

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE

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Romans 5:1-8

1. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, **even as I have loved you**, that you love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have (**My**) love for one another." John 13:34-35
2. The Apostle John wrote "1 John" so that we might know that we have eternal life.
"These things I have written to you who (profess to) believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." I John 5:13
3. The confirming quality he wrote about the most was love-he used the word 36 times.
"This is His (God's) commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one who keeps His commandments (to believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another) abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us." I John 3:23-24
4. The love of Christ, manifesting itself in and through our lives, gives meaning and significance to our lives, words, and actions. I Corinthians 13:1-3
"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

I. This love is poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Romans 5:5

- A. Jesus said, "apart from Me you can do nothing." John 15:5
- B. As we abide in Christ the Holy Spirit pours out the love of Christ in our hearts.
- C. The Holy Spirit is referred to:
 1. As the Spirit of Jesus. Acts 16:7
 2. As the Spirit of His Son. Galatians 4:6
 3. As the Spirit of Christ. I Peter 1:10-11
- D. Paul wrote Timothy, "For God has not given us a Spirit of timidity, but of power, **love**, and discipline."
- F. The fruit of the Spirit is "love" out of which spring all the other graces mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23. Someone has written:
 - Joy** is love exulting.
 - Peace** is love reposing.
 - Long-suffering** is love enduring.
 - Gentleness** is love in refinement.
 - Meekness** is love with bowed head.
 - Goodness** is love in action.
 - Temperance** is love obeying.
 - Faith** is love confiding.

II. This love is a self-sacrificing love.

A. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

B. "We know (define) love by this, that He (Jesus) laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." I John 3:16

C. Note the sacrificial nature of the love of God in Paul's life. Romans 9:1-3

"I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

NOTE: Paul would have given up his place in heaven if it could have resulted in the salvation of his people.

III. This love is a motivating love.

A. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." John 3:16

B. Jesus so loved the world that He gave up heaven and embraced the cross.

C. The Holy Spirit so loved the world that He continues with us in spite of being resisted, quenched, grieved, insulted and ignored.

D. Paul's life was controlled by this same love. 2 Cor 5:13-15

13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. 14 For the love of Christ controls us (has a hold on us, compels us), having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

E. The church today is more interested in being the recipients of God's love than the manifestation of God's love.

F. Is there a Power at work in your life enabling and compelling you to love others with the same love that Jesus loves you?

APPLICATION

1. Based on what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians we can authoritatively say, "If I have prayed the Sinner's Prayer, been baptized, and become the member of a church, and have not love, it profits me nothing. If I say all the right things, go to church regularly, tithe my income, and read my Bible every day, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I sing, pray, and praise God with my voice, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal."

2. Some insist that speaking in some type of heavenly language or unknown tongue is the confirming sign that a person has been filled with the Spirit.

3. I believe that the love of Christ being poured out in our hearts and through our lives is the ultimate indicator that we have been filled with the Spirit.

4. The fruit of the Spirit is first and foremost the self-sacrificing and motivating love of Jesus working in and through our lives.

5. Sacrificial love towards God, our fellow Christians, and the lost will characterize our lives if the Holy Spirit is in full control.

A CLOSING QUOTE: "At no other time in the history of Christianity did love so characterize the entire church as it did in the first three centuries. And Roman society took note. Tertullian reported that the Romans would exclaim, "See how they love one another!"