

# **Holy Spirit**

(Rev. 05/25)

## How do we know that we truly have the Holy Spirit working in us?

I love it when I get “new” questions, and this is one of them! I’ve taught on this topic before, but it’s never come to me as an NDQ. So with that, let’s go to Galatians for an answer:

*So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses.*

*When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

*But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*

*Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit’s leading in every part of our lives. Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another. – Galatians 5:16-26 (NLT)*

From this, we see a few “tests” that we can apply:

1. Struggles With Sin.

This one may seem counter-intuitive, but if you’re struggling with sin, you have the Holy Spirit working in your life. If you don’t struggle, either: (a) you’re fully sanctified (made perfect), or (b) you’ve given in to your sin(s). Since I don’t know of many people who have been “perfected” on earth, it’s more likely that you’ve stopped struggling with your sins and given into them, instead.

I was going to stop there, but I need to point out something: if you struggle with a sin, especially an addiction, it doesn’t mean that you’re a failure; it means that you’re human! Every time you take one step away from the addiction – even if it’s a little one – it’s a victory!

2. Look For Fruit.

The Bible tells us that if you have the Holy Spirit working in your life, there is change that others can see. These are:

**Love**

ἀγάπη (agapē) = Sacrificial, giving love. In other words, you put others above yourself.

**Joy**

χαρά (chara) = Focused on relationships, not things. God is the most important one, and we look to Him always – and especially in times of trouble.

**Peace**

εἰρήνη (eirēnē) = This comes down to an old saying: No God = No Peace, Know God = Know Peace

**Patience**

μακροθυμία (makrothymia) = Patience means choosing to act, rather than react. In other words, if I'm angry, I don't take it out on others. If I'm upset, I get myself under control before I deal with others.

**Kindness**

χρηστότης (chrēstotēs) = *With the believer, xrēstótēs is the Spirit-produced goodness which meets the need and avoids human harshness (cruelty). "We have no term [in English] that quite carries this notion of kind and good." (Source: HELPS Word-Studies)*

**Goodness**

ἀγαθωσύνη (agathōsynē) = This fruit the Holy Spirit produces in us is from God, and is only a pale imitation of how God treats us each day!

**Faithfulness**

πίστις (pistis) = God continues to grow our faith the more we follow Him.

**Gentleness**

πραΰτης (praūtēs) = Gentleness isn't weakness, it's strength that comes from being empowered by Jesus Christ to follow His commands.

**Self-Control**

ἐγκράτεια (enkrateia) = God gave us the Holy Spirit specifically so that we can overcome our struggles with sin!

By the way, the standard for measuring the fruit in your life is NOT you! You may feel you're patient when others see you as a tyrant. You may feel you love others, when others feel rejected by you. You may think you have self-control, when others see you dominated by something else.

No, the true test is to talk to those around you and see how **they** view you! If you're afraid to ask another person if you have fruit in your life, maybe you should ask yourself why you're afraid...

3. Look For The "Big Three".

At the end of this section, Paul mentions three things that we, as Christians, should avoid:

**Boastful**

κενόδοξοι (kenodoxoi) = Literally this is "empty glory". In other words, we build

ourselves up, rather than building others up.

***Provoking One Another***

προκαλούμενοι (prokaloumenoi) = Literally this is “to call forth to oneself”. In other words, I irritate others or provoke them to respond.

***Envy***

φθονοῦντες (phthonountes) = Literally this is “to become bitter/sour”. In other words, I’m upset about what other people have; all the while ignoring the blessings I’ve received from God.

As with the fruit mentioned before, you aren’t necessarily the best person to evaluate this. Ask someone else and see what they think of you in these areas. (You can also look for the “Fruits of the Flesh” listed in Galatians 5:19-21.)

Now that I’ve given you positive proofs for the Holy Spirit working in your life, let’s deal with some other issues related to this:

*First, assessing your behavior is measured over days and months, not just one day or one hour.* If you were kind once for an hour, it’s a start...but it’s not proof of the Holy Spirit working in your life. By the same token, if you’re kind 99% of the time but have one bad day, it doesn’t mean the Holy Spirit isn’t working in your life; it just means you’re human.

*Second, we NEVER assess the Holy Spirit working in our lives by how we “feel”.* Feelings are powerful gifts from God...that can easily lead us astray. For example, there’s a cult group that relies on “feelings” to let them know if they’re saved. If it “feels” true, it must be true, right?

**Random Thought #1**

**If we let our feelings rule our faith, we will  
spend our lives constantly being thrown about.  
Our faith rules our feelings, plain and simple.**

Third, ALL fruit should be appearing in our lives, not just a couple. If there’s only one or two showing up, it’s probably because we’re resisting the call of the Holy Spirit to lay down our hurts, forgive others, and move forward.

**Random Thought #2**

**We, as humans, CAN prevent the  
work of the Holy Spirit in our lives  
by the attitudes we choose to cling to!**

So, with that, there’s a LOT more that I could cover here. Hopefully this gets you started on this journey! If you do want to dig deeper, maybe you could suggest this as a sermon series..? Just a thought!

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