jehovah Shalom*.

This is significant because whenever God declared His name, it meant that He was revealing His attributes or His character. In those dark times for the Israelites, He revealed Himself as their “*Peace*.” And know that God doesn't change, He's still our *Jehovah Shalom* and that He dwells in us.

Whenever you feel overwhelmed, worried and anxious, remember Him who is in you.

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“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

Jesus didn't deny that we will face trials in this world, but remember that in Him, we have peace. So let's fix our eyes on Him and know that perfect peace is available for you every single day because you have Him in you.

Know that peace is not the absence of chaos but the presence of God.

Thoughts to ponder:

Is your peace missing today? Check where your mind is focused on— is it on the problem? Or is it on God? Philippians 4:6-7 says that the peace of God that transcends all understanding comes when we pray and make our request known to God. Have you been worrying instead of praying about it?

Day 4

LONGSUFFERING

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

Longsuffering is also translated as patience, endurance, constancy and steadfastness in other modern translations. The Holy Spirit empowers us to endure and persevere in life's circumstances, and He gives us the faith to patiently wait on God no matter how long it would take. We have seen that He has been faithful and He is never slow in fulfilling His promises.

Throughout the history of Israel, we have seen God's patience towards His chosen people. They were unfaithful, they fell into idolatry, they were taken captive by nations around them yet God remained *faithful* and He still fulfilled the promised Messiah to show His great patience towards them, and towards us.

“For many years You had patience with them, and testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen; Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You are God, gracious and merciful.” (Nehemiah 9:30-31)

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Seeing how God showed patience with us should lead us to showing the same patience with the people around us. As it is written in the Bible, we are commanded that we should “with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2) And in those trials that we are facing, we must be “patient in tribulation and continuing steadfastly in prayer.” (Romans 12:12)

Like Hebrew 12 said, let us run with endurance while fixing our eyes on Jesus Christ.

Thoughts to ponder:

Is this patience towards other people and life's circumstances evident in your life? Whenever you feel like losing it, remember to ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to act with grace and patient towards it.

Day 5

KINDNESS

But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

Matthew 5:39-41

In Luke 19:1-10, there was this man named Zacchaeus and he was a tax collector. The Jews hated and despised tax collectors because they were working for Romans and they were defrauding their own people. But that day, as Jesus was passing by, He noticed Zacchaeus up in the tree and was trying to get a glimpse of Him. Jesus then stopped and called Zacchaeus telling him that He will be a guest in his house that day.

Because of the kindness that Jesus showed to him, Zacchaeus repented from his sins and said “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.” (Luke 19:8)

Zacchaeus was just like many of us— you may be rejected because of the things that you have done, or you may feel like you’re useless and despised. Yet Jesus has always been willing to give us the same kindness and acceptance that He gave to Zacchaeus. And this kindness is what leads us to *repentance* (Romans 2:4)

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This is the same kindness that we should be willing to show to the people around us. We have to be His hands and feet here on earth. Genuine kindness is the one who is willing to go extra mile for the sake of other people. And this is not just something we do out of obligation but something that we simply do because we want to.

May the kindness that we show towards the people around us lead them to the One who loves them most– Jesus.

Thoughts to ponder:

Are you willing to be like Jesus even to the difficult people? In what way you can serve the people around you? What are the things that you can do to bless the people even in the smallest way you can.

Day 6

GOODNESS

*And God is able to make all grace abound toward you,
that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may
have an abundance for every good work.*

2 Corinthians 9:8

The word goodness came from the Greek word “agathosune” which means “an uprightness of heart and life.” It means that the goodness that the Spirit produces is something that is from the inside out. This was shown when we live with integrity even when no one sees us.

We can live righteously only because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21) We became the righteousness of God through Christ and by believing this new identity that we have in Him, it will lead us into living it out.

Let this goodness be shown in the way you work, in the way you live, and in the way you relate with people. I pray that in every good work that you will do, your motive is not to gain recognition nor to please people.

Remember that you are doing it out of the overflowing goodness that He lavished on you.

