10-point checklist for spiritual health

Every one of us needs an occasional visit to the doctor for a checkup to make sure everything is working alright and that we don't have an unknown serious internal condition.



1. Love

- [ ] This word for love doesn't refer to warm feelings but to a deliberate attitude of good will and devotion to others. Love gives freely without looking at whether the other person deserves it, and it gives without expecting anything back.

2. Joy

- [ ] Unlike happiness, joy is gladness that is completely independent of the good or bad things that happen in the course of the day. In fact, joy denotes a supernatural gladness given by God's Spirit that actually seems to show up best during hard times. This is a product of fixing your focus on God's purposes for the events in your life rather than on the circumstances.

3. Peace

- [ ] It's not the absence of turmoil, but the presence of tranquility even while in a place of chaos. It is a sense of wholeness and completeness that is content knowing that God controls the events of the day.

4. Patience

- [ ] Other words that describe this fruit are lenience, long-suffering, forbearance, perseverance, and steadfastness. It is the ability to endure ill treatment from life or at the hands of others without lashing out or paying back.

5. Kindness

- [ ] When kindness is at work in a man's life, he looks for ways to adapt to meet the needs of others. It is moral goodness that overflows. It's also the absence of malice.

6. Goodness

- [ ] While kindness is the soft side of good, goodness reflects the character of God. Goodness in you desires to see goodness in others and is not beyond confronting or even rebuking (as Jesus did with the money changers in the temple) for that to happen.

7. Faithfulness

- [ ] A faithful man is one with real integrity. He's someone others can look to as an example, and someone who is truly devoted to others and to Christ. Our natural self always wants to be in charge, but Spirit-controlled faithfulness is evident in the life of a man who seeks good for others and glory for God.

8. Gentleness

- [ ] Meekness is not weakness. Gentleness is not without power, it just chooses to defer to others. It forgives others, corrects with kindness, and lives in tranquility.

9. Self-control

- [ ] Our fleshly desires, Scripture tells us, are continually at odds with God's Spirit and always want to be in charge. Self-control is literally releasing our grip on the fleshly desires, choosing instead to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. It is power focused in the right place.

10. Walk by the Spirit

- [ ] While not a fruit of the Spirit, the final item on the checkup produces all nine qualities listed above. When we follow the Spirit's lead instead of being led by our self-focused desires, He produces the fruit.But even when we don't walk by the Spirit, He is the very one who convicts us that things are not in proper order in our lives.

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