

WALKING IN THE  
FRUIT OF THE



RELEASING THE NATURE AND POWER  
OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE

GLORIA COPELAND

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### ***Fruit of the Spirit***

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## Chapter 1

# SUPERNATURAL FORCES OF DIVINE LIFE

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,  
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,  
temperance: against such there is no law.*

GALATIANS 5:22-23

The fruit of the spirit are powerful spiritual forces. They're more than just nice character traits for Christians to have. They are our daily victory. Walking in the fruit of the spirit actually opens the door for us, as believers, to walk in the gifts of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, goodness and kindness are all supernatural expressions of the character and presence of God who lives inside us. When we yield to them, the Holy Spirit enhances and strengthens them in us to become a river of living water that flows out of us to help bless others!

Each fruit of the re-created human spirit supplies us with something we need so we can walk in the blessings and wholeness that Jesus

## WALKING IN THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

provided for us. And each one provides us with an element of divine power that equips us to meet the challenges of life and come through in victory.

These fruit are born into us when we receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord in the new birth (1 Peter 1:23). They give us the power we need to rise above the snares of the devil and the pull of this fallen world. They help us fulfill our divine calling and keep us strong and stable enough to complete our God-appointed race on this earth. When we're ready to go to heaven, like the Apostle Paul, we can say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

Without walking in the fruit of the spirit, the gifts of the Spirit won't work. Galatians 5:6 says that faith works by love. So without the spiritual fruit of love, your faith won't work. And "without faith," as Hebrews 11:6 says, "it is impossible to please him."

*Nothing* the devil comes up with can defeat you when you're walking in the fullness of the fruit! As author Greg Zoschak puts it, "There is not any situation, trial or temptation that a child of God will face that one of the fruit of the spirit will not enable him to overcome."<sup>1</sup>

If the devil tries to stir up trouble in your relationships, for instance, forces like love and kindness will come to your aid. If he tries to discourage you with contrary circumstances, forces like faith and patience will see you through. If he tempts you to get into pride because you're excelling on the job, or to get into fear and turmoil because you're in danger of being laid off, the fruit of humility and peace will protect you.

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1 Greg Zoschak, *A Call for Character: Developing the Fruit of the Spirit in Your Life* (Tulsa: Harrison House Publishers, 1991) p. 22.

On the other hand, if one of the fruit is not operating in your life, you can't be totally successful because that particular area will be the place where the enemy will concentrate his attack. Without the force of self-control, for example, even though you may have all the other spiritual fruit in operation, without that fruit to help you rein in your natural desires, you'll be vulnerable to getting pulled off course by the lusts of your flesh.

That's why, throughout the New Testament, God tells us continually to cultivate *all* the fruit of the spirit! He loves us and wants us to be overcomers. And that's what the fruit empower us to do.

I first began learning about the fruit of the spirit in 1988, a few weeks before our annual West Coast Believers' Convention. I'd been fellowshiping with the Lord in preparation for the meetings and, as always, I asked Him, "Lord, what do You want me to preach?"

It usually takes a few days for me to discern what He's saying. I have to listen to my spirit for a while until I'm sure I've heard clearly from Him. But that morning was different. He spoke to me so powerfully, I heard Him right away:

*I want you to teach on the fruit of the spirit,* He said.

His answer totally surprised me. I'd never taught just on the fruit of the spirit. So I began an organized, in-depth study on it. I knew I'd received the Lord's direction, so I dove in and got started!

I began searching my Bible, looking at the many scriptures that talk about the fruit of the spirit, and I got some wonderful books on the subject. Then, with all my resources piled around me, I read and prayed—hour after hour, day after day—and let the Holy Spirit teach me what you're about to read.

What the Lord showed me not only blessed me, it changed my perception in a way that has impacted my life ever since.

*The fruit of the spirit will produce a strong foundation for victory.*

I don't know about you, but I want to finish my life as a winner. When reward day comes, I want to hear Jesus say, "Well done, My good and faithful servant!"

I'm sure you do, too. For that to happen, though, we'll need to keep growing consistently in the fruit of the spirit.

### Partakers of the Divine Nature

"How exactly do we go about walking consistently in the power of the fruit of the spirit?" you might ask.

The first thing we do is go to the Bible to see what God has to say about the subject. One passage I've studied quite a bit is 2 Peter 1:3-11. It says that God:

[By] His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these [we] might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (verses 3-4).

These verses help us understand the process by telling us that *godliness* (which is another way to describe the fruit) comes through the knowledge of the Lord.

*God has already provided every born-again believer with everything it takes to bear spiritual fruit.*



The better we get to *know Him*, the greater revelation we'll have of His divine nature that's already inside us. The better we understand His nature, the more we can partake of it, and the freer of this world's corruption we become.

The passage goes on to say:

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.... Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (verses 5-8,10-11).

