

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Study Series: The Fruit of the Spirit

Lesson 2 - Love

Texts: Galatians 5:22; 1 Corinth 13:4-7

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

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The Nine Elements of the Fruit of the Spirit		
1	Love	Love (Agape) is the kind of love God has for His creation. It is pure, selfless and self-sacrificing; seeking the best for others (even enemies) at all times, at all costs.
2	Joy	The joy here is much deeper than a sense of happiness or gladness from life's circumstances. It is a profound delight and rejoicing that comes from knowing and serving God.
3	Peace	Peace is an unshakeable inner calm that can be a rare quality in turbulent times.
4	Forbearance	Also called longsuffering, forbearance has the common synonym "patience." It also means to delay repayment of a debt.
5	Kindness	Kindness is looking beyond our interests to the interests of others.
6	Goodness	This fruit of the Spirit is an attribute of action. It means living one's life with good morals and motives as well as doing good things for others.
7	Faithfulness	Faithfulness is steadfastness, constancy, or allegiance; it is carefulness in keeping what we are entrusted with.
8	Gentleness	Gentleness is the quality of being kind and careful. The way a Christian engages with others is what the fruit of gentleness is all about.
9	Self-control	Ability to control our thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Galatians 5:22-23, *"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."* NIV

1 Corinth 13:4-7, *"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no account of wrongs. Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."* NIV

Agape

There are four words in the Greek language translated "love" in English, three of them are found in the Bible: Storge (familial), Philia (friendship), and Agape (God's kind of love); the fourth is Eros (romantic). While the other kinds of love proceed from emotions, agape is an act of the will; it's a choice to seek the greatest good of others. This is God's kind of love that's pure, selfless, self-sacrificing at all times and at all costs. Agape rightly makes John 3:16 the most popular verse of the Bible. John 15:13.

Question: Is Love a segment or the container of the Fruit of the Spirit considering Galatians 2:22-23 vs. 1 Corinth 13:4-7?

The only way the love of God can be reproduced in the human heart is by the new birth and the subsequent infilling of the Holy Spirit - Romans 5:5, *"And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us"* NIV.

The Father demonstrated His love towards us by giving us His Son and the Son came to show us how to express Agape toward the Father and others - John 15:9-10, *"As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Remain in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love"* NIV.

The Greatest Commandment

John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another" NIV.

Love for God and others was the intended purpose of the Mosaic law and the prophets (Matthew 22:40, Galatians 5:23). Believers who exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in the NT fulfil the law far better than the OT saints that observed the rituals without the help of the indwelling Spirit of God.

Question: Why does God demand the fruit of love from believers? Clue: 1John 4:7-8; 3:1.

The Two Legs of Agape

Matthew 22:37-39, "Jesus declared, " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" NIV.

1. **Loving God** - we were designed to be God lovers
 - ❖ Starts by responding to His love - accepting His offer of salvation and abiding in Him daily. Matthew 11:29; John 15:5.
 - ❖ Lovers spend time together - Mark 1:35; Psalm 42:1-2; 63:1-5 - loving God requires daily prayer intimacy.
 - ❖ Obedience - John 14:21, "Whoever has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me. The one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and reveal Myself to him" NIV. Obedience is the biblical litmus test of love for God.
2. **Loving Your neighbour** - 1 John 3:14-16, "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. The one who does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that eternal life does not reside in a murderer. By this we know what love is: Jesus laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers." NIV. It is difficult to investigate an individual's love for God but 1 John 4:20 says that loving our neighbours is the practical evidence that we love God.

Conclusion

Loving God and others requires: 1. **Abiding in Christ** - John 15:1-5. 2. **Death to self** - John 12:24. 3. **Daily work with the Holy Spirit** - Galatians 5:16. 4. **A renewed mind** - Rom.12:1-2; Phil.2:5. 5. **Giving** - John 3:16; 2 Corinth 9:10-13. Agape love is alien to the most loving men and women of this world. Only intimacy with Christ and total surrender to the Holy Spirit produces the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives - chief among them which is God's kind of love.