

PARENT/STUDENT IDENTITY GUIDE

8th Grade Conversation

OBJECTIVE

Have a conversation with your student about the fruit of the Spirit and their identity in Christ.

THE 411

Your student is very receptive and is looking at those around them to try and figure out their identity. For teens, the focus is often not what's on the inside, but the outside. Many teens form their identity based on how they or others dress, their abilities, or even the music they listen to. To a teen, their image is vital, and they will do anything to find out where they belong. When students feel they don't fit in, it leads to mood, behavior, and/or anxiety disorders. As parents, you need to be aware that your student is looking for their identity in things other than Christ and when they do that, they often find that acceptance is hard to find. So hard to find that, one in four teens says they have a mood, behavior or anxiety disorder, according to a recent study. One of the most alarming finds was that 22 percent of teens said they had a severe disorder that disrupted their daily lives, says Kathleen Merikangas, of the National Institute of Mental Health, who led the study.

SUGGESTION

Using [Galatians 5:22-25](#), have a discussion with your student about the fruits of the Spirit. As you read through the passage, use a dry erase or window marker to write the fruit of the spirit on your son/daughter's bedroom mirror. Your son or daughter may often get wrapped up in their own identity and not recognize that if they are followers of Christ, then they should be allowing the Holy Spirit to work through them. By reminding them that others should see the fruit of the Spirit in them, you can help them remember to make a conscious effort to, as verse 25 says, "keep in step with the spirit." Stress to your student that although they themselves are not God, He has uniquely created them to bear His image. When we allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, others should see the fruit displayed in us. Leave the words and Scripture on their mirror for a while to remind them that each time they see themselves, they should also see a glimpse of God. Use the discussion guide below to help you with this suggestion.

DISCUSSION

READ: [Galatians 5:22-25 \(NIV\)](#)

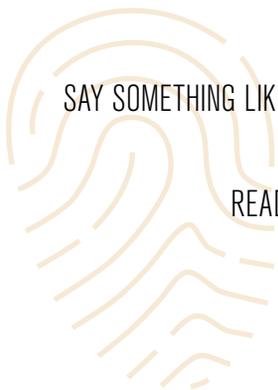
"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

The Bible tells us that God sends the Holy Spirit to live in us when we choose to follow after Christ.

READ: [1 Corinthians 6:19 \(NIV\)](#)

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own."



SAY SOMETHING LIKE: When the Holy Spirit lives in us there should be a change in us. It should be evident that God is living in us by the characteristics that we display in our life. Jesus compared our lives to that of fruit trees. He said that people would be able to recognize that we are followers of Christ by the fruit that we produce. Just like you could look at an apple tree and recognize it was an apple tree by the fruit that comes from it, people should be able to recognize that you are a Christian by the “fruit” of the spirit in your life.

READ: **John 15:1-8 (NIV)**
 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

ASK: Which of the fruit of the Spirit do you think most people can see in you? (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self control)
 Are there any of the fruit of the Spirit that are really hard for you to display? Why?
 How do you think you develop the fruit of the Spirit?
 What do you think Jesus meant when he told us in John 15 to “remain in me?” How do we do that?
 Do you think spending time each day focusing on God’s Word and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your day will help develop more fruit of the Spirit?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Although we will never be perfect in every area of our life, I can see a lot of the fruit of the Spirit being displayed in your life. (Take time to share with your student some specific ways that you have been able to see the Spirit working through them)
 I want to write the fruit of the Spirit on your mirror to remind you each morning that although you are (insert your student’s name here), when you invited Christ into your life, you are now also being controlled by the Holy Spirit. And if you listen to Him in your life, you will also take on the identity of Christ. Others should see Jesus in you, just like I see Jesus in you by the fruit I just shared with you.



PRAY

Spend some time praying asking God to take control over your student’s life. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead them in their decisions, actions, and motives. Give God permission to take their life and show your student the areas that they need to give control over to God.