

*God's Chosen
Children
are
Always Fruitful*

God's children are fruitful

When we follow Jesus Christ as our Lord and Master, we become willing slaves to fulfil His will. This is the nature of His church. We follow the example of the obedience He showed to the Father so the Father was seen in Him, and thereby through our obedience we are to reveal the life qualities of the Son.

When we begin to discover what that means as we are prompted by the Spirit of God, we realise it is far from the cultural practice we have adopted, where we in many cases have become passive observers who think we are to enjoy the benefits of the family without family responsibilities.

We are then confronted with the realisation that the Bible is our owner's manual for the whole of life. And in this book of life skills we are to adhere to, there are over one thousand unavoidable instructions in the New Testament as to how we are to live in obedience as children of God. If we are to be true followers of Christ we will live His life as He lived the life of God the Father before us.

In the very same way as His obedience to the Father guaranteed He completed the work of our redemption, which is the fruit of His Father's labour, our obedience to the Son guarantees we will complete the work that the Son requires of those who say they believe in Him, which is the everyday evidence of His life. And by this we show our fruitfulness is dedicated to Him, in the same way His fruit was really dedicated to the work of God the Father.

Many Christians are familiar with the idea of being fruit inspectors when considering the claim of someone to be a disciple of Jesus, but most don't apply any way as much diligence to the inspection of their own lives for evidence of fruitfulness in obeying all Jesus Christ has commanded.

The owner's manual tells us that everyone who is in Christ will be a fruitful servant of the Lord, simply because the Lord works in them to be fruitful.

To be saved by His fruitful labour of obedience means we become fruitful in carrying out the work He has prepared for us, which He has empowered us to accomplish by the governance of the Spirit.

Therefore the Bible indicate that there is no possibility of someone not revealing the qualities of the Son in their lives if they believe in Christ, just as the Son showed the likeness of God in His obedience to the Father.

Jesus said to His disciples, *“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”* Can it be said of us, if you have seen me, you have seen the Son; for the life of the Father is in the Son, and the life of the Son is in the children of God. *“I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.”*

John 17:23

A disciple is to become like his Master. (Mat 10:25) Therefore it is written, *‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.’* (Col 3:23) *‘For in Him we live and move and have our being’.*

Acts 17:28

As the Son said He did nothing on His own initiative but only what He saw the Father doing; can we say we do nothing on our own initiative but only desire to be doing what we see the Son doing? This ability to do what He commands requires humility.

If the humility of Christ is not present, the servant heart will not be present and the body of Christ will be headless. Without humility the fruitful work of God in Christ Jesus will not be forthcoming, because the Spirit of God can only lead the humble heart. At best the works done will be limited because of the distortions of His word that still infect the heart.

Resistance to comply with the word of God comes from a heart of pride, so without humility the Spirit of God cannot lead us into all truth. Pride comes from a spirit of independence, and since Christ and the Father are united in the work of the kingdom, our self dependence is to be something that is to be vehemently disliked.

When Jesus spoke His last words on the cross, He said *“it is finished.”* When we come to our end, will we be able to say we have finished the work that God had prepared for us to complete?

This little book is hoping to assist those in Christ to be His fruitful followers.

The Father is working

“Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean;

I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover,

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and

I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and

I will be your God.”

Ezekiel 36:25-28

‘For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.’

Phil 2:13

The Son does the work of the Father

“My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.”

John 5:17

“For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.”

John 5:20

“But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.”

John 5:36

“We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day”

John 9:4

‘Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.”’

John 4:34

“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”

John 17:4

Christ's work is to remove everything that separates believers from God, the guilt of sin and the power of sin and Satan. *'but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.'*

Heb 9:12

'In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.'

Eph 1:7

'For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.'

Heb 10:14

'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"'

Gal 3:13

'He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.'

2 Cor 5:21

'Through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.'

Heb 9:12

As part of His work Jesus Christ not only frees us from the power of sin, He gives us the power of God over sin. *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."*

John 14:16-17

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given."

John 7:38-39

As part of His work the Son prays for the protection and unity of the believers. *'For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;'*

Heb 9:24

'Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.'

