



*Fruits
of the
Spirit*

TEACHER TOMAS

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

TEACHER TOMAS

Edited by Angus Bowen and Karen O'Dell

Teacher Tomas' Fruits of the Spirit
published by

Harp of God, Inc.
P.O. Box 692
Monterey, MA 01245

July 1999 All rights reserved

Order this and our other publications
from our website at:

www.lightandlife.com.

Printed in the U.S.A. by
ArrowPress
Pittsfield, MA

Contents

Greetings	1
CHARACTER	4
Courageous Loyalty.....	11
Confiding Trust	16
Forgiving Tolerance	21
Loving Service	25
Enlightened Honesty	30
Unselfish Devotion.....	33
Undying Hope.....	37
Comforting Presence	41
Unfailing Goodness	45
Sincere Fairness.....	48
Merciful Ministry.....	51

“Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

Matthew 7:16

“And the fruits of the divine spirit which are yielded in the lives of spirit-born and God-knowing mortals are loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, unfailing goodness, forgiving tolerance, and enduring peace. If professed believers bear not these fruits of the divine spirit in their lives, they are dead; the Spirit of Truth is not in them; they are useless branches on the living vine, and they soon will be taken away.”

The Urantia Papers

Greetings

I am Tomas.
I am your teacher, your guide,
your companion, your friend
and the friend of those values and standards
which you hold dear,
which you embrace with your deep heart.

I am an advanced teacher of supernal values,
having attained some degree of wisdom and experience
by the very process of evolving as you.
In my mortal career I was a Sociologist,
or what you might call a Cultural Anthropologist.
I was a married man.
My beloved partner Janus and I had four sons.

The privilege which I enjoy today
in meeting with you in this fashion
is second to none.

It is said that the most important work
is the work of our realm
and my most important work
is spread before me today in your presence.

As we become better acquainted
and as you begin to foster our lessons into your life,
we will begin to see and feel
the profound effects which can be
and will be
brought about as a result of our efforts.

I have long sought this time with you
and am greatly looking forward to
the evolution and development
of our relationship
in the loyal, steadfast company and support

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

of heavenly hosts who indeed conspire
to lift you up and to help you become aware
of your true radiant reality,
your true connection with divinity,
and with your spiritual family
which embraces you and rejoices in your life
and in your victory over fear.
The universe is a friendly place.

Your appreciation of your spiritual development
will be augmented by the daily practice of
STILLNESS.

Through the practice of Stillness,
of going within,
you calm all those otherwise complicating systems
that can be a bar against intimate contact
with your own Indwelling Spirit,
the “still, small voice” inside.

And in the end
it is this God Fragment Within
which is your most eternal and faithful Guide.
Never are the heavenly hosts
to replace your own integral relationship
with your Indwelling God Fragment.
The Father who indwells us all
is our origin and our destiny
and so for many reasons,
the focal point of Stillness
has been and will continue to be stressed.

As we spend time in conversation and prayer
with our Creator,
we are reminded of Grace.
The mortal existence is so filled
with energy and industry and activity
and yet with only relative degrees of harmony.
Being so busy gives you the idea

Greetings

that you are being somehow purposeful or productive,
but only when you experience the Stillness
are you in complete knowledge
of His presence,
and only as you carry your understanding of Grace
with you into your life
are you capable of maintaining
that quality which allows you to prevail with men
in such a way as to maintain your own sense
of balance and solidarity.
This condition is evidence of a well-unified personality
operating in the fullest capacity.

CHARACTER

I would like to venture with you
into the realms of human "character,"
but first I would like to tell you a story
to illustrate how it is that your character
has been formed by your conditioning;
it is a short introduction to farm life,
on which farm we will cultivate true character.

I would ask you to envision a Farm House
that was leased to Tenant Farmers
by a Property Manager
who worked for a Land Owner
who had need to travel to a distant country.

Let us carry this picture further
and say that on this Farm
there are many animals and many helpers,
many farm hands in various cottages and residences,
in order to support the land in its natural function
of growing crops and putting up stock and so forth.

And while these workers have been under the direction of the
Tenant Farmers,
they have been forced to behave in certain ways
and subscribe to certain behaviors
that are not necessarily in accordance
with the values of the Land Owner.

Might I introduce one example of a girl
who has been instructed to gather the eggs
but she has been forbidden to pass by the well
on the way to gather her eggs,
and so for many years she has crossed the lawn
in avoidance of the well.

The Land Owner returns from his travels

and discovers that the Property Manager
has permitted the Tenant Farmers
to mis-manage his Farm.
The herds are being neglected,
the buildings are in disarray,
the abuses of nature are apparent,
and the workers are unhappy.

The Land Owner is displeased with the Property Manager's
mis-management of the property
so he banishes the Property Manager
from the job to which he was assigned,
and he also dismisses from the Farm House
the Tenant Farmers
who have been wielding authority
over the hapless helpers on the property.
The story is made personal for you
when you refer again to this girl
who has for years been taught
that she must not go near the well
in order to gather her eggs
when in fact this is not true. And yet,
years after the dismissal of the mis-management,
the girl continues to follow the practice
that she was taught
through fear of punishment
in avoiding the well in the collecting of her eggs.

The analogy of this Farm to your world
should be apparent,
for what we are dealing with is the correction of this Farm
in order to instill in it the harmony of function
that would be, in the eyes of its Owner,
most pleasing and delightful for all involved,
from the animal herds,
to the land and buildings,
to the human helpers themselves.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Now I will return my focus of attention
to the discussion of character.

Although the subject of human character is broad
and could occupy us for literally years,
we can indeed begin to perceive
what we mean when we discuss character.

The study of character
is the study of your emotional response
to your environment
and to the personalities
in your environment.

You who have been born of the Spirit
have professed a desire to become more Godlike.

To be Godlike is not to be perfect
at the expense of others,
but is to manifest your godlikeness
in your character association with others.

As you are born of the Spirit
that Spirit has its own divine capacities
and its own recognition of those qualities
which are the basis for developing character
which is not built as an external discipline,
but is grown,
is born of your desire to carry the Spirit and the flesh
in a unified personality.

In order to have a well-balanced personality,
the balance, then,
involves your divine understandings
as well as your mortal understandings.

The divine aspects
would constitute such things as the beatitudes
or "turning the other cheek"
or those more readily understood spiritual character traits.
The mortal animal nature
is not innately born with high character.

Character

Your animal nature balks at developing
that which would be beneficial
to spiritual growth and character development.
The human being, then, is not always so readily amenable
to high character,
and the imbalance results in weak character,
in immature personality.

In understanding the human being,
it is possible to understand the human character,
that is to say YOUR OWN reactions
to your environment, to other personalities,
to situations in your life.

You may look then at your reactions
and compare them to reactions
of the Spirit, or spiritual reactions,
in order to find a harmonious understanding
and balance within yourself
that will thus represent YOU
and will then be represented
in your comings and goings
as part of your character.

The undertaking, then, you see, of character growth,
is an organic part of life, part of your spiritual evolution.

