

We've learned many things about the Holy Spirit.

- * He works to bring us to saving grace in Christ.
- * He lives in us from the time of our accepting Christ as our Savior.
- * He seals us as members of God's family.
- * He gives us strength to fight life's battles with the world, our flesh and the devil.

Find the verb at the beginning of the sentence. Circle what the Holy Spirit does for us.

What is the Fruit of the Spirit?

- 1) What happens to us as a result of being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- 2) How we know God lives in us.

The fruit of the Spirit has nine different QUALITIES. Let's read them in Galatians 5:22-23. Yes, they are: 1) love 2) joy 3) peace 4) patience 5) kindness 6) goodness 7) faithfulness 8) gentleness 9) self-control.

The greatest example of the fruit of the Spirit is in the life of the man Jesus Christ. Let's begin our study with the greatest of these qualities as we seek to be more like Him. That quality is love.

As we look back over our lives we see there are different ways that love is EXPRESSED. Name some of the ways you have seen love expressed: 1) _____ 2) _____

Let's begin by looking at worldly love. This is best seen as a longing or desire for human sexual love. The qualities of this love are desire, POSSESSIVENESS, control and even PERVERSION in its more DESTRUCTIVE expression. This is the worldly sex encouraged by Hollywood, TV, other Media and our culture. If you want to have sex with whomever, then just do it! There are no ground rules. Just do as you please! This selfish love was not what God wanted for us. Galatians 5:16-17, 19, 21

God created the physical attraction between a man and a woman. The longing and desire that make up sexual love. Let's read about this love expressed between the beloved and the lover as the Bible suggests. Song of Songs chapter 2.

We are to choose "one Beloved". This kind of love is acceptable toward one person, your marriage partner. He is to be your one and only lover and you his beloved !

God gave you this gift that you might experience great pleasure together. In 1 Corinthians 7:2-6 Paul explains why it is good for us to have a marriage partner to whom we are devoted. Let's read what Paul says.

If your desire for your husband fades over time, pray everyday to thrill to his touch! And everyday you would become more desirable to him! God can change your heart and give you healthy desires toward your husband and he for you.

Satan is out to destroy the family. If you or your husband are in need of a "heart change" in your marriage- take it to the greatest marriage Counselor of all! Our Almighty God. Yes, share your heart's desire with the one who can make change happen.

Let us turn to another kind of love, the love one has toward a friend or companion. In Luke 14:10 it says we are to say to our friend, "Friend, move up to a better place." We put our friends in a high personal place. In a friend's joy or sadness Luke 15:8-9 tells us we are to "rejoice" and "share distress". In experiences we share, the joy of our friends become joy for us too!

As for fellow believers in 1 Peter 3:8 we are told to "live in harmony with one another; be SYMPATHETIC, love as brothers, be COMPASSIONATE and humble." And in Galatians 6:10 we are told "as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Aren't you glad you're in that family?!

But the Apostle Paul takes us deeper still in learning what God wants us to know about love that we will call "caring love". It's how our God loves in a very personal way. Please turn in Scripture to 1 Corinthians 13. This chapter is key to understanding how very important love truly is to our Lord.

In verses 1 and 2 what does Paul say about using spiritual gifts without love? What is their value? _____. In verses 4-8 Paul gives a great description of what "caring love" is and is not. Let's list them from the Scripture.

Caring love is...

Caring love is not

Caring love is *not* glad when evil comes to someone. Can you give an example? Perhaps someone who cheated you or treated you badly and later had harm or disaster come to them?

Caring love is *not* proud and ARROGANT. Let's read what happens when pride comes into our life; 2 Chronicles 26:16, Psalm 10:4, Proverbs 11:2, Proverbs 13:10. What happens?

Caring love is *not* rude. To be rude is to behave in an ugly way, not decent or in a becoming manner. Have you ever been around someone who is rude or OBSCENE? They behave in shameful ways that cause those around them to feel ashamed to be in their presence. This may be done in words or in actions that are disgusting to those around.

The Spirit filled Christian knows right away that the Holy Spirit is offended. The Christian is very sensitive toward what is *not* decent. Philippians 4:8 gives us guidelines as to the kind of experiences we are to enjoy. What are they?

Caring love is *not* self seeking. As 2 Timothy 3:2 tells us in the last days "people will be lovers of themselves". Caring love seeks the best for others. Self-seeking is the opposite. Looking only after one's self. Not concerned with the needs or problems of others.

Caring love does *not* come from our own hearts but from the heart of God. We are *not* able to love those who are unlovable. We are *not* able to love those who do not love us or have brought harm to us. His divine love flows through us to others. We are blessed to be the vessel through which God shares His love for one of His children.