Heb 7:25

Jesus prays to the Father that we will keep us safe and unit us with Him as He is one life with the Father. *“I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.”* John 17:11

“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.” John 17:20-21

Jesus gives the Holy Spirit who gives the life of God

Jesus gives the Spirit of God to the children so they do the work of the Son. The works of the Spirit are the works of God. He fashioned the world. (Gen 1:2) He regenerates the soul: to be born of the Spirit is to be born of God. He is the source of all knowledge; the giver of inspiration; the teacher, the guide, the sanctifier, and the comforter of the Church in all ages. He fashions our bodies; He formed the body of Christ as a fit dwelling place for the fullness of the Godhead; and He makes our mortal bodies alive in Christ. Rom 8:11

‘However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.’ Rom 8:9-11

The children do the work of the Son

God prepared what He wanted us to do for Him before the world was created. (Eph 1:1-10) *‘For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.’* Eph 2:10

He has already planned what He wants us to do with our lives. He has a plan for each of us to serve Him in this world. This plan includes the Holy Spirit governing our lives in leading us in our service to Him.

God calls us His workmanship, we are His handiwork; we are the precious creation of God. We are made with skill and a purpose by God, to fulfil His purposes. Specifically, we are "*created in Christ Jesus for good works.*" Good works do not give us salvation, but they are absolutely meant to be the result of our salvation in order to serve out living God.

Not only are we made by God, our ability to do the work of God also comes from the Father. Greater works we will do because God provides His power to fulfil His purpose. "*but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*"

Acts 1:8

Jesus answered and said to them, "*This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.*"

John 6:29

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS."

Matt 11:29

If we are securely yoked to Christ by God the Father, when Jesus works, we work alongside Him, because His yoke makes us a single working unit striving to achieve the same task. And since He is the dominant force, He sets the agenda and determines the pace at which we work.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father."

John 14:12

Because the Son gives the Spirit to us, fruitfulness will be the evidence God lives here. If we have God in us, He works in us and we work out that which He prepared beforehand for His glory. '*work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*'

Phil 2:13

'and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.'

Eph 1:19

Christ has come that we may be bought into conformity with God. The knowledge of this truth leads us to godliness. *'this is the will of God, your sanctification.'*

1 Thess 4:3-5

Our sanctification means we are in Christ to be transformed into His likeness. (Rom 8:29) *'But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.'*

2 Cor 3:18

Fruitful evidence of spiritual life comes through abiding in the Son

Abiding in the word must never be separated from the need to personally abide in the life of Christ.

"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."

John 15:2, 4-5, 8

If we don't realise that church attendance is not the same as living for Christ, we have been deceived into thinking we have bought ourselves a ticket for heaven, but there is no bus. Unless Jesus Christ abides in us, and we abide in Him we are never going to produce the fruit of God.

When we are successful grafted into the Vine by the calling of God, the Vine give life and fruitfulness to what is otherwise a dead branch. So if there is no fruit the grafting has not taken and the branch is still dead because God has not done the joining.

Jesus is not only the living vine, but He is also the light of life. *"In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men."* (John 1:4) *Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."* John 8:12

Those who have Christ in them have something of the light of His life. *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see*

your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Matt 5:14, 16

Jesus is also the Word who is with God. The work of God is enhanced by correctly applying the word God has given in the way He intended. *'So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."* John 8:31-32

Freedom from the dictates of our own understanding only comes by abiding in the word of Christ.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil." Prov 3:5-7

Christ in us produces the fruit of God

'I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.' Gal 2:20

If the love of Christ for His mission and His chosen people does not compel us to live for Him, we can hardly say we have died with Him and being raised up together with Him as a new creation of God.

If we have not denied the world and the things of the world we can hardly say we seek first the kingdom of God. If we are not forsaking the deeds of darkness we can hardly say we walk in the light of the Spirit of God.

If we don't understand what is not pertaining to holiness and the divine nature, we will think that being good enough in the eyes of the world is acceptable in the church, but it means we remain enslaved to the deeds of darkness.

