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## *Bear Fruit During this Summer through Good Conversation*

Embracing the fruit of the spirit on a daily basis allows for good conversations. Good conversations promote good energy, happiness, communication with one another, and contentment with oneself.

Summer is a time when many life events occur: weddings in all of their splendor, outdoor activities, explorations of all types, family gatherings, travel, changing ways of being with one another, rediscovering oneself and beginning again, retirement, and in those quiet moments, contemplation.

The pace of life is slower and we give ourselves permission to participate in longer and even deeper conversations. We find ourselves embracing community, which may be of a different configuration. These different configurations of persons gathered permits new ideas and possibilities to permeate our thinking and actions. Those new conversations are key in making new decisions, seeing a new viewpoint and considering the reality of life from another vantage point.

We, as responsible persons, take care of the necessary business of life and adjust to the nuances of living. As we age, we find ourselves discussing the handling of estate details, just in case anyone in the family is listening. Our wills, living wills, advance directives, and end of life decisions are documented. We 'rest' within ourselves knowing that all of our earthly possessions are taken care of if the unforeseen happens to us or in the event of our death.

We may mention these realities of life in conversation, in passing when a moment presents itself. However, it is far better to have these desires of the heart documented. Whether you are an adult child or an uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, or other friend or relative, the aging process for all is occurring.

It is happening. So, it is good to have a conversation about circumstances of life, this summer, while the pace is a little slower and families are enjoying one another.

We usually pay close attention to our bodies and its care. What about spirituality?

Spirituality, in conversation, is more often focused toward wellness and wholeness of mind, body, and spirit. People of faith—Jews, Christians, Muslims and others—place an emphasis on having belief and grounding in a supreme being.

Spirituality for many becomes finding the inner self through the love that God has for us and seeking the love that we as Christians are commanded to have for one another.

The unanswered question for many is, "How do I care for the spiritual side of my life?" Or one may say, "I have been going to church all of my life and I still have questions about God and growing spiritually."

What do we do in caring for each other as family members and move forward on the journey of our lives? How do we discuss those issues which center around aging without raising fear and uncertainty in others? How do I talk with Mother or with Dad about growing in faith when they say that their faith is private? How do I talk with Dad about no longer driving when he is so fiercely independent?

As a Christian, I believe that life continues after death of the body. In living we must be very aware of what we pay the most attention to. If we focus only on the hard goods of life and living and do not make space for the spiritual within ourselves, the potential for one's spirit and soul being deficient or malnourished becomes greater.

When we have conversations about these matters with our loved ones, perhaps other questions will surface. If we consider incorporating the spiritual possibilities, we may find the fruit of the spirit.

*The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.*  
(Galatians 5:22)

Continue to bear good fruit, especially during the summer. It is as good a time as any.

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