

## Lesson 3

### WHAT IS LOVE?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love  
(Galatians 5:22a).

There are not nine fruits of the Spirit. There is one fruit of the Spirit, and that's love. The Scripture reads "fruit" singular, not plural. Joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are all characteristics of God's love.

In the original Greek, the word for *love* in Galatians 5:22 is translated *agape*. There are two other primary words in the New Testament translated for love: *phileo*, which means tender affection, and *eros*, which means sexual desire.

A good definition of *agape* would be "God's divine love." You cannot have *agape* love without God. *Agape* is used to describe a love far more significant than emotions and physical attraction. *Agape* is an unconditional love that our perfect loving God has towards us.

1. Write 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

We have the opportunity to experience this love every day as we wake up with the Holy Spirit in our hearts. To experience the power of this love in our lives, we need to seek God first thing in the morning and ask Him to pour out *agape* love in our hearts so that we can better love Him and love those around us.

2. Write 1 Peter 4:8.

3. Write Proverbs 10:12.

When God's Spirit is working in us and leading us, our attitude will be kind, loving, and compassionate toward others. Herein lies the real proof that you are a child of God. You will have a love and compassion for people that you didn't have before. You'll want to serve them, help them in whatever way possible, reach out to them, and share with them God's love, power, and work that He wants to do in their life.

Walking in the Spirit is walking in love. If we're going to walk as Jesus walked, we've got to walk in love. We will think of others' needs before our own.

4. Write Romans 8:14.

When a person becomes a Christian, the Spirit will lead them. We may not always feel as though we belong to God, but the Holy Spirit is our witness. His inward presence reminds us of who we are and encourages us with God's love.

The Spirit works from the inside out; He works within our hearts and changes our attitudes and desires, leading to activities that would be pleasing to God the Father.

When we are bound by a set of rules, we tend to rebel because the law deals with negatives; such as, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" whereas, the Spirit is positive and He leads us to love and to show love and kindness. Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God and love our neighbor.

5. Write Matthew 22:37-39.

6. Write Matthew 22:40.

7. How does God show *agape* love? Write John 3:16-17.

8. In John 15:13, how did Jesus, God the Son, show His love for us?

Jesus loved us so much that He gave His life for us. We may not have to die for someone, but there are other ways to practice sacrificial love. We can lay down our rights, our way, our wants, and think of others first before thinking of ourselves. Practically, we can be there for others by listening, helping, encouraging, and giving of our time.

9. Write John 13:34-35.

10. Write 1 John 4:7-8.

11. Write 1 John 4:11.

The greatest evidence that a person has the fruit of the Spirit is visible *agape* love in action. It is this kind of love that brings dynamic power to a believer's life and puts them in a place where God can use them. Pray daily and ask God to pour out this love by His Spirit into your life.

12. Write John 13:35.