

# **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - LOVE**

## **Pastor Katy Reeves**

### **I. Galatians 5:22-23**

- A. We will focus on the Spirit's fruit of LOVE
- B. Two kinds of love--'agape' and 'human'
- C. Greek word 'agape'; divine love; a strong, ardent, tender, compassionate, devotion to the well-being of someone
- D. Sometimes it can be hard as we go through our daily interactions with people to maintain a mindset of love
- E. Especially when someone has hurt you or offended you
- F. But Jesus told us that walking in love is the first and the great commandment
- G. First we are called to love God, then we are to love others

**Love is the foundation for every principle in Scripture.  
Prosperity, deliverance, and healing all hang on the law of love.**

**If things are not working properly in your life, it may be that the love of God is not flowing the way it should.**

### **II. Matthew 22:36-40**

- A. If we obey these two commandments, then we will have everything else covered
- B. Love is the distinguishing characteristic of every true disciple
- C. It is the evidence showing that you are filled with the Spirit of God
- D. Agape love is supernatural love that comes from spending time--a lot of time--with our God
- E. It is NOT human, emotional love
- F. It is unconditional and does not depend on being loved in order to love
- G. Agape love is not based on emotions and has nothing to do with how you feel
  - 1. Agape love is choosing to let God, Himself, love through you against all human feelings and emotions you may encounter

2. It is concerned about preserving others and is so strong that it will allow you to love your enemies and bless those that curse you
3. Agape love surpasses human love; which is a conditional, two-sided love that only wants to love what's lovable
4. Human love must be pleased and will only love if it is loved in return
5. It is all about self-preservation and has its beginning in selfishness

**When you seek to retaliate against others when they hurt you, rather than walking in love, you demonstrate your lack of trust in God's ability to vindicate you.**

**Self-preservation is a result of fear.**

**It shows that you trust your own ability to handle situations more than you trust God.**

**When you hold on to anger, pain and other forms of hurt, YOU are responsible to deal with it.**

**BUT, when you RELEASE those things to GOD, they are His responsibility and not yours!**

### **III. Romans 5:5**

- A. When you become Christ-like, your life belongs to God and you have the ability, through the Holy Spirit, to love others the agape way.
- B. God tells us to overcome evil with good
- C. When you operate with love, even when it's hard, you demonstrate your love for God and His way of doing things

### **IV. Romans 12:9-21**

- A. Our God is well able to handle these types of situations
- B. The enemy will always try to get you to walk in selfishness instead of agape love
- C. Love is where true power lies

- D. Remember the two greatest forces in this world--love and selfishness
- E. You choose to walk in one or the other every day
- F. If the enemy can get you out of love he can defeat you
- G. Agape love is unconditional, limitless, selfless and is not based on emotions
- H. Unfortunately, most people operate in selfishness
  - 1. They live in human, emotional love
  - 2. Human love has limits, it is conditional, requires pre-qualification and has to be loved before it can love
- I. Pride and selfishness is the root of all sin, which is based in fear
- J. You can kick selfishness out of your life--How?
- K. **YIELD TO LOVE!**
  - 1. Life is a series of decisions that ultimately determine your future
  - 2. Every disciple should make the quality decision to be an expression of God's love on this Earth

**Fear and hurt will always quench God's love in you, so don't allow these things to get a foothold in your life!**

**V. Romans 8:2**

- A. There are two laws that govern life
  - 1. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus-which is love
  - 2. The law of sin and death-which is selfishness
- B. Like curtains on a curtain rod, your deliverance, answered prayers, healing and faith, all hang on the rod of love
- C. The decision to walk in love enables you to fulfill Jesus' commandment and allow God's spiritual principles to work in your life
- D. If you are not walking in agape love, then you are limiting what God can do in your life

