

Lesson 1

The Fruit of the Spirit - Love

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

1. What is fruit?

 2. Why do you think Paul chose to use the analogy of fruit to describe the characteristics that should develop within a Christian?
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- Paul lists 9 characteristics that he refers to as the fruit of the Spirit. Take a few moments to define each of them
 - Love

 - Joy

 - Peace

 - Long suffering

 - Kindness

 - Goodness

 - Faithfulness

 - Gentleness

 - Self control

For Discussion:

A. Which of these characteristics do you see in your own life?

B. Which ones are lacking?

Take a few moments to pray asking God to develop the fruits in your life.

For our first study, we will examine love.

1. In your own words, define love.

For Discussion:

A. Using lyrics from a popular song or perhaps a common phrase how does our culture define love?

B. What about these descriptions do you agree or disagree with?

Read 1 John 4:10-11

1. According to John, what is the source of love?
2. Why should we express love to each other?

Read Romans 5:8

3. What do Paul's words teach us about the follow:

- Who God loves?
- Who we should love?
- How God loves?
- How we should love?

Read Mark 12:28-30

4. According to Jesus, what is the greatest of all commandments?

5. How do you think a person should express love for God?

6. According to Jesus, how do we express our love for God?

John 14:15

"If you love Me, _____

1 John 2:3

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we _____

Read Mark 12:31

7. What is the second greatest commandment?

8. How do you think a person should express love to others?

According to John, how do we show love to others?

1 John 5:2

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and _____

For Discussion:

A. Finish the following statements

- A wife shows love to her husband by...

- A mother shows love to her daughter by...

- A sister shows love to her siblings by...

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Look carefully at 1 Corinthians 13. What are the characteristics of love according to the Bible?

Let's examine these a little more carefully. ...

1. Give an example of how love suffers long or is patient.

2. In what ways do you need more patient love?

3. What does it mean to parade yourself?

4. Why is that not a true expression of love?

5. Looking at the phrase “*love does not seek its own*” how does that combat the definition of love that is most common in our culture?

6. How does love bear all things?

7. Give an example where someone else’s love helped you through a challenging time

8. Obviously love believing all things does not mean that love is gullible. Think of a practical way where love might believe all things.

For Discussion:

A. Love endures all things. Think about the following relationships, what type of things might your Love need to endure?

- Mother / children
- Daughter / parent
- Wife / husband
- Siblings
- Co-workers
- Church relationships

B. Paul states that love never fails, and then goes on to list some things that will fail. Are there any relationships where you have let your love run out? What changes are you willing to make?

For Discussion:

A. After looking at a biblical description of love, has your view of love changed at all? If so, how?

Some of the words that might help describe the love of God are selfless, continual and extravagant.

B. In what ways have you experienced the selfless, continual and extravagant love of God?

C. What are some practical ways to express that kind of love this week toward

- Children
- Husband
- Someone at church