

Fruit-Filled Living (Pt.3)

"Love Them Apples!"

(Galatians 5:22, 23)

Introduction: There is nothing better or sweeter than a good apple!

Apples are called the world's most popular fruit –

Apples are called the world's most perfect food –

Apples also have many health benefits –

But even with all that going for them, *apples are not the world's most perfect fruit...*

The fruit of the Spirit is the only perfect fruit, *and the fruit of the Spirit is Love...* It's important here that we understand what love the apostle Paul is referring to here.

I. Love defined: Like the apple which has 72,00 varieties, love comes in three different varieties.

A. The Occurrences of Love –

I. There are three Greek words used for love.

a. Eros – This is what is found in lustful relationships, it is very selfish.

b. Philos – This is a warm social love of family and friendships. (*This is where we get our word, Philadelphia (the city of brotherly love).* Then there is...

c. Agape – This is the highest level of love, and it is the word Paul uses here for the fruit of the Spirit.

2. Agape love is used by Paul as both a verb and a noun –

a. Paul uses love as a noun 75 times referring to its unconquerable kindness. (*Love always seeks the highest good for others regardless of their treatment of us.*)

b. Paul uses Agape love as a verb 34 times because love is the result of a decision to do the best for another person. (*Agape love involves the mind before the heart.*)

c. Agape love is a deliberate effort – that can only be made by God's help because real Agape love never seeks anything but the best for others even when they seek the worst for us.

1. God the Father initiated His plan to save man out of Agape love-

2. God the Son accepted the assignment that took Him to the cross because of Agape love –

3. And Jesus prayed that the Father would place this same Agape love in His disciples because He knew no other motivation would be sufficient to keep them faithful to their mission with God.

d. Agape love is the fruit that can only be produced in believers by the Holy Spirit...

To help us, we need to understand...

B. The Origin of Love... Agape love is found in God Himself. (1 Jn.4:8)

1. One of the most treasured verses in all the Bible show us God's love – (Jn.3:16)

2. God's agape love is an everlasting love - (*Jer 31:3*)

a. Throughout the O.T. God displayed His love despite all of Israel's sin & failures God still loved them.

b. In the N.T. *God demonstrates His own (agape) love toward us, (Rom 5:8)*

3. *God is Love - 1 Jn. 4:8 and He showed us true love in Jesus. (Who Jn.13:1 says loved us all the way!) (Gal 2:20)*

4. Agape love is defined by God, and it was designed to be a pattern for us to *walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. (Eph 5:2)*

But we can't produce pure "Agape" love in our heart and relationships unless the Holy Spirit produces it in us!

II. Love designed:

A. Love is designed to be vertical – Meaning it deals with our love for God. (*Mark 12:29-30*) *But also...*

B. Love is designed to be horizontal – Referring to our love for others... Jesus finished answering the question of the greatest command, ... (*Mark 12:31*)

1. This is the primary function of the Spiritual fruit –

2. Paul told the Corinthian church that was all caught up in the emotionalism and exhibition of spiritual gifts, that they were excluding the greatest gift of the Spirit— love! (1 Cor. 13)

Paul was basically saying, the best way to show that you're a Christian is not exhibiting flashy gifts but rather by extending loving grace. And we can only do that by the power of the Holy Spirit producing His fruit in us!

III. Love desired:

Christians are to be God's love with skin on!

A. We are to love our families – (*1 Pet 3:8ff*).

1. Love allows us to live in harmony –

2. Love allows us to be sympathetic –

3. Love allows us to be compassionate toward each other –

4. Fruit-filled living in love will keep your prayers from being hindered. (*1 Pe.3:7*)

B. We are to love our church family – (*Col.1:4*)

1. Jesus said by our love men will know we are His disciples – (*1 Jn 4:20a*)

2. When love is missing worship is lacking - because all the gifts that promote worship are to be a labor of love. (*Rev. 2:4*)

3. When love is missing the churches, witness is gone – Aren't you so glad someone loved you enough to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with you!

Sinners need the love of God that only the children of God can show them.

We won't and can't love the lost or anybody else until we let the Holy Spirit produce His love in and through us and that is exactly what He wants to do today in us!

Conclusion: Letting love flow through your life is what fruit-filled living is all about... and it can only happen when we work with the Holy Spirit and let Him grow His fruit in us!