'The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.' 1 John 2:4-6

Those who are in Christ no longer belong to the world

'Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' 1 John 2:15

'But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.' 1 Tim 6:6-10

The life of God is always producing kingdom fruitfulness

God's children work for the kingdom of God and not for the things of the world. *"Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."* John 6:27

If we have been called by God, God says He will cause us to walk, to accomplish, to work according to His intentions. *I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.* Ezek 36:27

The faith God gives produces the fruit God works

He prepared this work before hand so that when He brings us into union with Christ we do the work of God in Christ. It is not so much our work because we are slaves if Christ, but by His grace we get the credit for His labour of love is us who live for Him. In a way He is saying to us who love Him, what's Mine is yours.

Spiritual fruitfulness is the work God has prepared for His children. Fruitfulness comes from obedience to every word that comes from the mouth of God. Jesus said: *"Go and make disciples teaching them to obey all I have commanded you"*.

If we are born again in the image of Christ we have believed into Him with the result that we obey Him because He lives in us so we can do His will. If we love Christ who lives in relationship within us, we will

as a result be careful to keep His commandments and we will be going around making disciples to follow Him.

Faithfulness always results in fruitfulness because it is the work of God and God doesn't fail to accomplish His will.

Therefore the unfruitful Christian simply does not exist. If we are Christians we will be fruitful. And the degree to which we walk in step with the Spirit will determine our maturity as we walk in the situation God places us, and this maturity or lack of it will determine to a large degree the size of His harvest through our obedience.

But whatever our situation, whether as a new believer, or a disciplined mature believer, His life in us will show the evidence of His presence as He bears witness to Himself and His passion to complete the work of salvation in His Son.

The more diligent we are in pursuing the knowledge of His life in us, the more light we will have that transforms our minds, and the more we will resemble God Himself, having been changed in such a way as to be an improved representative of the life of Christ.

As this process of transformation is going on when we are faithfully rooting out the mental weeds we have cultivated from the wisdom of men, we will be better equipped to assist the people of God achieving maturity, and also increase our usefulness in reaching those who are lost in complete darkness.

In the Parable of the Sower Jesus talks about four categories of people. (Matt 13:1-9; 18-23) All but the last of the good soils proves to be unbelievers. And about the good soil, Jesus says "*This is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.*"

Matt 13:23

The point is good soil always produces fruitfulness. Everyone who is good soil, who truly understands and accepts the Word of God, yields good fruit: either thirty, or sixty, or a hundred.

And again in the Parable of the Talents, (Matt 25:14-30) every servant was fruitful except for the last one, who was an unbeliever. One made five talents more and another two talents more. The last person, who

received one talent, hid the talent and did nothing with it. He is not an example of an unfruitful Christian, but an unbeliever. God does require fruitfulness and that fruitfulness is certain to follow if we are abiding in Christ.

We are not justified by our works, but those who have been justified by faith will inescapably and always live a life of good works. Eph 2:8-10

What is fruitfulness?

Fruitfulness is evidence of Rebirth in Christ. Faithfulness is a form of fruitfulness. Faithfulness is one of the “fruits” that God produces in us and requires of us. Fruitfulness is our character remade in the image of Christ and the godly responses to the situations we are in, whatever they may be.

Fruitfulness includes the results of our faithfulness, this is the result of following Christ and trusting him and loving Him and obeying Him. It means loving others as we have been loved. (John 15:10, 12) And in the Parable of the Talents, the “*fruit*” in view includes the results of our obedience and work in the Lord, as well as the faithfulness itself.

True faith is fruitfulness in Christ. Doing the work of God is the evidence of the Spirit of God. Real faith from God produces evidence of the presence of God and His passion to complete the mission of Christ by taking light into the darkness so that people will be transferred into the kingdom of God.

What are the evidences of God’s good works? When we have committed ourselves to Christ and live to please Him, the natural result is our behavioural choices will look like His. He was clear that true followers of Christ will be recognisable by their fruit: *“Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”* Matt 7:16–20

There are many ways Christians can be fruitful. True fruitfulness begins in the heart with the fruit of the Spirit. That inner fruit affects outward actions; so our words and our activities will glorify the Lord,

and God's will is accomplished. Here are just a few behaviours that show God's fruit.