If you ever need inspiration to walk in the fruit of the spirit, reread those verses often. They list many wonderful benefits. When you abound in the fruit, you enter into the best God has planned for you. Operating in them empowers you to fulfill your divine call. You'll remain spiritually sure-footed and avoid destructive falls. Best of all, according to these verses, when you've finished your earthly assignment, you'll enjoy an abundant entrance into God's everlasting kingdom!

What does it mean to have an abundant entrance into His kingdom?

For one thing, it means you won't just barely make it into heaven by the skin of your teeth. And, you won't get there empty-handed with nothing to show for the life you lived here. When you step out of this natural realm into the glory realm, because you cultivated and walked in the fruit of the spirit here on earth, you'll have eternal rewards awaiting you. You'll have a big welcoming party gathered there to greet you.

Lots of people will be flocking around you telling you how glad they are to see you. You'll have family members and friends there. People you've loved and ministered to will be celebrating your arrival in heaven and telling you how, while they were on earth, they were influenced by all the fruit of the spirit they saw in your life!

### The Fruit + the Gifts = Maximum Power

The gifts of the Spirit are exciting and spectacular, and the Church definitely needs them (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). They're extremely valuable. But unlike the fruit, the gifts don't manifest whenever you want them to. You can't get up every morning and say, "I believe I'll walk in the word of wisdom and the gift of miracles today."

No, the gifts manifest only as the Holy Spirit wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). They function only in certain situations. You can't live on the gifts. People who try end up getting into trouble.

We've all heard the stories. We've heard about tongue-talking Christians who regularly prophesied in church on Sundays and yet, somehow, ended up falling into a lifestyle of sin. We've even heard, on occasion, about a truly anointed minister of God who had great healings and miracles taking place in his or her meetings and then got involved in some kind of illicit affair. What opened the door to those tragedies? How could such seemingly spiritual believers end up going so wrong?

The answer is simple. *Those believers operated in spiritual gifts, but they didn't have much spiritual fruit.* So they didn't have the strength to overcome the pressures of temptation. As a result, when the devil came after them, they succumbed to his attack. They ended up going on a fleshly detour that left them shipwrecked and robbed them of part of God's purpose for their lives.

No believer ever intends to end up that way! But if we don't learn to walk in the power of our divine nature, it can happen to any of us. That's

why we don't want to put all our focus on the gifts. Although it's scriptural and good to "covet earnestly" the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31), we also should want to *covet and cultivate the fruit*.

- We want the love of God flowing in abundance because "love never fails" (1 Corinthians 13:8, NKJV).
- We want plenty of joy because "the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).
- We want peace because it keeps us tranquil in times of trouble.
- We want faith and patience because they're the power twins that undergird us so when we're believing God for healing or prosperity or something else He's promised, we're able to hang in there until we receive.
- We want gentleness, goodness and meekness because they enhance our relationships, and empower us to manifest to those around us the character and life of God.
- We want temperance, or self-control, because it comes to our aid and gives us victory in our conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil.

The maximum manifestation of spiritual power is achieved in our lives only when the gifts and the fruit are working together. So value *both* the gifts and the fruit. Desire to move in the gifts as the Holy Spirit wills, and develop your faith to walk consistently in all the fruit as well. You'll be setting yourself up to be a winner in every aspect of life!

## Witnesses of the Power and Character of Christ

You won't be the only one who wins as a result of the fruit of the spirit you bear. Others will benefit, too. As the forces of God's divine nature

flow through you, you'll become a greater blessing and bring change into the lives of people around you. You'll impact the world in a greater way for Jesus and, as believers, that's what we're called to do.

We're called to be witnesses to the power of our resurrected Savior with our words but also to reveal Him through who we are and what we do. Acts 1:8 says, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

*We're called to be a living revelation of God's love, life and divine character.*

At this very moment, people all over this earth are starving for a revelation of God's love and goodness. They're hungry to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). They may not realize it, but they're craving the fruit of the spirit that's available only through a personal relationship with God.

Everyone in the world wants to be loved. Even seemingly hardened sinners who haven't heard or believed the gospel are seeking joy and peace. But they're looking in the wrong place. The world can't provide those things.

The world has no real victory to offer. It can't help people when they're in a crisis or provide the solution when their marriages are crumbling, their bodies and emotions are breaking down under the stresses of life, or they're being driven to destruction by fleshly lusts they can't control.

Even the so-called "success strategies" the world comes up with can't produce real or lasting success, because apart from Jesus, it's not available. Without Him, people have no way to truly live as overcomers. They can't access supernatural forces like love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness,

goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control, so they don't have the power to triumph over the troubles of life.

But we can help them find that power! We can share with them the good news about Jesus and show them the abundant life He provides. We can point them to the Answer Himself by cultivating and yielding to His nature, making it our lifestyle, and putting it on display.

Simply by walking in the fruit of the spirit on purpose, every day, wherever we go, we can let the world see Jesus in us!

### Speak Your Faith

*I declare by faith that I walk in the fruit of the spirit that are in me because God's divine nature lives in me. It is making me an overcomer in every area of my life. I walk in love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance (self-control). I am a living revelation to others of God's love, life and divine character!*