This is how caring love happens as God directs:

- * We have a situation in which God asks us to give caring love to another person.
- * We tell God that we do *not* have caring love for this person.
- * We think how God would give caring love to this person as the Scripture says.
- * We act in obedience and do as God would do giving caring love to this person.

1 Corinthians 13:8 tells us "Love never fails". Our love from our own hearts may fail us and others but there is nothing else like God pouring His caring love through you. It may be the most difficult thing God ever asks us to do—and the most wonderful privilege we will ever experience. But it will be impossible without God's changing our heart to be more like His. This caring love from God gives value to everything we do. John 13:34-35

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:7-8 "It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres (continues on, even in difficulty). Love never fails."

IS THERE AN ISSUE TO RESOLVE? Will we humble ourselves before God to change our heart to be used by Him? Or will we depend on our own heart's will and power?

WHAT DID GOD SHOW US TODAY?

- 1) Worldly love is not what God wants for us. Galatians 5:16-17, 19, 21
- 2) We are to be "beloved" and to have a "beloved". Song of Songs Chapter 2
- 3) Caring love is expressed through me to others when I humble myself to the will and the power of the Holy Spirit. Only God is able to do this through me. John 13:34-35
- 4) Only spiritual gifts expressed with God's caring love have value. 1 Corinthians 13:1-2

How will you begin to show God's caring love ? To whom will you give it?

1) _____

Prayer Request: _____

Word Study:

- 1) arrogant: making claims to superior importance or rights; very proud. He's an arrogant leader with an attitude of always being right even when he is clearly not being truthful.
- 2) compassionate: understanding, to have pity, be kind and have mercy. Her attitude is very compassionate with others, always putting their needs first, before her own.
- 3) destructive: to destroy, cause a lot of damage. His attitude was very destructive to others
- 4) expressed: to put into words; to make something clear or plain. She expressed her love.
- 5) obscene: offensive to moral or decent values; disgusting. The obscene movie was offensive.
- 6) perversion: sexual satisfaction not in a natural or normal manner; man with a woman.
- 7) possessiveness: to be controlling, selfish, jealous, not wanting influence other than oneself
- 8) qualities: characteristics or nature of someone or something. She has the quality of love.
- 9) sympathetic: to be compassionate, considerate; to look upon with favor, be open-minded and encouraging. She was sympathetic in her care for the sick children.

What Love is	How to Love	Scripture
Patient	Be willing to wait for God's perfect timing. Have self-restraint. Control your impulses.	Isaiah 40:31 Romans 15:1 James 1:4
Kind	Ask, "What would this person like?" "What does she need?" Speak softly and be caring	Proverbs 25:11 Isaiah 58:6,7 Ephesians 4:32
Does not envy	Be content with what you have. List your blessings. Be happy for other's good.	1 Corinthians 3:3 Exodus 20:17 Philippians 4:11,12
Does not boast	Be humble. Don't brag. Give credit to others.	Psalms 49:6,7 Psalm 34:2 Philippians 3:1-8
Not proud	Don't think you are better than other people. Be modest. Don't be arrogant or overbearing.	1 Corinthians 8:1 Philippians 2:2-8 John 13:14,15
Not rude	Be courteous and kind. Be gracious. Use good manners.	Numbers 12:3 1 Peter 4:9 1 Peter 5:5
Not self-seeking	Think of others first. Give someone else first choice. Don't be greedy and selfish.	1 Corinthians 10:24 Acts 20:35 John 15:13
Not easily angered	Think the best of people. Don't jump to conclusions. Ask questions and listen.	Matthew 5:22 Romans 15:2 James 1:19
Keeps no record of wrongs	Forgive the "wrongs." Remember the "rights." What did Jesus do?	Galatians 6:1 Matthew 6:12 John 8:11
Does not delight in evil	Don't watch or read evil things. Turn away from gossip. Don't gloat when others fall.	Matthew 5:29 Proverbs 11:13 Galatians 6:1
Rejoices with the truth	Be happy about good things. Spread good news. Tell the truth to yourself and others.	Philippians 1:18 Isaiah 60:1 Ephesians 4:25
Always protects	Protect the helpless and weak. Protect yourself against temptation. Defend the name of Jesus.	James 1:27 Proverbs 4:14,15 1 Peter 3:15
Always trusts	Trust is believing God's promises. Pray about everything and trust Him. Believe that all things work for good.	Isaiah 14:24 Philippians 4:6 Romans 8:28
Always hopes	Never give up. Remember God doesn't give up on you. Expect good things from God.	Ephesians 6:13 Romans 5:10 1 John 3:3
Always perseveres	Be persistent. Keep on praying. If God is for you, who can be against you? Be faithful to God and others.	James 5:16 Romans 8:31 1 Peter 4:8
Never fails	Love never fails. God's love never fails. Pray for a loving heart like His.	1 Corinthians 13:13 John 15:9 John 13:35