Loving God more than anything else.	Matt 22:37
Loving our neighbour as God loves us.	Mark 12:31
Being transformed into the image of Christ.	Rom 8:29
Obeying all He has commanded.	Matt 28: 20
Self denial and taking up the cross to follow Him.	Luke 9:23-24
Practical obedience to the word of God.	John 3:36
The humility of Christ.	Phil 2:5-8
Developing the mind of Christ.	1 Cor 2:16
Mourning over the deeds of the flesh.	Matt 5:4
Absolute surrender to Christ.	Matt 10:37
Building up one another in the church.	1 Thess 5:11
Helping a brother who is in need of practical support.	1 John 3:17
Making disciples and teaching them to obey Him.	Matt 28:19-20
Obeying the teachers the Spirit has appointed.	Heb 13:17
Using the talents the Lord has provided	Matt 22:37-40
Walking as He walked.	1 John 2:6
Putting to death the deeds of the flesh.	Rom 8:13
Offering our bodies as a living sacrifice.	Rom 12:1
Being transformed by the renewing of our mind.	Rom 12:2
The outworking of the life of the Spirit.	Gal 5:22-23
Showing the qualities of genuine love.	1 Cor 13:4-8
Accurately handling the word of truth.	2 Tim 2:15

God's children are faithfully pursuing fruitfulness

Fruitfulness involves the whole life and character in expressing the holiness of God. The Bible often uses the metaphor of fruit to describe the produce of our lives. Fruit can be either good or bad. (Matt 7:18; Luke 6:43) And Rom 7:5 says, "*For when we were in the realm of the flesh . . . we bore fruit for death.*" A fruitful Christian will produce better results: "*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life.*" Prov 11:30

We don't work as if God is far away; we are to work because His indwelling us is the power of God to cause us to live according to His sovereign will. Only by abiding in Christ and Him in us are we able to produce the fruit of God.

God the Father is the gardener, (John 15:1) and He desires us to be fruitful. Jesus said, *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* (John 15:5) As branches cling to the vine, we cling to Christ, drawing our very life from Him. The goal is “much fruit,” as Christ uses us to bring about blessed godly results in a broken, fallen world.

Fruitful Maturity in the image of Christ is our desire

God’s desire is to transform us into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29) and make us as fruitful as He was. In our loving allegiance to Him, we want to be known by good works, (Eph 2:10; Titus 2:7; Col 1:10) humility, (Eph 4:2; Titus 3:2) and forgiveness. Eph 4:32; Col 3:13

We want to always be ready to *“give an account for the hope that is within you”* 1 Pet 3:15

We desire to be the *“good soil”* Jesus spoke of in the Parable of the Sower. Matt 13:3–9

The result of spiritual fruitfulness is that God is glorified, we grow, and others come to know Christ. This is the ultimate fruitfulness for a child of God. Matt 5:16; Mark 16:15

Our spiritual maturity is going to enhance our ability to serve Christ and represent Him in the way that honours His life in us. It also follows the teaching that says: *‘We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.’* Col 1:28

Faith without the works of God is dead because God is not in possession

Faith without works is dead. *‘What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.’* (James 2:14, 17) *‘For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.’* James 2: 26

Real faith comes from God by the effective working of the indwelling Spirit of God, who always reveals Himself by His works of fruitfulness. So if regeneration has taken place, good acceptable fruit will be

forthcoming. His presence is evidenced by His life transforming the chosen children of God into the image of Christ.

Real faith from God produces evidence of the presence of God and His passion to complete the mission of Christ by taking light into the darkness so that people will be transferred into the kingdom of God.

God will judge the works

Not everyone will be able to produce the same crop, but those who have received more resources will be required to do more. *"From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more."*

Luke 12:48

However not everyone will use their resources wisely.

'Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.'

1 Cor 3:12-15

Our preconceived ideas about how we should live blind us to the truth of living for Christ. This was true of the religious leaders in Jesus' day, and it is true of people who take the word of God out of context so they can set their own agenda; and it is also true in society where an undeclared bias is held and hidden. It doesn't matter what the evidence says to the contrary, the prejudice of a person will not be surrendered because it's about the individual's ingrained belief about the reality of life as they see it and want it to be.