I would like to bring to your attention
the core ingredient
in working with and developing character
in yourself and in your relations with others,
and that is the quality of "self-respect."
When Spirit begins to dominate your thinking
and to activate your life,
you are at once rewarded with a sense of self-respect
which had not theretofore been as ingrained
or as meaningful.

That in you which is respectable
is the reality that you are indwelt by divinity
and this Indwelling Spirit
is your new core basis of reality.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

How can you not respect your own Creator?
How can you not respect that
which has divinely smiled upon you
to the extent of giving you potential immortality?
How can you not respect that quality of divinity
which has attached itself to you,
bestowed itself on you and IN you,
in order that you may attain eternal life
and ultimate perfection?

With self-respect as your core understanding
of yourself-in-becoming,
you have the foundation then to bear fruit,
to see with eyes to see
and ears with which to hear
Spirit promptings and Spirit guidance.
Henceforth your growth is sustained and nurtured
because of that Element of Respectability which is IN you.

Identify yourself with that Father Fragment
that it may continually remind you
of your divinity connection.
As you then begin to observe and hear your behavior
and your interactions with your fellow human creatures,
you will be able to recognize the areas of character
wherein you have strength, in order to develop them,
and wherein you have weakness, in order to correct them.

Another key element of developing character
is the inner ability
to maintain a sense of "balance."
We have touched upon the quality of balance in character
in terms of the character of the Spirit
as compared to the character of the unevolved human.
The difference is remarkable!
It is a challenge to bring these two facets of character
into a working harmony, an alignment.

It is through your association with Spirit

that you maintain balance.

It is in stopping at the Well of Stillness
that you feel the harmony of your cosmic connection
and feel "the peace which passes all understanding."

As you feel the energies of normal life around you,
it is easy to become wrapped up in these energies
to the exclusion of Spirit.

It is easy to get off-balance.

All of us become embroiled, ensnared, enrapt, embraced
by and in activities and energies which steal us away.

As you understand balance in your life
you can readily see where and when you become off-balance.
When an individual enters your environment who is off-balance,
you can feel the atmospheric conditions alter
and you are vulnerable to also being toppled
unless you have your anchor dropped into
the Well of Deity.

When and as you bring the Spirit into your arena
you bring that Element
which allows you to act in balance.

By the same token,
it is fair to caution against overmuch spirituality,
for it is likewise possible
for individuals to "go off the deep end"
into spiritual realms and adventures
without the true connection to divinity
which would disallow such fanaticism.

Balance is necessary for a fruitful and successful life
in terms of your own mental composure
and your subsequent effect upon your world.

As you have been born of the Spirit,
as you perceive the ability to commit yourself
to the will of God,

and to doing these deeds which would indicate
that you were born of the Spirit,
it behooves you to have balance.

The fruits of the spirit

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

are to be found in the well
that has been by-passed in order to gather the eggs.
Thus, all of humanity has suffered from thirst,
spiritual thirst.

It is intended that our study of character
will bring into view those behaviors which
satisfy the soul, harmonize the heart,
emphasize the fellowship, and delight the gods,
and that are more in keeping with the original plan
for this delightful Farm Yard.

Courageous Loyalty

It is a time of great quickening.
We will take advantage of that quickening
in order to catapult you into a new plane of operation
in your personal life
and in your more gregarious arena as well.

We have embarked upon a study of character.
We have discussed the core element of self-respect
as a foundation for character building,
for as you respect that which resides deep within you,
your own Fragment of God,
you have a place to begin your understanding
of what will be necessary to bring the fruits of the spirit
to bear in your lives.

We have also discussed the importance of balance
in developing character,
that it behooves you to maintain balance,
that you not exclude your physical nature
nor your spiritual nature,
but that you grow as a whole.

I would like, now, to discuss with you
the character element set out as the fruit of the spirit,
“courageous loyalty.”

“Courageous” as a word is a lesson in itself,
as is “loyalty.”

Physical courage is perhaps the easiest of all courages
to carry forth.

The animal can be courageous in getting its needs met,

in acquiring its way
in providing goods, food, weapons,
pleasures, securities, for itself and for its family,
and many times courage is simple brawn,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

hailing back to your early evolution
of the fundamental survival of the fittest.

Courage is advanced when it involves altruism,
when it bespeaks ideals and ethics
hinging upon its societal connections,
philosophic understandings, political persuasions,
economic fortresses and so forth.

Here the mind enters the arena
and brings with it courage
to stand for certain foundations
upon which your civilizations and institutions
such as families are built and sustained.
Herein lies argument; herein lies diversity;
herein lies tremendous variety of thought
and the courage of thinking and believing.

With this form of courage
the mortal has risen above brute force
and entered the more subtle force of ideas and mores.

In spiritual terms,
courage bespeaks the ability to put forth your God,
allows your God to live and work
through your free will choice; thus,
courage to stand for that which you believe in,
for that which has reality
whether or not it is supported by your society
or by your family,
is the highest form of courage.

Courage without Spirit can result in fanaticism,
and so we focus on those who have
devoted themselves courageously
to the Spirit.

It requires courage to stand for something,
to espouse your belief, your opinion,
to make testimony to others of your life's experiences.
This courage, this integrity of the individual,

Courageous Loyalty

is an aspect of sharing the inner life;
it is rambunctious.

The nervousness that you might experience
during heated discussions
stems from your understanding, on an elemental level,
that in the face of differing opinions
if you relied on mere base courage,
the situation could result in fisticuffs;
however, if you have evolved to a philosophic plane
which allows for differences,
you are afforded the freedom to express yourself
courageously.

Even if you have not spoken out,
you have experienced the courage of some conviction,
some decision,
and even accepting your thoughts as your own
is an act of courage.
When you have committed yourself to the Living God,
to the Living Way,
when you have experienced this Reality
to the point where you have seen it operating,
where the Spirit of Truth has reflected to you
the reality and the truth of the moment,
your courage is reinforced.

As you begin to trust others,
to understand each other's strengths,
to overlook one another's weaknesses,
to love each other in the Spirit such as Jesus loves you,
as you bear with each other in your humanness
and in your desire to grow and to develop true character,
you begin then to courageously stand shoulder to shoulder;
you become a courageous block of believers,
loyal to the one truth, loyal to each other,
loyal to your ideals, loyal to your God.
The highest kind of courage

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

is your loyalty to the First Source and Center.

As you reinforce your loyalty
to the First Source and Center,
you are given opportunity then
to develop courage in this loyalty.

Many times you have courageous loyalty
but you allow yourself to get caught up in the instant,
in the moment, in the circumstance,
and you deny the First Source and Center.

In time you will embrace this Reality courageously enough
that your loyalty will not allow for you to get caught up
in the things of this world, in the circumstances of
lesser courage.

You are known and loved and appreciated
even as you grow, even as you deny your loyalty
to the First Source and Center;
to others, and more importantly, to yourself
you are forgiven. You are encouraged to get up
and go another round with life stronger, firmer, wiser

I urge you to lean upon the courage
of your own understanding through the Spirit
and not lean overmuch upon the words or writings of others.

