



Fruit of the Spirit

(Galatians 5:22-23)

"Love"

- There is just one word for **Love** in the English Language.
- The original New Testament was written in Greek. So, we sometimes lose some of the meaning of the word "love" when we read the English translations of the Bible.

There are four words for "love" in the Greek:

- 1) **"Eros"** - This is the word the Greeks used for sexual or romantic love. It is a feeling. It is not used in the Bible however.
- 2) **"Phileo"** - This is used 54 times in the Bible. This is a word that is used to describe love we have for a close friend. It implies a strong emotional connection. You can "agape" your enemies but you cannot "phileo" your enemies. It is a state of affection.
- 3) **"Storge"** - This is the love we have for the affection that naturally occurs between loved ones (between parents and children, siblings and married couples in a good marriage). It is only used once in the Bible as a compound word for "devoted" in Romans 12:10 encouraging us to have "brotherly" love to each other.
- 4) **"Agape"** - This word is used 259 times in the Bible. This is the love God has for us. It is the kind of love we have for God and others that leads us to action. It is not a love of feelings like other kinds of love. It causes us to do things we don't always feel like doing like staying up all night with a sick child. This kind of love is deliberate and an exercise of the will. This kind of love is out of commitment and obedience to God. This kind of love does not always lead us to do what is easy and may even cost us something. Agape love may be associated with good feelings but it is not driven by the feelings. The good feelings often follow the actions prompted by agape love. It is not based on the other person's performance or what we can get out of it.

Verses to consider:

- 1) **Luke 10:27** - He answered: " 'Love (Agape) the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind', and; 'Love (Agape) your neighbor as yourself.' "
- 2) **1 Corinthians 13:4-8, 13** - The Bible's description of love.
- 3) **Romans 12:9-21** - Godly love acted out.
- 4) **John 13:35** - Love is proof that we are a Christian and a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- 5) **1 John 4:7-21** - Proof that God loves us and how He showed it.

Questions to consider:

- ▷ Give an example of when you loved someone "unconditionally."
- ▷ Give an example of when you loved someone "conditionally" (Is that love? Why or why not?)
- ▷ When and when not is "tolerance" loving? Is tolerating sin loving? Why or why not?
- ▷ How are we to best love the "sinner" and hate the sin?
- ▷ Explain the phrase: "We love to the extent that we are willing to be inconvenienced"
- ▷ Explain the differences between romantic love, brotherly love, love of family, and godly love.
- ▷ The objects of our love are important. What is the Bible's teaching on this that brings the most "JOY" (hint: Jesus first, Others next, Yourself last)

We love because He first loved us!
(1 John 4:19)