If we say we believe in the sovereignty of God and also hold that Christians have a free will to go another way, we have denied God. We are either slaves to the darkness or we are slaves to Christ who is the Light of the world, who makes us lights in the world. Any denial of God's sovereignty weakens our ability to produce the fruit of God.

The self denial required for fruitfulness is a life of humility, and it's about surrendering our ideas in deference to the Spirit of God because

we respect Him as God, otherwise we can't be led into all righteousness according to His truth. A transformed mind requires a daily sacrificed life so that nothing in us hinders the teaching of God. The battle ground is not out there, it's between our ears.

To those who yield fruit Jesus says, *“Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your Master.”* Matt 25:23

If we are faithful, the fruit that results from our faithfulness is good and acceptable to Him, because it is proof of His life working His works. As long as we are faithful and doing what God requires, we shouldn't ever feel that we just aren't "fruitful enough." We don't have control over the results; our responsibility is to be faithful to do what God has said. We do the work of God and God produces the fruit His way, and in His time.

When we are faithful God decides our reward. For it is faith we received from God that makes our works good, and God may be doing incredible things through our seemingly everyday efforts that we simply will not see until we get to heaven.

But if there is no fruit there is no hope

“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” Matt 7:19

A lack of holiness and the works of God can only mean the name of the Lord has been taken in vein. True belief results in the manifestation of the presence of God who indwells the believer. The opposite to the light of God's presence is not just a lack of fruitfulness but overpowering darkness.

“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” John 3:18-21

Therefore there are no Carnal Christians and fruitful Christians

People are either saved or dead in sin, there is only the flesh and the spirit. People are either spiritually alive or dead. When Paul rebukes the Church in Corinth he is not saying some are fleshly Christians as might be understood from the KJV translation. *'For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?'*

The use of carnal in this KJV verse has led to a great deal of bad interpretation, the word carnal is actually “*fleshly*”. The verse is better rendered fleshly. *'for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?'*
1 Cor 3:3 NASB

This is a rebuke for behaving like the unsaved; he wasn't intending them to assume you can be saved and show no evidence of the Spirit of God compelling the love and obedience of Christ. Paul has already called them saints. *'To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours::'*
1 Cor 1:2

To be of the flesh is to be dead in sin, not regenerated. No one can be a fleshly Christian, for this is a contradiction in terms. If you are fleshly you seek after material things and forsake the spiritual. Unfortunately there are many who promote the idea you can live as a fleshly Christian and still be saved. How ridiculous!! Fleshly means pertaining to flesh, to temporary bodily existence, to be unregenerate. It is having a concern for material things before obedience to God. Christians are to be concerned about being holy and putting to death the fleshly thinking that remains.

'So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “ Abba! Father!”'
Rom 8:12-15

The fleshly person who lives for themselves may sit in the church, but they will not be heaven bound because the living Lord does not live within their hearts.

God's power works within the humble heart

If Christ is in us there cannot be any desire for independent thinking, because independence is not consistent with the mind of Christ. God has already taken the steps to make independence a thing of the past. *“Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”*

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Because the believer has received a new heart the will is controlled by the power of Christ. *‘For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.’*

2 Cor 5:14-15

Now the love of Christ controls us. His love has the power to confine us, to hold us fast, to compel us to do His will, and preoccupy us with His plan. *‘so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.’*

Rom 8:4

That the law might be fulfilled in us is that law we are to fulfil, and complete. We are to fill up and to make full to accomplish the instructions of the word of God because His statutes are now part of the life of the Spirit in us. *‘even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)’*

Eph 2:1-2, 4-5

‘So then, brethren, we are under obligation,’

Rom 8:12

We are obliged because we are in debt to Him who bought us with the price of His blood. We are indebted to the one who we owe something, because we are indebted for a service rendered. *‘knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the*

precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.'

1 Pet 1:18-19

The Holy Spirit is God's provision for His children to be fruitful

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." This means the Holy Spirit is directing the conduct of the believer's life. A true Christian life is a life personally led at every turn by a Divine Person. The Holy Spirit undertakes to lead us into our responsibility to live the Christ life. A true Christian is led by a living Holy Person within us.

We should believe the teaching of God's Word that the Spirit of God's Son dwells within us, and we should surrender the control of our life to Him, and look to Him to guide us at every turn of life. He will do it if we only surrender to Him to do it and trust Him to do it.