Lean upon your own intimate and personal
and courageous relationship with Our Father,
for He is the Reality which will bring you up
and lead you home.

Courageous loyalty is a subject which bears
great thought, great meditation,
for in your life, in your daily dealings,
you are given opportunity to manifest your loyalty
and it does require courage.

Remember Peter, who three times
denied knowing the Master
In his heart Peter knew courageous loyalty

Courageous Loyalty

but he was caught up in the times,
became off-balance and missed an opportunity
to manifest courageous loyalty.

Your heart knows when you have denied an opportunity.

It is not so much a sin to overlook opportunity
as it is to have a moment presented to you
to be true to yourself and to your God,
to have that instant presented to you personally,
and then dodge the issue.

That is a form of betrayal and denial.

Granted, it is minute in one context, but it is a habit that,
once broken, once overcome,
can help you develop into a strong promoter
of truth, beauty and goodness.

Be alert to these moments.

Allow your Spirit to be alert to the opportunity
to express itself through you.

Each opportunity that you can give to your Spirit
for its expression through you
as a vehicle of love and truth,
is an opportunity to work in service
for the First Source and Center.

Look for those occasions to manifest courageous loyalty
to the First Source and Center.

Confiding Trust

“Confiding trust” is a fruit of the spirit.

It is a natural gift of sonship.

When you give yourself over to divinity
and become part of the Living Reality,
your motives are such that

you desire to bring the Spirit into your life
in such a way as to manifest the Love of God.

It is a natural result of knowing God
that you should want to be like Him
and to share Him in your

behaviors and attitudes with others.

Confiding trust as a behavior is ideationalized
in your prayerful attitude.

Coming to the Father, trusting in His love,
in His acceptance, overcare, guidance, and consolation
is innate to you who have been born of the Spirit
and who turn to the Spirit for sustenance, nourishment and
answers to your grievances and prayers.

As you come to know the Father,
as you come to Him with your burdens,
your experiences, your cosmic problem-solving situations,
you begin to discourse with the Father as with a Friend.

Your soul conveys to Him the attitude
of needing His guidance
in solving the many natural problems that come about
as a result of living the life of a mortal of the realm,
a realm much affected by darkness.

Your difficulties with your fellow human beings;
your distresses with your own abilities
to live up to your own standards;
your dismay when you discover disharmony;
your chagrin at recognizing betrayals;
are serious things which can occur in the life
of a God-knowing mortal

Confiding Trust

that cause deep feeling and concern.
Bringing these concerns to the Father in confidence
of His hearing, seeing, knowing
and ultimately doing something about it,
is a manifestation of your trust.
In your upward struggle
you come to then confide in the First Source and Center
your feelings,
not only about your external situations
but about your internal situations.

You well know it is not necessary
to discuss these things in words with the Father
for He hears, sees, knows your soul as it is
and responds to your attitude
as you approach Him in prayer.
It is your attitude that He speaks to and answers.
It is His presence that responds to you
as you open to His presence.
This is a result of your confiding trust in the Father

As you then develop this relationship with the Father,
you look out upon the sea of personalities
surrounding you in your daily life.
Each individual you encounter
is also indwelt by a Fragment of Divinity.
There is a piece of God in each of His children
whether they are aware of it or not.
As you realize this Reality,
it behooves you to learn to have confiding trust
in your fellows, also.

Trust is a difficult thing for you mortals to undertake,
for your trust has been betrayed often.
Lucifer, like the Property Manager on our little Farm,
betrayed the trust of the Father
and your entire evolution since those early, early times
has been founded on this distrust.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Distrust is part and parcel of your realm.
It permeates every facet of life in the realms of
politics, education, philosophy and so forth,
and certainly in your behaviors and in your reactions.

It is apparent that you all distrust one another,
for you are unwilling to be exposed
to the full breadth of one another's soul.

Your personality techniques and defenses are deeply
ingrained. Your inability to communicate is an
example of distrust.

You distrust having to acknowledge to each other
your own ignorance.

You distrust the consequences of your own actions,
the pain of insight and the comfort of communion.

You do not have to go far afield
to see how cleverly you have built up your defenses
against the demands of others,
the manipulations of clever sophistries,
the flash and glitter of your material realms,
and even the soothing tones of intimacy.

Trust is a decision you make.

Only you can determine that you will trust.

Faith is given to you,
but to act upon your faith requires that you trust.

And so the fruit of the spirit, confiding trust,
requires an effort, even though it is a natural
fruit of the spirit.

Unless and until you are conscious of the ways
in which you curtail your confiding trust in others,
you will not advance nor will your brethren.

Many of your distresses are brought about
by placing your trust in sources
which fall short of the goals of eternity,
which fall short of the recognition of God.

It is worthy of the adventure to attempt none-the-less
to convey a confiding trust even in your enemies,

Confiding Trust

for it gives them an opportunity to make a choice.
Every decision made brings the mortal closer
to ascending one step further;
every moment provides unlimited opportunities
to the Spirit believer.

When you speak with the non-believer,
it behooves you to be as wise as serpents
and as peaceful as doves.
It behooves you to whet their appetite for truth.
It behooves you to encourage them to know the Father,
for in knowing the Father,
they are welcomed into this fraternity
where you have confiding trust in one another.
Spirit believers,
your brothers and sisters in the Spirit,
those in whom you recognize a God-consciousness,
are your friends in the Spirit.
In opening yourself to them
you are lightening your burden.
When you speak with them in confidence and in trust,
they will hear you as a fellow sojourner
and respect your confidence.
They will give back to you in kind
as the Father gives back to you
when you speak to Him in confiding trust.

I, also, trust that you are listening,
that you are "hearing,"
for this is one of the keys,
that you learn to listen with ears to hear
what it is that your brother wants to share,
and respond to that self-expression, that soul need.
Always remember your Source of trust.
If you are sincere in your desire to be about
the Father's Business,
you will refer to Him incessantly.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

You will not hide behind yourself,
but behind Him who sends you.

Before I conclude this subject,
I would like to remind you that the betrayal of Judas
was largely due to his refusal to trust his fellows.
He refused to confide in them his feelings, his worries,
his suspicions, his concerns regarding Jesus,
many of the Master's behaviors,
and many other facets of life
during those times they spent together.

As you isolate yourself one from another,
you cut yourself off consciously from
the fruit of the divine spirit,
confiding trust.
And so I ask you to look to your brothers and sisters
and learn to trust.
Learn to confide in others,
in trust of their response to your soul.

Forgiving Tolerance

Now let's spend some time chewing on the fruit of "forgiving tolerance," another aspect of character.

This fruit is somewhat of a paradox
and resembles perhaps a pomegranate,
for in spite of its appearances,
it is full of many-faceted aspects
of feeling, attitude and emotion
which belie its smooth surface.

"Tolerance" is an admirable trait in itself.
Even so, it bespeaks a certain superiority.

It is an endurance, this tolerance.

