**Aimee & Galatians 5:22-23**

My firstborn child is a daughter named Aimee. My wife and I were so excited by her birth. We had been trying to start a family for more than ten years, so you can only imagine how thrilled we were to discover that she was coming, **and to then have her in our arms!**

I will never forget taking her home from the hospital. Scared half to death that I might not know what to do to care for her, and thrilled that I had the opportunity. I was holding her in our bedroom that first day home when I saw those blue eyes looking at me and realized that they would see things in the days ahead that I would not be aware of her seeing. It was then and there that I decided to be as holy a man of God that I could possibly be through the Holy Spirit. She and I have had an amazing bond as she grew up—and I think it all started on that day. Both my daughters have that special attachment—and I think it is from my efforts as a dad to have in my life these nine fruits of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. I believe that whatever I might achieve is not through human effort, but by the help and control of the Holy Spirit. **Each night as I put my children to bed, I would pray that God would help these nine qualities to be in their lives.**

Aimee received a call to ministry at our church’s General assembly when she was a child and had an awareness of God leading her life. She has graduated from our church school, Point Loma Nazarene University, as a child-development major, but struggled to see what God had ahead for her. She taught elementary school for a while, and then suddenly had a firm direction from God to go to our Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City. One of my less spiritual suggestions for her was to wait until she could afford it—and she rebuked me firmly!

She was right! God worked in many ways to make that a special time in her life. She graduated and felt led to be a youth pastor…which she did for several years. While she was somewhat successful in both churches, it did not seem that this was going to be her life’s work. She felt drawn to go to George Fox University and to pursue a doctorate in Christian Formation. As a part of that direction, she was ordained through the Oregon district as an elder. During this time, she met Chris who became her husband. They now have a precious little girl, Emma, whom I love dearly. I continue to pray for them almost daily that all of them would be filled with these nine qualities through the Holy Spirit.

What about You? Has anything in your life confronted you with the need for these nine qualities in your life? I am convinced that far more than what we do, **who we are in life will make the difference and glorify Jesus more than we know.** It may not be a baby’s blue eyes that gets your attention, for God has many ways to interact with your life.

Those around us are constantly watching us, and often we try to hide the reality of our life from them—and usually we are not successful in our efforts to do so. How much better to seek God’s help to have these qualities in us even though life takes many unsuspecting turns and confronts us with challenges we did not anticipate.

Aimee has had many turns on the road of her life’s path. But throughout the years of her life, these nine qualities have been evident and powerful as a witness for Jesus. And I am convinced they will always be there in her by God’s help.

For me, I will always be glad for those two blue eyes piercing my heart.