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WHAT'S THE POINT?

Christians
should grow in
love.



1. ALL WE NEED IS LOVE, RIGHT?

Sitting in a café one day people-watching, I spied a couple having lunch. It was hard to miss that they were together – the matching jumpers creepily screamed ‘we’re an item’ – but it wasn’t the only resemblance. When I looked closer they actually looked similar. It’s odd, right, but have you noticed that the longer you spend with someone you like, the more you seem to take on some of their characteristics and mannerisms? It starts with the odd word here and there and before you know it you’re finishing their sentences and coordinating outfits. We are influenced and changed by our time with those we love. It should be the same for us as Christians.

As we spend time with God and grow in maturity, we should be influenced by Him and become more and more like Jesus.

It’s a bit of a weird thought to get your brain around, but as Christians we actually have the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, living in us. Now common sense tells us that if He’s living in us, there should be some evidence of that in our lives. He is bound to influence us. I’m not talking surface influence like suddenly having a deep desire to wear a checked shirt, carry a large Bible and have a WWJD friendship bracelet (What Would Jesus Do) on your left wrist ... *Jesus bling*. I mean our character! Having the Spirit dwell in us has got to have an impact on our character, and we should see evidence of that in our lives.

STOP

So, as a professing Christian what should Jackie's life look like?



'I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honour, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, bestowing a rich inheritance on those who love me and making their treasuries full' (Prov. 8:17-21).

Sometimes people describe the evidence of God's presence in our lives as 'fruit'. Just like my wee mum sees the evidence of the healthy apple tree in the crop of juicy apples she collects from her garden, we would expect any Christian to grow and produce 'fruit' in their lives.

In this book we are going to look at the 'fruit' that should be evident in our lives as Christians: the fruit of the Spirit.

STOP

Do you think that all the fruit we see in our life is good fruit?



'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law' (Gal. 5:22-23).

Have you ever seen the cartoon strip of a man and woman wearing fig leaves with the caption 'Love is ...'? Love is never having to say you're sorry, love is always having someone to hold hands with, love is saying I love you at random moments, love is soothing away all his worries ... *really?! When we think of love, lots of us think of romance, all hearts and flowers. It's that way you feel, the butterflies inside, when they look at you from across a room (and I'm not talking about indigestion!). We think love is all passion*