Simply "putting up with,"

totally lacks fruit of the spirit by itself.

Tolerance is meaningless without the qualifier: "forgiving."

In forgiving, you have brought godlikeness into the picture
and broadened tolerance from a mere stance of endurance
to the condition of reality which reflects
truth, beauty and goodness.

And so I will spend a moment discussing forgiveness.

You may have heard it said
that it is unnecessary of the Father to forgive His children,
for He already sees all there is to see
and is in complete and total understanding
of His myriad children.

There is nothing for the Father to forgive,
for He is love, and in love,
looks upon His children with tenderness and compassion.

The human being, however, is not so easily forgiving,
for there are perceived betrayals and offenses
and thoughtlessness that bring about emotional feelings
which make forgiveness difficult.

And yet you are given the fruit of the spirit,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

forgiving tolerance,
and thus we know it is possible that you can learn forgive-
ness, that you can practice forgiving tolerance.
Not only can you practice forgiving tolerance, but
forgiving tolerance can become your very nature,
so when you encounter offense,
you can then respond in the Spirit.

Now, how is this attained? What, after all, is forgiveness?
Anything, anyone, different from you
is external to you and meaningless
unless you personalize the experience.
When you personalize your experience,
you are at once vulnerable and subject to feelings.
You are at once exposed to the danger
of having your feelings hurt.

In recognizing the Father's viewpoint,
you can look then, impersonally, at the situation
in terms of human error.
Who has erred and for what reason?
How have you been damaged by the error?
What is your responsibility in the error or in the damage?
"To err is human; to forgive is divine."
And so you must transcend your own human foibles and frail-
ties — and this is difficult!—
for then you must let go of your righteous indignation.
You must let go of your opinions, prejudices, and fears.
You must learn to see that person as a child of God
who is subject to human error.

In some cases you can ascertain their motives,
their intentions, in causing you harm or hurt feelings.
Sometimes you cannot understand
why they would behave in such a way.
Sometimes you believe that the violation is so great
that you are justified in withholding forgiveness.
But, as long as you hold in your heart

that animosity, that hatred,
you are holding within yourself a block against the Spirit,
a door closed against truth.
Only as you forgive are you yourself forgiven.

To find the courage to open the door and forgive
is to become as a little child, to recognize
that you are in the hands of The Eternal Parent
who loves you as He loves all His children.
When you can give the offense to God,
to do with as He will,
when you have unburdened your soul
of the responsibility of judgment for that other individual,
you have opened the door.

You have allowed yourself to be washed free,
washed clean of the spiritual blocks
of anger, hurt, fear, and superiority.
This position of childlike acceptance and obedience
to His will allows you to rise above the anger and pain.
You are made free. You are released
from that which you held hard in your heart
and you are forgiven your anger.

Now when you see individuals who are different,
who are ignorant, who are offensive,
you understand that they are immature,
that they have not yet learned.
Perhaps, like you, they seek to know,
and forgiving tolerance now becomes a way of life.

You have an understanding of forgiving tolerance.
You also have an understanding of what it means to have
impatiently cast aside an opportunity to grow or to serve
because you were unforgiving.
Be therefore tolerant of yourself, and forgiving of yourself,
as you seek to attain the better approach,
the better way of life.
This pomegranate, that you can feel in your hand

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

as a marvelous, solid, red, vibrant fruit of the spirit,
is filled with little seeds, with membranes
separating pockets of seeds from each other,
and this is the condition of the human.

The human has many emotional seeds
and these marbles of mortal madness—
distrust, despair, anger, resentment, fear, prejudice, conceit
— are made sweet and wholesome,
and turned into a fruit of the spirit,
by the understanding that
this fruit has been created by God.

Its juice is sweet;
its purpose is to nourish character development.

Loving Service

I would speak to you about how it is
that you may take the fruits of the spirit
and ascertain how it is that your love for the Father
will bring about "loving service."
How can you manifest your character most effectively
to help bring about His will in your life
and in the lives of others?

God is love;
and love is the desire to do good to others.
Love is from God.
It is brought to our attention by the Indwelling Spirit.
We love God first because He is,
then we love God because He is in us;
and finally we love God because we are in Him.
We become devoted to Him
because we love Him and want to serve Him.

In introducing Our Father to others,
in sharing Him through your inner life with others,
it is not your mindfulness to be of service
which is the earmark of your devotion,
but that you do these things without regard for reward.

Self-forgetfulness
is the closest approximation of loving service
in this context, because to forget the self
in order that you might serve your fellow man
is an assurance that you love the altruistic and ideal poten-
tial of your fellow human being.
You love your brother because he is.
Secondly, you want to serve him
because he is in your life,
in your awareness, and has come to your attention.
He has been presented to you as an opportunity,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

as a challenge, as a privilege, as an adventure,
as an occasion to serve.

And thirdly, you serve because you are in him.
You see in him a reflection of you. You see his potential. You
see hope of his eternal survival.

You have faith in him as the Father has faith in you.
This provides a new reality for all of your relationships,
for they are not based on the material realms
and all those entrapments and inducements,
but are based upon Spirit Reality,
potential absolute reality.

When you are so engrossed
in doing what the Father has given you to do,
in joy and in confidence, you have no thought for yourself
but for the work at hand.

And thus the fruit of the spirit, loving service,
comes from the Father, through the Father,
by the Father, to you,
to see in your fellows that same relationship
that you, as His child, have with Him.

And as the enlightened elder brother/sister
of your siblings in the Spirit, in potential,
you have the opportunity to serve the God of all being
through this simple fruit.

Service is a gift.

It has been seen as a duty, an obligation, a requirement,
but in truth it is a service that you do for the Master
in doing for his children.

Loving service is not a labor of woe
but a labor of love.

There is no sense of obligation, for these acts of love
are done, these gifts are given,
these services are rendered willingly.

When your offering is done in love and willingly,
it is a manifestation of your relationship
with the First Source and Center
who willingly serves you.

The spirit inherently serves.
Every human being has their own understanding of service,
and if they perform this service for the Father,
without regard for reward, they have done His will.
Whether this service is toil or dance, labor or song,
makes no difference. It is error, then,
to say that one service is better than another.

You may have been limited in your perspective
of what it means to serve,
and yet you serve often and well.
Not all service is of the evangelical order.
Service is wonderful, when done naturally and lovingly.
You serve each other by simply being.

Look, for example, at the brother and sister
who each make music, one in light opera
the other in rock and roll.
Their music, their voices, are diverse
only to the insensitive ear.
To one who truly listens with ears to hear,
both of these people are giving their gift of song
with integrity for it is a gift from their soul,
and how can anyone deny a soul gift?
Sometimes when you serve
you perforce deliver a tough fruit,
one with a rhinoceros hide, and it may be said,
“What kind of gift is this?”
It’s not pretty nor tender, it can’t be from the Father!”
But look you well to that gift
for it may be the gift of truth,
and although truth can be difficult,
it is a service to receive in love,
in the Spirit in which love is attended.

