

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Fruit of Love

Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Sermon Series Title: “The Fruit of the Spirit”

Sermon Series Summary: In Christ, we have received new hearts and new life. With this new life, God bears the Fruit of the Spirit. It’s not something we do. It’s something that God grows within us through His Spirit.

Setting: After looking at the works of the flesh, Paul lists the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul takes a whole chapter to talk about love to the Corinthian church. Corinth was a city devoted to power, prosperity, plurality, and promiscuity. The church in Corinth loved wisdom, eloquence, and knowledge to a fault, leading them to division and sin.

Summary: We are back in our “Fruit of the Spirit” sermon series, looking at the first fruit: love. This is the most important fruit (as it describes who God is), and it’s the fruit that bonds the others together. In 1 Corinthians 13, we see the importance, perseverance, and character of love for us in Christ.

Main Point: *“God is love, and we are called to love as we have been loved in Christ.”*

Sermon Points:

1. The Poverty of Love
2. The Necessity of Love
3. The Eternity of Love
4. The Ability to Love

Opening Question

1. How would you define love?

(Love is not a romantic feeling or an emotional state. Love is the unconditional commitment to pursue another’s good at a cost, not for any reciprocity but for the person’s dignity.)

Love is the first fruit that is listed in Galatians 5. We will go to the love chapter in 1 Corinthians 13 to see the depth and the beauty of this first fruit.

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Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

2. Why is the fruit of love first on this list?

(Love is the most important fruit. It is the fruit that bonds all the other fruits together. We see love being expressed in 1 Corinthians 13 in terms of the fruit of the spirit. Love is not just something that God says He has. Love is what God says He is (1 John 4:8, 16). It's part of His nature as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He did not create us, because He needed us to love Him. He is love, and He created us to invite us to be part of this love story.)

Love brings us back to our humanity, since we have been created in the image of God who is love. Love is at the heart of the Greatest Commandment for His people- love God and love neighbor. In addition to that, Jesus says that the world will know that we are His disciples if we love one another.)

3. Out of love's characteristics in 1 Corinthians 13, which one sticks out to you?
Why is it so difficult to love in this way?

(Answers may vary.)

It's difficult to love in this way, because we are self-centered, selfish, and self-glorifying in our sin. We don't want what is best for others, but we want what is best for ourselves. We don't like being uncomfortable, but we desire to be comfortable in our sin and glory. Love is costly and goes directly against our sinful nature.)

4. What is the opposite of love? What does it look like to love in a counterfeit way?

(The opposite of love is not hatred. Hatred usually comes about because we love something or someone. The opposite of love is selfishness, manifested in fear and pride. We're afraid of discomfort, insecurity, and loss. We're proud of ourselves, and we want what's best for us.)

Loving in a counterfeit way is to be nice, gentle, and pleasant toward others, not for their good but for ourselves. We desire people to like us and approve of us. We want to

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preserve ourselves, so we fear confrontation. We may act loving toward others, so that we may receive something in return which is the opposite of love.)

5. How do we love according to 1 Corinthians 13?

(When we see love being described in this way, we see that love is a power. It's a power that moves and transforms. It's a power that embraces and blesses others. We see that love is not just a power, but it is personified. That is because love is found in the person of Jesus Christ. All the attributes of love describe Jesus Himself, and it is Jesus who has loved us in this way.

The source of love cannot be found inside of us because of our sin. It needs to be found outside of us, and we know His name, Jesus Christ. He has loved us in this way through the cross, so that empowers us to love God and one another according to 1 Corinthians 13.)

Final Thoughts: *The love found in 1 Corinthians 13 is the love that we all long for. It's not just a poem for weddings, but it is the love that moves and transforms. It's the love that we are called to as the people of God. And the only way for us to love in this way is to know that this love met us first in Jesus Christ. And because we have been so loved, we are able to love God and one another.*