



Series: Love First

Sermon Title: Living the Fruit of the Spirit

Date: 4/7/2024

Galatians 5:22-25

What the Spirit produces in every believer is ALL of these things. The Fruit of the Spirit is Singular in nature, meaning these aren't different types of Fruit; they are ONE work of the Spirit within you and me. Each is a descriptor of what the Spirit is growing within us. From the moment we are saved by Jesus – the Spirit is at work cultivating His Fruit.

Philippians 1:8-10

Paul's prayer here is that you and I exercise a complete God-given love that is self-sacrificial, not self-serving, giving, and all-encompassing, not selective.

The Bible shows love as a main ingredient of all creation. In Genesis 1:27, we see God created humanity "in his own image" and being made in his image, we not only have a capacity or ability to love as He does but it is meant to be a part of who we are, just as He is love **1 John 4:7-8**

This love isn't a mere emotion but a fruit that shapes our actions and relationships. Big Idea: **Let love define how you live.**

Let's explore three *facets* of God's love:

1. The Unconditional Love of God

God's for us is a love that predates our actions, our flaws, and even our very lives (**Ephesians 1:4**). This unearned, undeserved love is repeated in **John 3:16**.

We can demonstrate this love by first believing in God's pure, unconditional, sacrificial love for us. Only then can we extend that same forgiveness and acceptance to others?

We are called to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31), regardless of who they are or what they've done. This isn't about accepting wrongdoing but about seeing God's value for each person, a value rooted in God's love for them and God's image of them.

2. The Sacrificial Love of Jesus - is a love that led him to the cross.

Luke 23:33-34

Jesus didn't just talk about love; He lived it by sacrificing Himself to save all who call on his name. This sacrificial love extends beyond the cross (**1 John 4:11**)

True love involves putting the needs of others ahead of our own. What happens when we love like this? Lost people will see the difference the Holy Spirit makes in you and me.

3. The Active Love of Living Like Jesus

This is the type of love practiced between a husband and wife to beautifully demonstrate mutual love and self-sacrifice. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

The unconditional love Jesus offers isn't passive. It is a love that demands action.

This passage gives us more than a definition of love, more than a sentimental notion; it's another one of the details of God's gift of life. He is all of these, and He calls us to be his image and look this way, too. We need to practice this type of love because living this kind of love in a challenging, sin-filled world takes constant effort and prayer. But this is what faith in Jesus is calling us to.

The Fruit of the Spirit is Love - Fruit, by its very nature, is meant to multiply the original and nourish those who benefit from it.

The Fruit produced in you by the Spirit of God is meant to benefit you, your families, your marriages, and your relationships. Love benefits this church family, and beyond all the personal benefits, God-shaped love allows us to display how the Holy Spirit is changing us!

The world needs to see the love of Jesus through you! Through love, we draw closer to God, carry His image more completely, and have a better opportunity to be an outpost for Jesus in this broken world.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **The Fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Which aspect of the Fruit of the Spirit is most challenging to display today? Why?**
- **Is it ever acceptable for a Christian to NOT demonstrate love?**
- **Describe a time when you chose to sacrificially love someone even though it was difficult. What did God teach you in that situation?**
- **When do you find it easy to love others? When are you challenged to love others?**