When Jesus washed the feet of his apostles,
he served them in love, for even though his gesture

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

was a common practice of that day,
he added an element of meaning to the gesture
that transcended it from a mere ritual to a gift.

In providing this loving service,
he caused each apostle to consider his service to them.
And it was out of love for them that he delivered this fruit.

It is not necessary for you to serve
out of a sense of obligation,
even when your trusted brethren assume upon you.

Loving service
is to hear your own still, quiet voice within
and stand firm behind that which you are being told
by your own soul.

Do not try to live up to others' expectations of you.
Loving service should be done through love, if at all;
otherwise, it is an obligation that you are meeting,
a sense of duty,
and it is another set of values than your own.

However, when you feel enthused and moved
to do something and you are excited,
and feel the Spirit move you, you cannot set expectations on
others that they will also be so moved.

This is part of the difficulty of coming forth
as a new soul, a Spirit-born person.
No longer are you a puppet on a string
for others' values and others' emotions to pull.
You are becoming your own person.
You stand out there by yourself
with only your faith to guide you
and you experientially learn how to be
the most effective child of God you can be.

Do not grow weary in your well-doing,
but if more is being required of you
than you feel you can give, look to your own motives.
You must see with a fatherly affection.

Loving Service

You may discover it wise to withdraw your service
in good faith that, even so, His will will be done.

In this way you may extend yourself
into other areas of fruitful loving service
which perforce includes service to yourself,
for you must tend to your own vessel.

You must sit with the Father and restore your soul.

It is in the well of the Living Water
you will find the strength necessary for loving service.

Enlightened Honesty

This is a course in character for the purpose
of your attaining a greater affinity with Deity
and then, subsequently, expressing such values in your life
so as to bring forth the fruits of the spirit
as living testimony.

As you desire to serve,
as you desire to be a channel of His love,
you will better acquaint yourself with those qualities
which are the fruits of the spirit
unencumbered by your ego, your personal motives,
your colorations and so forth.

As we talk about these Godlike qualities,
it affords you the opportunity to reflect on your inner life,
the life you share with others, and those you serve.

It is my presumption
that you seek closer understanding of Our Father
and His will for you;
and that you intend to follow through
with the natural result of knowing and loving God,
which is to share His love with those you meet.
In that context, then, I would like to discuss with you
the designated fruit of the spirit:
“enlightened honesty.”

Once more we have a tall order,
for “honesty” in and of itself is a bit of a study,
and “enlightened” is the qualitative determiner.
Honesty, on its most fundamental level,
has to do with lying, cheating and stealing.
A liar is an unwelcome associate.
One who lies in his mouth will lie in his behavior.
He is untrustworthy.

Why would someone lie to another?

It is not fraternal to deceive, but deceit and dishonesty
have been your legacy for a long time.

And many lies, deceptions and deceptions
have become an integral part of your social flavor.
Little white lies designed to salve someone's feelings
are still lies.

Many times individuals lie in the mistaken notion
that they are protecting someone from pain.
Parents lie to their children; children lie to their parents.

Truth avoidance is utilized to avoid the discomfort
of judgment, possible alienation of affection,
and responsibility for your actions.

Those who engage in such techniques are lazy,
because there are enlightened ways of expressing honesty
if you are willing to seek divine counsel.

He who would be truthful must first be true to himself.

It has been said that if a man be true to himself,
he cannot be false to any man.

In aspiring to manifest mature well-balanced character,
it is necessary that you be honest with God
for, as His child, you know that He already knows you
better than you know yourself.

In order for you to recognize your true identity,
you must acknowledge that you are not God.

If you are having a relationship with this

Power greater than yourself,
you are smaller, and this is humbling.

When this Power is living, loving energy,
is your origin and your destiny,
you are delighted to seek guidance
and acknowledge your smallness.

Honesty is related to humility,
but humility, you see, is a great strength.

Once you understand that your will
is in alignment with His will,
you understand the forces in support of your growth.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

You understand the Source of your own self-respect.
And so, whereas it may seem
that humility is a lowly estate, this is not the case,
for your greatest ally now is the God of all creation.

As you begin to identify with Godlike qualities,
you are in a position to put into practice those qualities which
are inherent in your Indwelling Spirit.
As you remove yourself from your societal conditionings,
your ego strivings, your idiosyncrasies,
your personal ambitions, your personal prejudices,
and your long-cherished conceits,
you are in a position to allow your Divine Counterpart
to respond for you and with you
in demonstrating the fruit of the spirit,
enlightened honesty.

Enlightened honesty has taken the truth
and polished it like a gem.
It is worn in the soul as a diadem
and distributed as pearls.

The deceptions around you
are the veils which create the darkness.
Serve the Master by dissolving the veils
that separate you from one another.
Cut through the unnecessary deceptions
of your social mores.
Cut to the chase.

Unselfish Devotion

Let us look at the over all concept of
“unselfish devotion”

and give it a broad brush stroke
to loosen the limbs of the mind.

A sweeping appraisal of unselfish devotion
would be dramatic in its employment;
it would be a pageant of grand scale, of epoch proportions.
Unselfish devotion stretches from Paradise,
all the way to the most finite detail.

In order that we might bring
this sweeping scope of a phrase
into our breadth of consciousness,
that we might discover it as an actuality
in our own life, indeed within our own personality
as a trait of character,
we shall look first at the quality of “devotion.”

Certainly anyone who has committed himself
to any, even trifling, cause has some idea of devotion:
A young fellow who brings home his first stray puppy
is instantly devoted to the four-legged creature.

He will feed it, he promises;
he will wash the bowl; he will walk the pup regularly.
And for a short period of time
his entire personality is focused in utter devotion
to this dog, this new pet.

Similarly, a young man may catch
a young woman's fancy and her entire waking life
is spent thinking of her beloved; her heart is devoted
to picturizing their ‘happily ever after’ situations.
Some individuals find themselves devoted to their work.

They have applied themselves and studied.
They have ambitions. They have made inroads
onto the ladder of echelon and community.
Their life is devoted to this service, this cause,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

and all that they do and represent, is in response to and in service of their devotion to their career.

Devotion is expanded here
now to include devotion to family and home life.
Not the young idealistic devotion of youth,
but the sincere and arduous devotion
of long-suffering, long-standing care, for the spouse,
the children, the homestead, the future,
and for the grandchildren.

Creativity is an example of devotion:
to paint the perfect picture,
to shoot the perfect photograph.
Sports also provide ideas and examples of devotion:
to run the race, to climb the hill, to jump the hurdle.
These are all ambitions and goals
which require devotion in order for you to reach your goal,
your attainment, your accomplishment, your prize,
and in many ways, your purpose.

“Unselfish” devotion is, again, a qualifier.

Unselfish means that you do it for
them.

You bring home this puppy not for your own enjoyment,
no sir, but for the benefit of that puppy
who deserves a good home!

It is not for your demure needs
that you should adore the young man on the white horse,
no ma'am, but for the honor and glory of a noble prince
and all the ideals and values that husband and hearth represent,
and so she would bestow herself
unselfishly upon his every need, willingly.

