



So what does this look like practically?

How do we walk by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit?

Here are three practical steps to take drawn directly from Paul's letter.

First, stop trying to manufacture fruit and start abiding in the Vine.

This week, replace one striving habit with one abiding habit. If you have been trying to white-knuckle your way to patience, stop. Instead, spend fifteen minutes each morning simply being with Jesus. Not reading for information. Not praying through a list. Just being present with Him. Ask the Spirit to show you His love. Ask Him to fill you with His peace. The fruit of abiding is always better than the fruit of striving. Jesus said it plainly. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. The condition is abiding. The result is fruit. Not the other way around it.

Second, identify where the flesh is winning and bring it to the cross.

Paul says we have crucified the flesh. That means we treat it like what it is: dead. When you feel the old desire rising, the old pattern tempting, the old anger flaring, do not negotiate with it. Do not manage it. Nail it to the cross. Say out loud, That is not who I am anymore. I have been crucified with Christ. The Spirit lives in me, and I will walk by the Spirit, not by the flesh. Name the specific work of the flesh that has been dominating your life, and by faith reckon it dead in Christ.

Think about the story of Ruth and Boaz in the book of Ruth. Ruth was a Moabitess, a foreigner, a widow with nothing to offer. But she clung to Naomi and she clung to the God of Israel. And when she went to work in Boaz's fields, she did not try to manufacture a harvest. She simply gleaned where the harvest was already falling. She stayed close to the source, and the source provided. Boaz eventually became her kinsman-redeemer, and the fruit of that connection was not just grain for a day but a place in the lineage of King David and eventually Jesus Himself.

Ruth did not produce the harvest. She positioned herself in it. That is what it means to walk by the Spirit. You do not produce the fruit. You position yourself where the Spirit is working, and you let Him provide what you cannot create.

Third, choose one fruit of the Spirit and ask the Spirit to grow it this week.

Not all nine at once. Just one. Maybe you need patience with a difficult coworker. Maybe you need self-control with your words at home. Maybe you need kindness toward a neighbor who has been hard to love. Maybe you need peace in the middle of a medical uncertainty. Maybe you need love for someone who has wounded you deeply. Ask the Spirit to show you where He wants to grow fruit, and then cooperate with Him. Walk by the Spirit in that specific area. Keep in step with Him when the old pattern tries to resurface. When the flesh says retaliate, let the Spirit lead you to forbearance. When the flesh says despair, let the Spirit lead you to joy. When the flesh says isolate, let the Spirit lead you to love. And watch what He does. The fruit is His product. But the branch has to stay connected.