



MARKS

OF A DISCIPLE

7 MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV).

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MARK #2

A DISCIPLE...STRIVES TO BECOME MORE LIKE JESUS

Optional Resource:

"How People Can Tell You've Been with Jesus"

Available online at **bellshoals.com/7marks**

or on the **Stephen Rummage app** on your mobile device.

INTRODUCTION

Jesus' death on the cross not only delivered us from the penalty of sin; it also delivers us from its power. As disciples, we become more like Jesus as we learn to be victorious over temptation and sin. Until we get to heaven, we will be engaged in a constant battle with sin, and sometimes we will fail. But as followers of Jesus Christ, it is possible to live a life of obedience to God and not give in to the power of sin.

VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

Read Romans 8:9-10.

Notice the different names used to represent Who lives in you now:

The Spirit of God
The Spirit of Christ
Christ

Each one of these names represents a person of the Trinity. God exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that each person of the Trinity is divine, and yet each has a separate function (2 Corinthians 13:14). In the last lesson we stressed that Jesus came into your heart and life, but here the emphasis is on the Spirit being in your life. No one can fully explain the mystery of the Trinity, but it is clear that when you become a follower of Christ, you receive a divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

Read Galatians 5:16-17.

Since we have a divine nature living within us, why do we still a struggle with sin?

Read Romans 6:4-7.

Before we trust Jesus Christ, we are slaves to to sin. It is our nature to sin. But when Jesus died on the cross, our old self was crucified with Him. Since our sin nature died, we have been raised, like Jesus, to walk in a brand new life. We now have a choice to serve God instead of the flesh and Satan.

Dying to sin and being raised to new life is beautifully depicted in the ordinance of baptism (verse 4). Baptism comes from the Greek word "baptisma" which means immersion. Jesus commanded the disciples to baptize

new believers as a depiction of dying to sin and being raised to new life. Jesus' death and resurrection are pictured as we are lowered under the water. Then, being raised up out of the water portrays Jesus' resurrection and our brand new spiritual life (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Have you been baptized since becoming a Christian?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, are you now ready to schedule your baptism, or do you still have questions?

Read Galatians 2:20

Because you have been crucified with Christ, your old nature is now dead. It no longer has power over you. However, that doesn't mean that your sinful nature will sit down and be quiet. You will still be tempted to sin.

Read James 1:14-15.

Name a temptation from real life. Describe how it could follow the progression outlined in these verses.

Read Romans 6:12-13.

Did you notice the phrase "let not sin"? That phrase implies that you now have a choice. Whether you

present yourself to unrighteousness or to righteousness depends partly upon where you spend your time and where you put your attention.

How might you present your members to unrighteousness?

To righteousness?

SPIRITUAL VERSUS CARNAL

As disciples, we live each moment either controlled by the Holy Spirit (spiritual) or controlled by our own sinful desires (carnal). A tool that explains this principle is the booklet "Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?" published by Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU). The booklet (included with your "7 Marks" materials) talks about three different lives: the Natural Man, a person without Christ; the Spiritual Man, a person who has received Christ and seeks to have Him control every area of their life; and the Carnal Man, a person who has received Christ but re-takes control of his life.

Write the phrase found in each of the verses below that describes a person under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:16	<hr/>
Galatians 5:18	<hr/>
Ephesians 5:18	<hr/>
John 15:5	<hr/>

With which of these phrases do you most identify?
Why?

Who or what is controlling you? Being controlled by wine (Ephesians 5:18) is just one example of being controlled by the old self. We can be controlled by many things, including anger, jealousy, lust, selfishness, greed, etc. The alternative is to ask the Holy Spirit to control your thoughts and actions. If fleshly appetites control you, then you are in the carnal state. If the Spirit controls you, then you are in the spiritual state. The more time you spend in the spiritual state the more you will become like Jesus.

What should you do when you find yourself in the carnal state? Bill Bright, author of "Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?" has equated being filled with the Spirit with spiritual breathing. When you realize you are in a carnal state, you exhale by confessing your sin and claiming God's forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:9). Then, inhale by surrendering control of your life and making Jesus Lord of your life again (Romans 12:1). Spiritual breathing should be a daily practice.

FRUIT

In the last lesson you were encouraged to grow in your relationship to Jesus by abiding in Him as the branch abides in the vine. "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). As the disciple bears some fruit, more fruit,

and much fruit, he becomes more and more like Jesus.

The Bible talks about several kinds of fruit that will be produced in a disciple of Jesus Christ. Let's explore three of them.

1. Read Galatians 5:22-23. List the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit.

As you abide in Christ, the Spirit of God supernaturally produces these qualities in your life.

2. Philippians 1:11 says we are to be "filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." Now, read Colossians 1:10. Based on this verse, what do you think the fruit of righteousness might refer to?

3. Read Proverbs 11:30 and Colossians 1:5-6. What kind of fruit is discussed in these two verses?

You will know that you are becoming more like Jesus as you manifest the fruit of the Spirit, develop a heart for doing good works, and feel compelled to share your faith with other people.

APPLICATION

Read Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:9.

Is there unconfessed sin in your life? The Christian with unconfessed sin is not walking in the Spirit and is not bearing fruit. You can confess that sin right now and ask the Spirit of God to forgive and cleanse you as He has promised.

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSE:

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."

Galatians 5:16