

Fruit on the Vine: Love
Series: Fruit on the Vine – Growing in Christlikeness
Galatians 5:16-24

INTRODUCTION

It's essential to remember that the fruit of the Spirit is not simply a group of moral commands. **It's not nine different ways to live a better life, although they certainly do result in a better life when they're present.** It is not just a call to live an upright, good, moral life. It is so much more than this. We learned that, in essence, the fruit of the Spirit is all about growing more like Jesus. **It is the character of Jesus that God grows in you.**

When you become a Christian, God gives you the Holy Spirit to help you and change you. The Holy Spirit works to develop the character of Christ within you. **The fruit of the Spirit is a beautiful picture or portrait of Jesus. And God wants your life to reflect that beautiful picture.** Notice that the fruit of the Spirit is not so much a list of things to do, but rather character traits that God wants to develop in you. But they are not just any character traits. They are the character traits of Jesus. That's why we call it one fruit, because together these character traits form the one character of Jesus. The Bible describes the whole process of growing as a Christian as growing to be more like Jesus.

Here's a helpful summary from a seasoned pastor, author and theologian: ***"The fruit of the Spirit is the character of God reflected in the lives of those who are united with Christ. It cannot be produced by an outward change of habit or a system of self-improvement but is cultivated as God works to conform us to the image of His Son. As we consider the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, Scripture guides us to examine our hearts, challenges our progress, and encourages us to trust God's promise that He began this work and will complete it."*** – Alistair Begg

As we said last week there is one fruit of the Spirit comprised of nine parts. Adrian Rogers describes it as **"one fruit with nine flavors."** The presence of all of these

characteristics (or flavors) provides evidence that a person is being controlled by the Holy Spirit.

For this morning, we begin to look at this nine-flavored fruit in detail. Today we begin with the fruit of love. Let's turn to God's word for answers.

I. The _____ of _____ and the _____ of _____

A. God is _____, and all love comes from _____
but remember that _____ is not _____ (1 John 4:7-8)

B. God showed His love by _____ Jesus
(1 John 4:9-10)

C. God wants to _____ His love in your life
(1 John 4:11-12)

II. The _____ of love in _____
and in the life of the _____

A. Love is the _____
(Matthew 22:37-39)

B. Love is the _____ Christian virtue...
love is _____ (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13)

C. Love is the fruit which _____ all the others
together (1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Colossians 3:12,14)

I like how the preacher Donald Barnhouse describes each of the
fruit of the Spirit as all springing from the one fruit of love. He
writes:

Love is the key.
Joy is love singing.
Peace is love resting.
Patience is love enduring.
Kindness is love's touch.
Goodness is love's character.
Faithfulness is love's habit.
Gentleness is love's self-forgetfulness.
Self-control is love holding the reins.

(<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/97337-love-is-the-key-joy-is-love-singing-peace-is>)

CONCLUSION

What can we take with us this morning? How about **this**:
we are _____ to love the _____. He loves with
the love He _____.

But how do we do this? How can we develop this kind of
love that spills over to others?

A. _____ God's love for you in Christ
(1 John 3:16)

B. _____ to forgive others when they wrong
you (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-14)

- Love takes the initiative

**C. Seek to honor other people _____ yourself
(Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3-4)**

What might this sort of love look like in life's everyday moments?

1. Love _____ real needs

2. Love _____

- Love takes the initiative, love meets real needs, love forgives and love acts!**
- We are called to love the way He loves with the love He provides.**