These devotions of youth give way to
the pain of struggle, the sorrow of illness,
the despair of defeat, the realities of life
which often bring disappointment
as well as accomplishment.

Unselfish Devotion

Even so, unselfishly we prevail,
learning how to eke out a living,
how to manage our monies,
how to compromise ourselves in relationships,
how to set aside for the future,
how to balance the many responsibilities of life
that all may be served,
with perhaps some time left over for a game of cards
or a Calgon bath.

Now unselfish devotion to Our Father and to His Family
enters the picture.

The Master would have you bear fruit
and give honor to the Living Vine.
How is it that He would have us manifest
unselfish devotion as a fruit of the spirit?

That we take care of the lower animal realms
is noble; that we love and are loved in return is noble;
that we have concern for the future of our families
economically, philosophically, politically,
ecologically, educationally, medically and so forth
are noble devotions.

But how are we devoted
to the God that dwells within each other?
How are we devoted unselfishly
to the God that has given us all these wondrous things
to have, to enjoy, to manage, to attain, to dispose of?
For is it not He who is deserving of the highest devotion?
Without Him, these things would not exist.
Without Him, you would not be aware
of the love, the beauty, the goodness
of all that you enjoy
as a son or daughter of the living God.

“Unselfishly,” you say. “But I am only human!
How can I possibly devote my life to God

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

and do it unselfishly? If I devote myself to God, will I then have time to take care of these other affairs? Will I have time to paint pictures, dream and explore?"

I am reminded of many who,
when speaking of spiritual matters,
testify that a certain degree of selfishness is desired.
It is wise to selfishly set aside
a period of time each day, as Jesus did,
to devote ourselves unselfishly to our Creator
in appreciation of the devotion that He has given us;
for the devotion Jesus displayed in his life in the flesh;
that he bestowed on his family conscientiously;
that he engaged in at the marketplace, in the caravans,
in meeting men and women
and finding out how they lived their lives;
in his travels, in his studies, in his musings, in his life with
his apostles, in the devotion that he manifested
to even the little children.
An exemplary life, indeed, full and rich.
And what made it unselfish was that
he gave all credit to the Father.

As you thus look about yourself in quiet awareness
of the many ways in which you yourself are devoted,
in the many noble ways in which you devote yourself
to value, to truth and beauty and goodness,
remember your devoted Caregiver,
for without Him, none of this would be possible.
Stop and thank the Father
unselfishly
for His devotion to you,
and honor Him by your unselfish devotion to Him.

Undying Hope

I would like to call to your attention
the fruit of the spirit designated:
“undying hope.”

Hope is a quality of life which is a gift of the Spirit,
and a clear realization of the value of hope
is made evident in those situations where
there is none.

In your own personal experience
it is possible to call up moments
wherein hope was lacking,
wherein you had aspired to attain some goal
and found at some point that the goal was unattainable.
Hope was dashed
and tremendous disappointment followed.
Sometimes as you lose hope the door opens
bringing the results of your hope to bear,
bringing you to an appreciation of the gift of hope,
the gift of God that gives the results and rewards
that you had hoped for.

Ponder for a moment the criminal, the battered wife,
the immature personality, the molested child,
the drug addict, the alcoholic.

Ponder the destitute widow
whose husband did not provide for her.

Ponder the hungry, the poverty-stricken.

Ponder the chronically ill, the cancer victim.

How can they survive, endure, without hope?

Many have no hope of hope.

They give up the struggle. They perish.

Many take others down with them.

Lack of hope has caused a blight upon your world.

Social ills, economic imbalance, disease,
are legacies disallowing this fruit of the spirit

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

its own grace, its own space, its own time.

When you, in your spiritual plentitude,
pause to give thanks for your Indwelling Spirit,
for the wonders which take place in your life
and in the lives of your loved ones;
when you count the cost
and find you have change left over,
remember those who have no hope.

Why? If for no other reason, for a better understanding
of the value of this gift of the Spirit: undying hope.

If you know someone who is scheduled to die of cancer, for
example,
do not put your hope
in the mortal tabernacle which is finite and temporal,
but place your hope in that personality
for it is undying.

When you see a battered woman
who is covered with bruises and finds herself entrapped
in a life of hell out of which she can find no path,
instill in her undying hope
not that she may live to experience more hell,
but that she may live anew
in the hope of "the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven,"
because she is loved and respected by the Great Friend,
and by her brothers and sisters in the Spirit.

When you see devastation brought about by drugs and other
substances designed to provide relief and escape from the
harsh realities of life as found on your world,
instill undying hope by sharing your own hope.
Share that you have also known a feeling of being lost,
of being separated from the Divine,
of feeling not blessed, of feeling unworthy,
of feeling impure and outcast.
Instill this undying hope by sharing it

Undying Hope

with the Indwelling Spirit that inhabits
the lowest and most humble of His creatures.

And what of those
who have cut themselves off from the Spirit so far
that they do not believe that God will speak to them;
that they have fallen so low they cannot be smiled upon?
This is work not only for the angels and the spirits
but for you, to inspire hope in those who have lost it.

Undying hope is not a passive condition.
It is a call to service.

Now, in order that YOUR hope stay alive and vital,
in order to serve those who have no hope out of such a hope-
less and helpless state of mind and being,
consider the merits of undying hope.

Where does hope come from?
It comes from the Spirit
which sees the end from the beginning.

“Undying”... Undying hope.
We all have had hope of something,
some attainment, some acquisition,
some radiant manifestation of
our worth, our effort or our vanity.
Often times those hopes are not met;
our expectations are flattened. What went wrong?
Are we not taught to have undying hope?
Do we not believe that we have a God-given right
to have undying hope?

Undying hope is not the same as chronic yearning.
You may chronically yearn for things, for relationships, for
riches, for luck, for automobiles, for good health,
for peace on earth, or for political victory,
but these fall short of the fruit of the spirit, undying hope,
which is born of that which can never die.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Let us look at undying hope in a pure and spiritual light.

The adage that comes to mind is:

“The disappointments hardest to bear
are those which never come.”

Perhaps your disappointment, then,
is because what you hoped for is not of the Spirit,
but of your own mind, your own desires;
thus you experience disappointment.

That which is truly of the Spirit, that which is His will,
will never disappoint you.

It will always be provided. It is always forthcoming.

And so, the ideal is to trust the kind of hope
which is based on the Father's destiny for you.
And when you hope for another, let it be that they, too,
will discover the illumination of that Reality
which provides not only undying hope
but eternal assurance.

Comforting Presence

It gives me cause to celebrate when I perceive your growth
and the growth of the greater community as well.

It is easy to become self-centered in your own realm,
so busy are we at our sundry tasks,

but the growth extends far beyond you and me.

There is a spiritual awakening taking place
all around you.

All of these advances are being made

because God is calling you forth

into a living, loving ideal of personal spiritual experience.

To continue in my discussion of the fruits of the spirit,

I am going to introduce the fruit of

“comforting presence.”