The Spirit of God lives in us to guide us so we walk consistently with His life. *'I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.'* (Gal 5:16) *'If we live by the Spirit, let us also ^[a]walk by the Spirit.'*

Gal 5:25

He is our teacher and we are encouraged by His power to have His priorities, to seek to accomplish His plans, and to cherish others with the love of God that He the Spirit has poured out into our hearts.

As a consequence of the Spirit's leading the believer will be able to produce the work that guarantees a valued harvest, no matter how small. *'and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.'*

Eph 1:19

*'so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing **fruit** in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously.'*

Col 1:10-11

We have the Spirit of Christ. *'But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.'* (Rom 8:9) But if we have the Spirit of Christ we have Christ Himself living in us.

'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.'

Col 1:15-17, 22

The work of God is living in obedience to Christ

The fruit of the Spirit is much more than Gal 5:22-23, the fruit of the Spirit is the life of Christ who is our life. Col 3:3

The love we are to show the world is more than 1 Cor 13:4-8, it is the love of Christ who died for us so we can live His life. The one who is born of God follows the example of the Son of God.

'The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.' 1 John 2:4-6

If you want an owner's manual on how to do the work of God, read the Bible as if it has been written especially for you. God gives a lifetime guarantee for manual keepers.

'So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.'

Phil 2:12-16

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

John 10:26-28

However there are many who sit as spectators to their own doom

A lack of fruit means there is no attachment to Christ the Vine who produces His fruit in those who abide in Him. If this is the case for you, and you have resisted denying yourself to take up your cross, today is the day of Salvation, today is the day for the sleeper to awaken and follow the Lord's command to repent so that the way to a life of fruitfulness is open and rewarded.

Jesus does the work of God in His disciples

Jesus is the only way to eternal life with God. His way is the road less travelled; it is the way that Jesus walks.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." John 14:6

The road most often taken is the Broad way that leads to eternal destruction. *"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."* Matt 7:13-14

Many people want to find their own way and determine how they walk, but No one comes to the Father except through the way of Jesus Christ.

He is the door to eternal life

So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." John 10:7-9

And the only key to the door of heaven is gained by self denial and taking up our cross.

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

Luke 9:23

Those who hear Jesus Christ believe that God is faithful because He does the Work of God, and they willingly follow Him. *"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me."* John 14:1

Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father."

John 14:9-12

Jesus is the life of His disciples

If we have God, God has us, and if He has chosen us, He has given us the life of His Son by the power of the Spirit who now lives in us to do the work of God. Therefore the chosen children no longer live for themselves but for Him who died on their behalf.

Anybody can do good deeds in the strength of the flesh, but this kind of doing is according to the will of man and will not be accompanied by faith. Unless there has been a radical turning away from self dependence to depend on the sacrifice of Christ for forgiveness of sins and the regenerating birth of the Spirit of God, the good done will be assigned to the fire along with the doer. Faith without works is dead, but works without faith is also a death sentence.

The Evidence of the fruitful faithfulness that comes from God by the power of the Spirit is married to unbridled devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord and Master.

Therefore the faithful believer is passionately joined to the bride of Christ that is called His Church. This Church contains His called out ones who have heard His voice and follow him.

This Church is the temple of God in which He has dominion as its supreme head, and only source of life and purpose. The Church is the temple because the people whom He called are also living temples who have the Spirit of God living in them.

Because of the working of God, those who live for Christ whom they love more than life are called the bride of Christ. These are the ones God has predestined for good works by the power of the Spirit of God. These alone will hear their Master say, "*Well done*"

So if you still reserve the right to choose how you live, and the good you will do on your own initiative, then you should know you are facing mortal spiritual danger of the worst possible kind, as you have obviously chosen to live for yourself and rejected Christ's Lordship, and have excluded yourself from the household of God even if you attend a church because the Spirit of Christ is not controlling your life.

May God have mercy on your soul and give you the gift of faith and repentance so that you can turn from destruction and receive the gift of eternal life only available through being joined to Jesus Christ the Lord.

Abide in Christ

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father."

John 14:10-12

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