

LOVE GOD and LOVE OTHERS, Week 4

Week 1 – LIVE to INFLUENCE others toward Christ – “Go and tell...”

Week 2 – LEND a HAND to others – “Go and DO...”

Week 3 – LEAD your HEART – “GROW up...”

Week 4 – LOVE GOD and OTHERS – “BE HEALTHY...”

We know we’re GROWING closer to GOD by our LOVE for HIM and for OTHERS.

Galatians 5:16-26 (CSB)

¹⁶ I say then, walk by the Spirit and you will certainly not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar. I am warning you about these things—as I warned you before—that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² **But the fruit of the Spirit IS love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control.** The law is not against such things.

²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

These verses, specifically verse 22 and 23, tell us how to LOOK and SEE the work of God in our lives. Now, why is this important? This is important because unless we get a true picture of where we are and what we are, we cannot honestly move toward being healthy.

When you go to the Doctor’s office, what do you expect? We expect the Doctor to examine our blood, chemicals and body so that...We can get a true picture of our health so that we can make progress, through medicine, diet, and exercise toward becoming healthier.

Yet, many come to church regularly and consistently and habitually, yet avoid the honest diagnosis of their spiritual health and never take heed of the prescription that is given by their pastor through the WORD of GOD. We have everything we need here in God’s Word to be HEALTHY BELIEVER’S. There can be no misunderstanding that we are to BEAR FRUIT in our lives. It’s all through the New Testament from Jesus Himself all the way to the end.

The RESULT of being BORN AGAIN is FRUIT of the SPIRIT.

Notice that the RESULT of the Spirit’s work in us is FRUIT.

Now, let’s look at closer at these verses.

#1 – The Fruit of the Spirit is SINGULAR.

This list of NINE things is really the picture of ONE BEAUTIFUL FRUIT.

The Fruit of the Spirit is different from gifts of the Spirit. The gifts are given by God, to different people, to EMPOWER and BUILD up the Church (the Body of Christ).

The FRUIT of the SPIRIT are the RESULT of GOD’S SPIRIT in EACH OF US.

#2 – The CENTER, the power of the FRUIT is LOVE.

Every other one of these pieces that make up the Spirit’s fruit, flow from LOVE. This is the LOVE OF GOD, though, not the kind of love the world gives.

This love has nothing to do with the worthiness of the one loved.

God’s Love Loves us because He Loves Us. God’s love has no regard to our merits, only that He chose to love.

Our love has “strings attached,” God’s love has no strings.

Our love has a “do this and I’ll love you” attitude, God’s love does not.

Our love is so fickle...God’s love is STEADFAST.

1 John 4:19-21 (CSBBible)

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And we have this command from him: The one who loves God must also love his brother and sister.

Let me summarize that verse:

“To LOVE GOD and LOVE LIKE God loves, is NOT EASY.”

This Love takes the initiative. It sets out to show it’s love.

This Love does not IGNORE the needs of others.

This Love forgives WITH OR WITHOUT an apology.

“Well, I’ll forgive her when she apologizes.” When we don’t love like this we are saying, “We don’t LOVE GOD enough to LOVE OTHERS like He loves us.” When you are overwhelmed by the Love of God you can’t help but love like this.

This Love is not based on FEELINGS, but of our ACTIONS (commitment).

1 Corinthians 13:1-2 (CSBBible)

¹ If I speak human or angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.

From this, all others build around to make a wonderful fruit.

JOY	PEACE	PATIENCE	KINDNESS
GOODNESS	FAITHFULNESS	GENTLENESS	SELF-CONTROL

These things (fruit), not **THOSE** things (sinful cultural traits listed first) are to describe the CHARACTER of a HEALTHY BELIEVER. God has called His church to be a noticeable, powerful, winning force in our culture and towns because of the LOVE of God that is in us.

TAKEAWAY: Does YOUR LOVE FOR GOD and OTHERS encourage people to believe the Gospel?

If not, the problem is not with God, it’s with us. And if we’ll surrender our hearts and lives to the truth of salvation, we can live organically and experience the intimacy and fullness of God in our life.