



Growing Spiritually

How to Live an
Abundant Life

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A Word from Mary...

I have discovered that spiritual growth does not occur in my life automatically. It has to be something I desire, and then something I specifically and consistently focus on.

The evidence of spiritual growth is how well we demonstrate the fruit of God's spirit, as given to us in:

Galatians 5:22-23: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

These are the characteristics that every Christ-follower should have, and we should be growing in each of these areas all through our journey. To do that requires a plan on our part—to pray this fruit into our everyday lives and put new habits, new spiritual disciplines into our daily routines. That's how we can become more and more like Jesus, transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).

If you are like me, you need structure to help you make needed changes in your life. That's the purpose of this booklet. It gives you a plan, focusing on each fruit. If you will intentionally and prayerfully use it, one fruit at a time, I believe you will see spiritual growth leading to a more abundant life.

I'd love to hear how this has helped you. Stay in touch by emailing me at tcww@christianworkingwoman.org.

Joyfully,



Mary Lowman

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#1 *Love*

Prayer Focus:

Pray that God will help you to love those people you're going to have to deal with today that you really don't like. You don't have to like them, but we are supposed to demonstrate love. (Remember: Love is not a feeling, it's an action.)

Read 1 Corinthians 13 several days in a row. Pray that chapter into your life. Ask God to make you aware of anyone who comes across your path that day that may need a touch of God's love.

Little Things Spell "Love"

- ❖ A pat on the arm
- ❖ A listening ear
- ❖ Simple courtesy
- ❖ Big smiles
- ❖ Eye contact
- ❖ A helping hand
- ❖ A caring heart

Action:

Who is in your life that needs a loving touch from you? Name them and determine how to show them love in action:

Name	Loving Touch
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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#2 Joy

Prayer Focus:

Pray this verse—*Psalm 51:12: Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

No one can keep you from being joyful if you choose to be, no matter what's going on around you. Pray that God will enable you to choose joy, regardless of your circumstances.

“Joy is the flag that is flown from the castle of the heart when the King is in residence there.”—C.S. Lewis. Pray that the flag of joy will fly from the castle of your heart today.

Action:

Psalm 19:8: The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart...

Psalm 16:11: ...you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

- ❖ Sing praise songs throughout the day, even if it's humming it inside your head.
- ❖ Start keeping a record of answered prayer. Then review often and give thanks.

List what/who you are thankful for:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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#3 Peace

Prayer Focus:

Pray Isaiah 26:3: You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

What is robbing you of peace?

Problem with a boss Problem w/co-worker Anger
 Financial worries Health problems Fatigue
 Marriage problems Child problems Too Busy
 Other _____

Pray about the things that are robbing you of peace. Find verses in the Bible for specific situations. Pray those into your life.

Action:

Talk to yourself correctly. Say things like:

- ❖ “Lord, by your grace I will survive this. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
- ❖ “What difference will this make in 24 hours?”

Take peace breaks. Get away somewhere even for five minutes, and re-focus your mind.

Make Scripture verse cards to help you to be peaceful and give you perspective.

- ❖ *Psalm 4:8: I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.*
- ❖ *Psalm 29:11: The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.*
- ❖ *Psalm 119:165: Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.*
- ❖ *Proverbs 14:30: A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.*
- ❖ *John 14:27: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*
- ❖ *Romans 8:6: The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.*

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#4 *Patience*

Prayer Focus:

List the person or people with whom you have the most difficulty being patient:

List the situations that test your patience the most:

Pray specifically about each of these.

Action:

Decide what you are going to do when you begin to feel impatient. What are the signs that you're losing your patience? Identify those signs and feelings quickly, then take quick action to defeat them.

When I start to feel impatient with someone or some situation, I will:

Remember how patient God is with you.

2 Peter 3:9: The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

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#5 *Kindness*

Prayer Focus:

Pray that God will give you a kind heart and a kind tongue toward all the people in your life.

Pray that God will show you specific acts of kindness that you could do for others.

Pray *Ephesians 4:32: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Action:

Make a list of some kind things you could do for others in your life.

Suggestions:

- ❖ Compliment them
- ❖ Give someone preference—like letting them be first in line in the grocery store!
- ❖ Volunteer to do something for them
- ❖ Say cheerful words to strangers
- ❖ Call people by their name, like clerks in the store.

Acts of kindness I can do for:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

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#6 Goodness

Prayer Focus:

Pray *Psalm 23:6: Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

2 Peter 1:5: For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge.

Pray that God will enable you to be virtuous, righteous and morally excellent.

Action:

What are some things you need to avoid that are NOT good:

___ Lying

___ Gossiping

___ Cheating

___ Stealing

___ Griping and complaining

___ Sexual immorality

___ Impure thoughts

___ Watching impurity or immorality

___ Reading impure or immoral material

___ Talking or listening to immoral conversations

Other: _____

Pray these things out of your life! Add to your faith goodness.

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#7 Faithfulness

Prayer Focus:

Pray 1 Corinthians 4:2: *Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.*

List the areas in which you have difficulty being dependable:

List any promises you've made that you need to fulfill:

Ecclesiastes 5:5: It is better not to vow than to make one and not fulfill it.

Action:

What action do you need to take in order to become more faithful, more dependable?

- Keep a list of commitments so I won't forget.
- Allow more time to get places so I won't be late.
- Follow up on any responsibility I have and pay attention to the details.
- Make myself accountable to someone so I'll be more faithful.
- Apologize to someone for promises broken.
- Be more careful about making commitments and promises so I don't overcommit.

Other: _____

Under promise and over deliver!

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#8 Gentleness

Prayer Focus:

Pray Philippians 4:5: Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Pray for a gentle tongue.

Proverbs 15:1: A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Ephesians 4:29: Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Pray for a gentle and quiet spirit.

1 Peter 3:3-4: Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

Action:

In what ways can you demonstrate gentleness?

_____ Thinking about what I say before I say it and choosing words that are gentle.

_____ Refusing to think critical and judgmental thoughts of others, but rather to have gentle thoughts about others.

_____ Slowing down enough to have time to be gentle to people, especially strangers.

_____ Being careful to use gentle words in emails and on social media.

Other: _____

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#9 *Self-Control*

Prayer Focus:

Proverbs 25:28: Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.

Pray 1 Peter 1:13: Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

Pray about specific areas where your self-control is weak.

Action:

Where do you have difficulty exercising self-control?

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> My eating habits | <input type="checkbox"/> My exercise habits | <input type="checkbox"/> My tongue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting up early | <input type="checkbox"/> Being organized | <input type="checkbox"/> Laziness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staying with a task until it is completed | <input type="checkbox"/> TV time | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent time with God each day | | |

Other: _____

Choose the one area where you feel you most lack self-control; go to God's Word for some relevant verses. Write those verses on separate cards; pray them.

Quote Galatians 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Humble yourself. Don't talk about yourself too much. Don't brag about your successes. Accept criticism gracefully, even if it's not given in the same way. Don't defend yourself.

Remember: You can only control yourself and that's a full-time job! Pray for others but know that only God can change a person.

Notes

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