

# The Fruit of Love



**1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

- Paul began with love because all the other fruit is really an outgrowth of love.
  - Unity and diversity must be balanced by maturity, and that maturity comes with love.
  - Spiritual gifts, no matter how exciting and wonderful, are useless and even destructive if they are not ministered in love.
  - Few chapters in the Bible have suffered more misinterpretation and misapplication than 1 Corinthians 13.
  - The only way spiritual gifts can be used creatively is when Christians are motivated by love.
  - The word charity should be love. It is agape (divine love).
- There are four words which are all translated by one word, love: eros, phileo, storge, and agape.
    - Eros – means passion or sexual.
    - Phileo – means affection – human love at its highest.
    - Storge – means affectionate – love between parent and child.
    - Agape – means divine love, the highest word for love in the New Testament.
  - Paul explained three characteristics of Christian love that show why it is so important in ministry.
    1. Love is enriching (v. 1-3). Paul named five spiritual gifts: tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, and giving (sacrifice).
      - Christians are “taught of God to love one another” (1 Thess. 4:9).
    2. Love is edifying (v. 4-7). “Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies (builds up)” (1 Cor. 8:1).
      - The Corinthians were impatient in the public meeting, but love would make them long suffering.
      - At the “love Feast” and the Lord’s Table, the Corinthians were behaving in a very unseemly manner.
      - Love does not rejoice in iniquity, yet the Corinthians were boasting about sin in their church (1 Cor. 5).

**3. Love is enduring (v. 8-13). Prophecy, knowledge, and tongues will all cease one day, but love will endure forever.**

- **The Corinthians were like children playing with toys that would one day disappear.**
- **Note that all three of the Christian graces will endure, even though “faith will become sight and hope will be fulfilled.”**
- **The greatest of these graces is love.**
- **Unfortunately, most of the emphasis today is on the gifts and not the fruit of the Holy Spirit.**