**VI. I John 4:16-21 and I Corinthians 13:8**

- A. God is love and love never fails
- B. When love is released, God is released into your situations

and circumstances

C. Make a quality decision to walk in the love of God and remove selfishness

D. Trust God and cast your cares on Him

E. Allow the agape love of God to flow into your life

F. You will see God's divine intervention

## **VII. I Corinthians 13:4-7**

A. This is the Love Test

B. After reading this, can you see to what extent you have - or have not - yielded your life to love?

C. **Circle of Love Object Lesson**

1. Draw a circle on the dry erase board

2. Inside is God's love w/all the blessings that come with it

3. Outside is the devil's territory w/all that comes with it

4. God expects you to love others unconditionally--even

when they hurt you. He has put His love into your heart by Holy Spirit. The ability to love like He does is already in you. You have no excuse. It's your decision. You choose love or selfishness. It's vital that you not let hurt and offense turn into bitterness and hatred through unforgiveness. This brings heartache, unanswered prayers, and ultimately, destruction; which is why God commands us, above all else, to never stop loving! God is love, and His power to prosper, heal, and deliver you operates in the circle of love. When you operate outside the circle of love, you put yourself in a position where God, who is love, cannot help you. Learning how to heal and forgive so you can stay in the circle of love is vital to receiving the wonderful things God has for you. Maybe you've been hurt by a friend or close relative; either way, you've got a life altering choice to make--either deal with your pain in a godly manner and continue to walk in love, or allow negative emotions to consume you, and ultimately destroy your life. The choice is yours! When you choose to walk in love, you position yourself to experience the power of God in every area of your life. Believe and trust Him to not only heal you from every hurt and free you from the pain associated with it, but also to restore everything you may have lost!~

## VIII. How do we walk in love?

### A. Proverbs 15:1

1. Respond with a soft answer
2. Refrain from acting contrary to the love of God
3. If you find yourself getting offended, step away from before you end up burning a bridge with that person
4. Keep your emotions under control
5. Overcome your flesh by aligning your thinking, actions, and words with the Word of God

### B. Philippians 4:8

1. Don't rehearse negative thoughts; disperse them instead
2. Make a conscious effort to think thoughts toward others that are honest, just, pure, lovely, good, virtuous and worthy of praise.
3. Don't be reckless with your words
4. Consult with Holy Spirit for wisdom in what to say
5. He will always show you how to respond the right way

### C. Something powerful happens when you are willing to lose sight of yourself to put somebody else in focus

### D. The way to get rid of selfishness is to get rid of FEAR

1. 1 John 4:8
2. Fear is dangerous
3. It opens the door for the enemy to come in
4. It also produces negative forces like offense strife and unforgiveness
5. Love empowers you to the point that you will be slow to take offense and quick to forgive

### E. Begin to meditate on the love of God and let Holy Spirit develop agape love in your heart

1. Read love scriptures out loud
2. Meditate on them
3. Pray them over yourself
4. Pray in other tongues

### F. Begin looking for ways to be a blessing to others

1. Love is always in action
2. Love is always giving--time, attention, things, etc.

### G. Open your heart to the possibilities of how God will use you!

## **Conclusion:**

Keep in mind that when you fail to develop in love, you fail to develop in character, which means you perpetuate a lifestyle of selfishness.

The moment you choose to withhold from others when it is in your power to bless them out of your increase and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, you are being selfish.

When you make the choice to restrict or limit your giving, you restrict what God can do in your own life!

God is looking for people of character.

That is what sanctification is all about--developing the character of God--and we are called to be sanctified.

God is faithful!

Make a decision today, that regardless of what it takes, you will love others unconditionally.

You will develop the character of love, because that, more than anything else, is crucial to your experiencing the fullness of God!

God intends for love to be the distinguishing characteristic of those who follow Him.

Use the love of God to mend fences when you and another person are in strife.

Put your feelings aside, and don't allow the enemy to create confusion and destroy your fellowship with the other person.

Be a Christian who makes a difference in your relationships by taking the love route every time!