

The Black Wall Street Inspiration Hour of Power
Radio Host: Minister Sheree
Email: ministersherree@theoriginalblackwallstreet.com
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Episode #1002—The Fruit of Love

Recap—Last week we began the series with “What is the Fruit of the Spirit” and discussed how Christians have an identity problem; meaning are we displaying the fruit of being Christ like?...

We are entitled to be fruit inspectors...

Opening—Love is an elusive concept; it means different things to different people; often shaped by gender and culture. To some love is:

- A. Security (financial)
- B. Emotional Safety (venerable)
- C. Validation

There are 4 Greek words for love:

- A. Eros—erotic (sexual desire, passion, lust)
- B. Storge—affection
- C. Phileo—friendship (Philadelphia—City of Brotherly Love—denotes attachment with another person)
- D. Agape—used more than 100 times in the New Testament—concern for the well-being of others, even your enemies (Matt 5:43-44)—the highest order of love

What comes to mind when we think about love? Most times we use words to define a feeling...

The love we are going to discuss today is Agape Love.

A. Agape Love

1. This love is Godly Love
2. Jesus said, *"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends"—John 15:13*

In this context He was walking about his disciples (his friends); he also died for the ungodly. ⁶ *For when we were still without strength, ^[d]in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* ⁷ *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.* ⁸ *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.—Romans 5:6-8*

3. Jesus' sacrifice on the Christ was the ultimate definition/display of love...
4. Jesus died for ALL (the drug dealer, the pimp, the whoremonger, the addict, the person in prison, the liar, the cheater, the gossip, the person addicted to pornography, the gambler, the fornicator, the adulterer, the alcoholic, the pill addict, the proud, the homeless...)
 - I. Christians DO NOT have a monopoly on God
 - II. Some think I can't be saved... (Give him your life—*Matt 11:28—Come to me, all of you who are struggling and burdened, and I will give you rest*)
5. Jesus showed how important this love is by giving us what he called the two greatest commands found in Matt 22:37-39:
 - I. *To love God with our whole mind, soul, and heart*
 - II. *To love our neighbor as ourselves*

These 2 commandments cover of all of the others...

Many of us have a misunderstanding of this concept because we still hold on to hatred, dislike, envy, in our heart for our fellow brothers and sisters...

B. Love is a Decision

1. We have decisions set before us every day... (*Remember: Lamentations 3:22-23 (KJV)-- "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness".*)
2. You can decide to let those things go that don't please God or not... (If God gives us new mercies, shouldn't we do the same?)
3. Love causes us to do what is right (no matter the thoughts—we can't use the excuse "The devil made me do it")
4. The Bible says that there is one sure way that you know that someone is HIS disciple—by LOVING ONE ANOTHER (a new command)—this how we, who call ourselves Christian, demonstrate sacrificial love for one another
5. How do you KNOW someone loves you? (Willing to sacrifice) ...
 - A. Extends beyond money (time, sleep, effort, etc.)

C. What are the expectations? What is the "Fruit of Love"?

1. Love is not love until it is on display.
2. Selflessness and deference (denying ourselves for the good of others). *Philippians 2:3-4 instructs us to "do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."* *Romans 12:10 urges Christians to "be devoted to one another in love" and to "honor one another above [them]selves."*

The Christian lifestyle does not nurture self-aggrandizement (promoting yourself) but centers on humility and self-denial.

3. We are called to follow the commands of God

A. Abraham (found in the Book of Genesis)—was called on by God to test his faith in love towards him

- I. He commanded him to take his promised son Isaac to a mountain to sacrifice him as a burnt offering (but Abraham didn't know this in the beginning...)
- II. Abraham obeys (*John 14:15—God said if you love me keep my commandments*)
- III. Abraham lays his son on the alter that he has built and drew back his sword/knife to kill his son, Isaac, and angel of the Lord intervened, called out from heaven to stop him
- IV. Abraham proved deep respect and obedience to God
- V. God provided a ram instead

D. **How can we attain Love for all?**

1. How accomplished? (remaining connected to Jesus the Christ; the true vine)—A plant will not grow back from only the stem, if there are no roots... you cannot love people on your own accord
2. Jesus the Christ came and displayed the fruit of love in how He lived his life here on this earth
 - a. Demonstrating love and compassion (miracles)
 - b. Endured the criticism and lies
3. Loving the unlovely... (we pray Lord change them instead pray Lord change us)
4. We rise above ourselves and seek “The Most Excellent Way”, as Paul stated in *1 Corinthians 12:31*:
 - A. loving our enemies
 - B. walking the extra mile
 - C. turning the other cheek
 - D. going out of your way

E. **Love Beyond Reason—Love on Display**

1. *1 Corinthians 13—Agape Love—Love at its greatest!*

Love is more valuable than speaking in tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, or sacrifice.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body [a]to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not [b]puffed up;

5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, [c]thinks no evil;

6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

A. What are the definitions of Love according to scripture:

1. Patient
2. Kind
3. Generous
4. Humble
5. Courteous
6. Unselfish
7. Good Tempered
8. Guileless

9. Sincere

10. Bears, Believes, Hopes and Endures all things

11. Never fails

Conclusion

Love is a way of Life! Don't just say it, display it! We should be displaying love on a daily basis. LOVE IS NOT LOVE, IF IT IS NOT ON DISPLAY!!!