

**MIRACLE GROW AND FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**  
**Galatians 5:13-25**

**I. ARE WE THERE YET?**

- A. Spiritual Maturity Inventory.
1. Spiritual maturity is not being busy with a lot of Christian activities, or knowing a lot about the Bible, or piling up spiritual accomplishments.
  2. How well are you doing with spiritual formation?  
Love, Joy, Peace  
Patience, Kindness, Goodness,  
Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control.
- B. Works of the World Inventory.
1. Everyone is in the process of being formed spiritually; the question is *by whom?*
  2. We live in a world that deforms people spiritually.
  3. How are you doing with spiritual deformity?  
Fornication, Impurity, Licentiousness,  
Idolatry, Sorcery,  
Enmity, Strife, Jealousy, Anger,  
Selfishness, Dissension, Party Spirit, Envy,  
Drunkenness, Carousing, and the like.
- C. The Problem in Galatia.
1. There were two false factions in the Galatian Church: the legalists and the liberals.
  2. Both roads led in the wrong direction.

**II. HOW DO WE GET THERE?**

- A. *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."*
- B. God's Job or Mine?
1. There are Calvinistic Christians. It's completely up to God.
  2. There are Marine Corps Christians. It's all up to me. "I have memorized more Bible verses, witnessed to more people, and prayed longer than anyone!"
- C. Meet in the Middle.
1. It is *our* job. We can't do it without God and God won't do it without us.
  2. It's like trying to go to sleep or the difference between a motor boat and a sail boat.
- D. The Key Concept: Abiding.
1. If you *abide* in Jesus, the fruit will come. If you don't abide in him, you'll never be fruitful.
  2. Jesus is saying, "Abide with me. Talk to me all the time. I don't care when. I don't care what's going on. Abide with me always."

**Prayer Concerns:** *Burney Biesel, Mac Kerr, Jane Lipford, Joe McDowell, Anne Miller, Mildred Sentell, Vicki Page-Skehan, Blake Stallings, Carol Webb, Madison Brooke Binkley, Gerald Borden, Sarah Clark, Richard Cole, Jack Cothran, Cledus Creel, Larry Fowlkes, Nancy Gunnels, Jeff Joyner, Sandra Kilzer, Linda Lindner, Van Lynch, Macy Morgan, Taylor Murray, Judy Owen, David Ray Petrie, Patrick Ramage, Skip Riley, George Skyes, Lloyd Watson, Kenji Yamauchi ...*

### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

O Loving Father, in every moment of our lives, you are there reaching for us, calling to your children everywhere ...

...Some of us are too busy to hear; we don't want to hear because you might call for changes we don't want to make.

...Some of us hear faintly, and respond faintly, drawn forward by our real need of you, but held back by our own uncertainties.

...Some of us come as close to you as we know how, and find our lives changed by your presence.

We ask you, O God, to keep on calling for us, because despite our busyness, we know down deep that we need you. Come into our hearts and make us loving people. Increase our patience and compassion. Forgive our blunders and our brittleness of spirit.

For those who find life especially hard, we pray for your presence. Don't let us forget those who are hurting, and lonely. And above all, help us be aware of how blessed we are, because, Father, if we can't see and acknowledge the good things we have, we might as well not have them.

Keep us in your Spirit as our worship continues, in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray ...

**THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### **SPIRITUAL MATURITY INVENTORY**

#### **LOVE**

- How tender is your heart towards God and other people?
- Do you ever have a critical, judgmental spirit in your heart?

#### **JOY**

- What is your current "irritability factor?"
- How often did you laugh this week?

#### **PEACE**

- To what degree are your heart and mind at rest in God?
- How consistently are you troubled or anxious?

#### **PATIENCE**

- How do you respond when you don't get your way?
- Are you able to wait gracefully?

#### **KINDNESS**

- How inclined are you to lend someone a helping hand?
- How are you doing at encouraging and affirming people?

#### **GENEROSITY**

- What portion of your time and money are you giving?
- Do you ever want to give the least amount possible?

#### **FAITHFULNESS**

- Would people say that you are dependable?
- Do you ever use words to deceive?

#### **GENTLENESS**

- How successfully do you speak the truth with grace?

#### **SELF-CONTROL**

- Have any bad habits?
- Ever give into an impulse?