Thoughts to ponder:

When people look at how you live your life, what do you think are the things that they will say to you? Of course we do not please people but our lives should be a testament of what we believe in. Will the people see the goodness of God in you?

Day 7

FAITHFULNESS

His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Matthew 25:23

The Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30 showed us what faithfulness looked like. This parable is about the master who went to a far country and he entrusted talents (money) to his servants. To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then the servant who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise, he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

When the master returned from his journey, each servant gave an account on what they did to the money that has been entrusted to them. The two servants who grew what was entrusted to them were commended by their master and called them "good and *faithful* servant." While the one who did nothing on it received the master's disapproval and was called "wicked and lazy servant."

Faithfulness has something to do with being reliable and trustworthy— even in the little things that have been entrusted

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to us. Good stewardship comes from faithfulness. And God promised that if we are faithful in little, we will be given much.

Remember that faithfulness is a *choice* that we can make today. Look at what's in front of you and be faithful in it—knowing that great will be the reward of those who will be found faithful.

Thoughts to ponder:

Are you being a good steward of God's gift to you? Your time, your body, your life, your family and He even entrusted to us the message of the cross. Are you being that faithful servant who can face God at the end of it all and confident that you will hear Him saying "Well done, my good and faithful servant." Or are you the servant who did nothing on it?

Day 8

GENTLENESS

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Matthew 5:5

The other translation word for gentleness is meekness. We can see throughout the epistles of apostles, they were always commanding the church to deal with gentleness with one another. Peter said in his letter that the believers should *be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* (1 Peter 3:15) Paul reminded the church of Ephesians that they should *with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.* (Ephesians 4:2) And James said in his letter that *the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.* (James 3:17)

Being gentle is the opposite of being proud or arrogant. When we deal with other people with humility, it means that we are not seeing ourselves as better than them. Even in the first-century church, it is evident that there are differences in opinions within and outside the church. That was the reason why the Apostles were reminding the church from time to time to be gentle in dealing with those differences.

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And even today, those differences still exist. Be reminded that we are to deal with the people who disagree with us with gentleness. When correcting someone, be sure that you are doing it with the right intention. You are doing it to educate the person and not to shame or make them feel that you are better than them.

Let us learn from Christ's humility who being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:8)

Thoughts to ponder:

How do you deal when people disagree with you? Do you answer them with arrogance or with humility? Know that with having the right intention, with having the attitude of gentleness and respect, we can win more souls for Christ.

Day 9

SELF - CONTROL

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Galatians 5:16-17

The fruit self-control will point us back to the command in Galatians 5 before Paul explained the deeds of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit: *to walk in the Spirit.*

Walking in the Spirit means that we are saying no to the desires of the flesh. Knowing that the things of the flesh are contrary to the things of God, we will sometimes struggle especially when we face temptation and when sin looks more desirable than godliness.

The Holy Spirit is the One who will empower us to flee and turn away from the temptations. Remember that being a Christian doesn't excuse us from facing temptations. In fact, the enemy is always after us, tempting us to sin and to go against God's will. The enemy doesn't want us to live in purity and freedom from his condemnation because he knows what God can do through us. This is why the Bible commands us that we should "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

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Know that temptation itself is not sin, even Jesus was tempted. Yet when we yield on that temptation, we sin. Remember what Jesus did when He was tempted in the wilderness after He fasted in Matthew 4, He fought the devil's lies with God's truth. Jesus knew that the immediate success that the devil offered Him was nothing compared to what God will about to do in the future. The devil told Jesus "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." but he was too focused on God's will that He can easily say no to that.

That kind of self-control is also available for us today. But in order to identify the enemy's lies and God's truth we have to: Be continually connected with God and we have to be in the Word.

The more we walk in the Spirit and the more we choose God over our flesh, the more that we can be like Jesus— just as we are called to be.


Thoughts to ponder:


What are the things that stop you from walking in holiness? Remember that we are not just to resist but to flee from temptation. Ask God to give you the power to cut off anything that is hindering you in living in a way that is fully acceptable to Him.

*Thank you for reading this! If you have been blessed
and learned something from this, don't forget to
share this to someone.*

God bless you!

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