

## “Vital Sign 2: Character to Change Your Circumstances”

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Character: the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual.

*“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”  
Romans 8:9*

Vital sign question 1: What are the mental and moral qualities that determine your behavior?  
Vital sign question 2: How do I know what my mental and moral qualities are?

*“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit.” Luke 6:43*

**“But sometimes I bear good fruit and sometimes I bear bad fruit?  
I am confused! What is my problem???”**

*“I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do, but what I hate I do...For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing!” Romans 7:14-20*

### **Understanding why I behave the way I do - A tale of two natures**

*“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 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. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” Galatians 5:16-25*

### **Sinful Nature: Sarx – flesh**

- We have the sinful nature from birth – Romans 5
- The sinful nature breeds sinful desires.
- Sinful desires result in sinful behavior.
- The sinful nature is bound by law.

**Spirit:** pneuma – breath life

- We have the Spirit when we **accept Jesus** into our hearts.
- The Spirit produces **godly desires**.
- The Spirit reproduces **His nature** in us revealed by godly behavior or **fruit**.
- The fruit of the Spirit is **free** from the law.

The sinful nature and the Spirit are **in conflict** with each other.

Both the **sinful nature** and the **Spirit** produce fruit.

The type of tree always determines the kind of fruit.

Trees are the result of seed. The **seed you sow** determines the **fruit you bear**.

### **The Four laws of sowing and reaping Gal. 6:7-8**

*“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:7-9*

1. You will **sow**
2. You will **reap**
3. You will **reap what you sow**
4. You will **reap more than you sow**

*“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” Galatians 5:24-25*