None of these fruits are possible without faith

and so in introducing comforting presence

it is assumed that you have known

the living love of the Spirit

and that you are now putting forth this Divine Reality

through your very life.

You well know that you are indwelt

by an aspect of divinity, your faithful Spirit guide
whose very presence brings you into the family of God.

Jesus called your attention to this presence

in his great pronouncement:

“The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.”

It is also referenced in the phrase,

“The presence of God surrounds you,”

and so it is true that as you walk in the light,

you are a living presence,

a vital and dynamic personality presence

because of this Indwelling God Fragment,

this spark of divinity which you are making your own

by your soul-ascending decisions.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

You have been admonished to "Be ye perfect."
As you are born of the Spirit
and as you allow yourself to continually strive
to be God-knowing and Spirit-led,
your alignment with the perfect God of all,
and through the example of the perfect God-man Jesus,
enables you, to your finite capacity,
to manifest the kind of spiritual poise
that reflects that perfection in your life
as it is reflected in absolute perfection On High.

It behooves you to recognize
how your very presence affects others
and to recognize, as well, the presence of God in others.
This awareness will afford you insight into the association
they have with their Indwelling Spirit.

The world is filled with hungry souls,
fear-ridden and confused.
One human crisis after the other
gives rise to anxiety and confusion.
Conflicting loyalties cause civil war
within the soul of man.
In this confusion is the fertile soil
in which the seed of peace yearns to be planted.

The qualifier of this fruit is "comforting."
Only the Father can provide true comfort.
Even as those who practice loving service
in the form of care-giving, parenting,
and other forms of succor and nourishment,
are in truth only acting as a vehicle for the comfort
inherent in divinity.

The Comforter
is one of the designated names given our Lord,
and so you, His child, are able to provide comfort
to those in your life as you pass by,

since it is from Him.
This new fruit of comforting presence
is available to you as a child of God,
and as you remain close to Him, you then can provide
a comforting presence to your peers.

Consider your relationships.
Consider first your relationship with the Father.
See and feel how it is that He provides you
with His comforting presence
and how meaningful it is to you when
you thus bask in the knowledge
that He is there to comfort you.
Consider also your relationship with yourself
and how it is that your presence is comforted
by understanding that the God of all is present with you.

Jesus has promised that in association with Him,
you will know the "peace which passes all understanding."
As you become assured of this peace
through daily Stillness,
as you have faith in His divine presence,
you are able to manifest this peace
in your dealings with others.

Having taken His comfort in this reality
for yourself, turn it outward now toward service,
in terms of those with whom you have contact,
those with whom you have relationships and associations,
and portray yourself as an embodiment
of comforting presence.

In your faith path, represent the Prince of Peace
with the fruit of comforting presence.
It is not necessary to speak. It is only necessary to BE,
in order to reflect this divine peace.

In the prayer of St. Francis,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

he asks, he seeks, that he may comfort
rather than be comforted,
and I ask you now to take this fruit
and savor it and use it to feed His sheep.

Unfailing Goodness

These fruits of the spirit which we have chewed on
and taken into ourselves as nourishment,
are already yours because you are a professed believer,
because you have opened yourself to the influence
of the Spirit,
because you are a child of the Living God.
You are influenced by your Indwelling God Fragment.
Within you dwells that Aspect of Perfection
which has, as its base,
the qualities of the fruits of the Living Vine.
You are His branches,
and so it is not impossible for you to manifest these fruits.

Indeed it is vital that you do “manifest these fruits,”
but it is understood that you are only relatively perfect
and that as you seek to grow and become more Godlike,
as you seek to develop within your own nature
the nature of God,
these fruits will become more apparent
and more ably manifested.

And so we come now to “unfailing goodness.”
Who would not admit to a bad moment now and then,
where you harbor ill will toward your neighbor,
or murmur expletives at rude drivers?
How many times have you known resentment
or those facets of imperfection
which you would regard, even philosophically,
as undesirable to a clear heart, a clear mind?
At the heart of you there is God, and so there is good.

Good is a quality of greatness, of divinity,
for divinity seeks only good, can do only good,
can be only good, for it is perfect.
It is love.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

It is the desire to help,
to share, to express, to serve, to comfort.
Unfailingly does God reach for you
and unfailingly is He there when you reach for Him.
Unfailingly He is good to you.
Are you unfailingly good to God?
Unfailingly good to your brothers and sisters?

How can we be good without fail? Without fail!
You can be unfailingly good because
you will not be failed by the Father.
Even as you voice your malcontent and your resentment,
your righteous indignation or rightful judgment,
the Spirit within you, which is divine,
will point the way out of that darkness.
Unfailingly it will lead you into further goodness.

If you find yourself caught up short
in a social behavior or in twisted thinking,
the goodness of God will reveal to you your error
and, with goodness,
return you to your path of clear thinking, right behavior.
When you manifest these fruits of the spirit,
it is the fruit of unfailing goodness
which allows your honesty to be given and received.
For who denies good? All seek good
in each other and in themselves.

“First make the tree good.”
And this good tree will produce good fruit.

Do not be alarmed when you discover
that sometimes as a mortal
you fail to recognize the opportunity to be good.
Turn only to that “missed” opportunity
as soon as you know
that you have been unaware of goodness.
In your loving service, be good.

Be good to those who spitefully abuse you.
The human retaliates; the divine comprehends,
manifests forgiving tolerance.

It has been asked,
“Why do bad things happen to good people?”
There is a story about a man
who traveled the world far and wide,
seeking the answer to this question
to which he received many answers,
until he finally came to the home of a great guru.
The guru would not see him,
but instead sent this sojourner to the garden
where he encountered a gardener who was old and lame.
The gardener put down his tools
and talked about his life
and confessed that through foolishness
he had lost his wife, his children, his home, his career,
his standing in society, and ultimately his health,
but he had finally come to know peace
in the garden of the great guru.
And so when the man asked the gardener
why it was that bad things happen to good people,
the gardener took up his tools and replied with a smile,
“I don’t know. Nothing bad has ever happened to me.”

In a man of simple faith,
God’s goodness is evidenced
by the quiet joy in which he goes about
doing good.

Sincere Fairness

I will discuss with you now
the fruit of the spirit designated "sincere fairness."
How can one even identify sincere fairness,
much less practice it
as an attribute of a God-knowing, Spirit-led individual?

Fairness in the material realms is not honored.
Life is not fair.

And many things that happen to one
do not happen to another.

How many children say, "That is not fair!"
How often have you said, "That's not fair."
And it is true that there are gross injustices,
but these are not the Realities of the Spirit
for the Father is unerringly fair
and Jesus is sincerely fair with his children.

One of the ways that a child grows
is through sincerity, sincerity and more sincerity.
As a child, you come to the Father without suspicion,
in total trust of guidance.
Your sincerity resonates from within.

Your primitive ancestors sincerely believed
that the soul of the departed was captive
in the stones or in the bones.
But consider the sincerity of a faith-born child.
If we assume that your sincerity
is born of the Spirit and not born of ignorance,
you are still ignorant, you aren't finished growing yet,
and you have not attained infinite perfection.
How, then, do you know your sincerity measures up?

