

BEARING FRUIT

A Bible Study Based on John 15:1-5; Colossians 2:7;
Galatians 5:22-23; Jeremiah 17:7-8

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus . . .” (Heb. 12:2 NIV).

LOVE - He “loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20 NIV).

Do I love my readers? Is love my motivating force?

How much of myself do I give them?

What about loving my editors, especially the ones who reject my manuscript?

Loving people who make demands on my time, who take me from my work?

JOY - “For the joy set before him [Jesus] endured the cross . . .” (Heb. 12:2 NIV).

Is my joy dependent on acceptances, praise, success?

Do I rejoice in taking up my cross (Mk. 8:34-35), or look for easier ways to serve the Lord?

PEACE - “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (Jn. 14:27 NIV). We never see Jesus up-tight even when demands on him were so great that “he couldn’t even find time to eat” (Mk. 3:20 TLB). See Col. 3:15.

Do I have his peace when I’m interrupted?

When I’m facing a deadline or blank sheet of paper?

When doors do not open for my work?

PATIENCE - “Think about his patience as sinful men did such terrible things to him” (Heb. 12:3 TLB); his patience on the night he was betrayed when even his disciples did not yet understand who he was (see Jn. 14:4-11).

Am I learning to wait patiently on the Lord?

How patient am I with editors, family members, myself?

KINDNESS - “Because of his kindness you have been saved” (Eph. 2:8 TLB).

Do people (editors, family, friends) see Christ in me?

Am I gracious?

GOODNESS - “He went around doing good . . .” (Acts 10:38 TLB).

Greek - agathos describes that which “being good in its character . . . is beneficial in its effect.”*

Is my writing benefitting my readers?

How can I “do good” with my writing?

FAITHFULNESS - He has enriched us, gifted us, strengthened us, called us, and is faithful (see 1 Cor. 1:5-9).

Am I being faithful to him?

Am I using the gifts he has given me?

GENTLENESS - “I am gentle and humble . . .” (Mt. 11:29 TLB).

Greek - meekness, prautes: closely linked with humility, a fruit of power not weakness, not fighting against God, the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest.*

Have I argued with the Lord lately?

Am I on an ego trip?

SELF CONTROL - Jesus responded. He did not react. He was always in control of his feelings, words, actions (see Mk. 3).

How much self-control did I exercise the last time something or someone irritated me?

What about my self-discipline?

Do I daily relinquish control of my life to the Lord?

*From *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.