Since you do NOT yet know everything,
nor have you attained the Father's level of wisdom,
then you must make an effort to be fair.

You must be fair in your assessments -
in your assessment of yourself,
in your own progress as an evolving being,
in your stature as a fledgling soul,
in your potential immortal soul -
and you must be fair with others who, like you,
deserve the fairest of assessments.

And so in your dealings with others, be fair.
Be sincerely fair.

Not just socially fair, academically fair, temporally fair. No.

But sincerely fair, as a faith-son,
understanding the relativity involved.
In your assessments, then, of a situation
or a circumstance involving yourself
and another individual, you must be fair
and acknowledge that you do not know
all that has gone into comprising the situation
or the circumstance,
for you are not all-seeing, all-knowing.

On your world no one has a handle on ultimate truth.

You have within you that truth
which resonates as the Spirit of Truth,
and even your perception of THAT truth
is relative to your capacity at the moment.

This reflects upon why it is that
you are in no position to pass judgment,
for no one is superior over the other;
no one is "chosen" over another;

all offspring of the Eternal Parent are beloved,
and each offspring of the Eternal Parent is growing.

Only the Parent, the Creator, knows His children.

And look at how sincerely fair He is on your behalf!

He does not require more of you than you can give.

He does not bless you more abundantly than you deserve.

He sees your acts and makes the best of them
and is happy for your desire to please Him,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

no matter how faulty your application.
It has been said that there are as many ways to the Father
as there are individuals who will walk the path,
and so it is that each of us has a tale to tell;
a story of our encounters with life's wonders and mysteries; a
story which has given us
our own unique approach or "pathway"
to our own personal relationship with Deity.
We each have a unique relationship
with its own fingerprint; its own undeniable and
readily acceptable truth.

In the world at large and in your sharing your inner life with
others, remember to be sincerely fair
in your assessments of the worth
of another individual's experience.

Merciful Ministry

As you “minister,” as you pass by,
your heart will be touched.

As you hear with ears to hear,
you will hear the cry of the lost, of the angry.

As you see with eyes to see,
you will see the confused, the forlorn, the sick.

You will feel compassion.

You are admonished to teach and preach the gospel
and when circumstances are such
that you cannot teach or preach,
you are to minister to the needs of your fellows.

In ministering to the needs of your fellows,
it is important to remember that ministry
is what THEY perceive their needs to be
and not what you perceive their needs to be.

Therefore, ask how you may serve.

And this ministry is done through your “mercy.”

Many times merciful ministry is unpleasant work.

Merciful ministry is not glamorous,
for it is reaching the needs of those

to whom you cannot otherwise teach or preach.

In merciful ministry you are up to your knees in mud;
your sleeves are rolled up and you’re ready to go to work
on behalf of your brothers and sisters.

The impression has been that ministering to the sick
is women’s work, and given their nature, women have often
been the caretaker and the ones who provide merciful
ministry as a way of life.

It is not true that women are consigned
to merciful ministry, nor are they to be expected
to provide merciful ministry, for merciful ministry
is a free will choice of an individual
who is moved by the Spirit of God to serve, to help,

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

to minister as you pass by.

It is not a duty.

I am going to ask you,
in the privacy of your own heart and soul,
to see before you a pitiable wretch
who you perceive to be unlovely, unworthy,
who is loathed and reviled by many.
How can you bring yourself to be merciful
and minister to this creature?
Remember that this individual
has a heritage, a language, a culture.
Perhaps he has children and a spouse whom he loves;
he has hopes and dreams.
You and he have the same fundamental human feelings.
And his Indwelling Spirit cries out
to be seen and known through personality expression
just as the Indwelling Spirit does in everyone.

Identify once again with that Indwelling Spirit,
the same Indwelling Spirit you have within you,
and embrace the Indwelling Spirit of your fellow.
Let your Indwelling Spirit say to him,
"I love you my child. I crave your love for me.
I want for you your freedom and your happiness.
I want for you to know the joy of life.
I want for you to sing the music of the heavenly choir
and sing to your children as well."

On the outside people look different,
but on the inside we are all one.

We are equal.

As one who is God-knowing and Spirit-led
the only consideration is that we love one another.
We must embrace each other in the Spirit,
and as we embrace each other in the Spirit,
we will walk arm in arm.

We will cease to fear one another,
for we will not see each other as different,
but the same.

We are children of God.

When you see anyone you regard as different,
experiment by allowing yourself a moment
to embrace that person in your soul and say,

“I am that person,” or,
“that person is my son,” “that person is my mother,”
in the highest possible sense.

Bring with it all your nobility of thought
and sincerity of feeling
as a God-knowing faith son or daughter
and embrace that individual as you embrace yourself.
Cease to look upon others as different from yourself.
Cease and desist to say “they and we” as a separation,
for we are One in the Family of God.

“This is idealistic,” you might say,
but I tell you it is the only way.

It is the only way.

It is truly the faith sons who will change
the face of your world.

It is your merciful ministry
of seeing your brothers and sisters in need
and standing by them and helping them in their powerlessness
to bring them up to the dignity of faith son status.

As you familiarize yourself with the Master and his times,
you wonder at the audacity of those who would jeer him,
and how he could state with forgiveness
that they were not aware of the harm they did.

Your world is comprised mostly of those who jeer,
who do not know the glory of God.

Those are the ones we are here to salvage,
to embrace, to introduce to the Living Vine.
They also are indwelt by God, and the Indwelling Spirit

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

yearns to adjust the thinking of the mortal it indwells
in order that it, too, may attain the stature
of a dignified faith son/daughter.

Merciful ministry applies not only to the body,
but to the mind and the soul of man.

Many suffer deep psychic wounds
that you are powerless to help.

It may seem to be a no-win situation
that you can do nothing about.

True, many will not survive the situation of the day,
but many will, and it is in undying hope for those who will
that we keep that faction of ministry open.

It is artistry to work with a wounded soul.

It is skilled ministry of a high order that goes in and lances
the wounds of time and heals the soul.

It is working with God that makes it possible.

Those of you who are willing to walk the second mile
can do great works.

What makes merciful ministry a fruit of the spirit
is the heartfelt need to do something
for the one who suffers, who has need.

You who have your roots firmly planted in the soil,
who have your arms as branches reaching to the sky,
to the Father,

you who are giving forth these fruits of the spirit,
look not with disdain

at those small shrubs who have not yet flowered;
do not trample on those small saplings,

but glory in the Life to come for these young ones.

You who raise your hands high with your many fruits
have cause to celebrate,

but look with merciful ministry on those who follow.

I am humbled and enthralled
by the work we have done together in revealing
to ourselves, to Our Father, and to our peers
a new appreciation of these fruits of the divine spirit.

We have learned to savor these fruits,
to drink the wine therefrom
and to revel in the spiritual joy they bring.

May we be strengthened and sustained
in our attempts to live these divine fruits
in all of life's circumstances.

My friend, advance.
