

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT DEVOTIONAL

LOVE



BP CHURCH

“But the **fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22–23, ESV)



Love (Agape): Unconditional, self-sacrificing love. It is the highest form of love and is often used to describe God's love for humanity.

Joy (Chara): Deep-seated gladness, delight, or rejoicing, often independent of circumstances.

Peace (Eirene): A state of tranquility, quietness, and freedom from disturbance. It can also refer to harmony in relationships.

Forbearance (Makrothymia): Patience, longsuffering, or endurance in the face of provocation or adversity.

Kindness (Chrestotes): Goodness, generosity, moral integrity, and benevolence in one's character.

Goodness (Agathosune): Moral excellence, uprightness, and kindness in actions and behavior.

Faithfulness (Pistis): Fidelity, loyalty, and reliability in keeping one's promises and commitments.

Gentleness (Praytes): Meekness, humility, and a mild or gentle disposition.

Self-Control (Enkrateia): The ability to exercise restraint over one's impulses, emotions, and desires.

Scriptures

“Let all that you do be done in love.” (1 Corinthians 16:14, ESV)

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”” (Galatians 5:13–14, ESV)

““For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, ESV)

“Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.” (Romans 13:8, ESV)

“Love is patient and kind;

love does not envy or boast;

it is not arrogant or rude.

It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

Love bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all things.”

(1 Corinthians 13:4–7, ESV)

A Theological Overview

When Jesus was asked to identify the most important commandment, He responded with “love God” and “love people” (Matt 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–31). Paul reiterates this idea in Rom 13:8–10 and Gal 5:14, where he argues that love (*agapē*) is the sum of the law, and that loving your neighbor covers all the other commandments of the law. Love is therefore the defining theme of the Bible—all of its commandments are summed up by the two commands to love God and to love others (Mark 12:28–31), and God Himself is defined by love (1 John 4:8, 16).

In the Old Testament, God demonstrates His unconditional love for Israel by choosing them on the basis of His love (אהבה, *’ahāvā*) rather than according to their prominence or size (Deut 4:37–38, 7:7–8). Further, God rescued Israel from Egypt, brought them through the wilderness, and gave them the promised land, even though they were stiff-necked, disobedient, and unfaithful. Throughout the Old Testament, God’s love preserves His covenant with Israel despite its idolatry and rejection of His reign.

In the New Testament, God’s love is fully revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which made salvation possible for all humanity (John 3:16; Rom 5:7–8; Eph 2:4–5). Those who embrace God’s loving gift of salvation are called to reciprocate God’s love with their entire being (Matt 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–34; compare Deut 6:5) and to extend sacrificial love to neighbor and enemy alike (e.g., Luke 6:27–36; John 15:12–14; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8; 1 John 3:16). Moreover, Paul regards God’s unconditional love as the basis for spreading the gospel of God’s sacrificial love to the entire world (2 Cor 5:14).

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(ROMANS 13:8, ESV)**

LOVE

Day 1: We Love Because He First Loved Us

READ: “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (1 John 4:7–8, ESV)

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13, ESV)

“We love because he first loved us.” (1 John 4:19, ESV)

THINK: 1 John 4:7-21 gives us a beautiful description that God is love. It is not that He does loving things, but that He is love and those who know Him, also know and practice this love. When we were in our messed-up and not-yet-saved condition, we could not see the truth (hard to believe) and we were pretty self-centered (not great at loving). Only by what Christ has done for us on the cross can we start to love the way we were meant to. “But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8, ESV). How Christ loved us is the way we should seek to love others.

DO: Spend time in prayer and reflection, seeking a deeper understanding of God’s love for you. In the columns below, consider how God has demonstrated His love for you, and how you can love others as a result of what you have received.

How has God loved me?

My response of that love to others is...

"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

Day 2: Giving Love With No Strings Attached


READ: “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” **(Luke 6:35–36, ESV)**

THINK: Because Jesus expects His followers to stand out, He simply says they should love their enemies, do good to them, and lend to them. In order to be distinct from the rest of the world, God's people should carry out these acts without expecting anything in return. If we do this, our lives will reflect God's own attitude of being kind and merciful. It's not that we do these things to become God's people; but rather, we do these loving acts because we already are God's people. Since God is kind even to the ungrateful and wicked, so should His followers also be.

DO: Identify someone in your life whom you may see as an adversary or someone difficult to love. Take intentional steps to show kindness toward that person, even if it's a simple or small act. By buying a cup of coffee, speaking a kind word, or simply lending a listening ear, these can all be examples of ways we can show love and mercy as Jesus called His followers to do. When we do these things, we may be surprised how over time, enemies can become friends.

“You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.”

- Amy Carmichael



**"ANYONE WHO DOES NOT LOVE DOES NOT KNOW
GOD, BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE."**

(1 JOHN 4:8)

Day 3: Show The World How It's Done

READ: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
(John 13:34–35, ESV)

THINK: Loving others was not a new concept to Christ’s followers, but loving others the way He did was. Jesus washed their feet (John 13:12-15); He told them to forgive others (Matthew 18:21-22), to love their enemies, and to even turn the other cheek to those who took a swing at them (Matthew 5). Christ, who is the epitome of love, demonstrated those things to us so that we would practice them on others. Consequently, our love for one another now serves as a witness to those outside the faith community. As we express love, encouragement, and generosity to other believers, it shows that a relationship with God can change our relationships with others in real and tangible ways.

DO: Circle the ‘One Anothers’ that you find most difficult to do and consider why you find it hard to practice. Make it an issue of prayer.

Be at peace with each other	Mark 9:50
Love one another	John 13:34a
Be devoted to one another in brotherly love	Rom. 12:10
Stop passing judgment on one another.....	Rom. 14:13
Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you	Rom. 15:7
Instruct one another	Rom. 15:14
When you come together to eat, wait for each other	1 Cor. 11:33
Carry each other's burdens	Gal. 6:2
Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other	Eph. 4:32
Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ	Eph. 5:21
In humility consider others better than yourselves.....	Phil. 2:3
Encourage one another and build each other up	1 Thes. 5:11
Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other.....	James 5:16
Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling	1 Peter 4:9
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others	1 Peter 4:10

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”




— Martin Luther King Jr.

Day 4: Love In Action

READ: “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” **(Romans 8:38–39, ESV)**

THINK: Humanity possesses the ability to express relationships through sacrifice, commitment, and love, yet it's equally true that we can sometimes approach our interactions with a transactional, cold, and conditional mindset. It is not so with God since God is love. Paul's message is clear and powerful: once you've received Christ's salvation, nothing can separate you from His love. Neither spiritual opposition, future calamities, or even death itself could displace one ounce of God's love for His people. In the face of life's challenges, conflicts, and disappointments, God's love for you remains a steadfast truth. Take courage that He is for you and not against you (Romans 8:31). As we strive to cultivate the fruit of love, let us remember that our love for others is not optional and we should remove anything that would seek to separate us from those we are called to love.

DO: Send a quick text to three people this week and encourage someone who is going through a difficult time. Express your love and support, reminding them of God's love. Pray for the strength to love others with a love that perseveres through all circumstances.

	Name	Sent
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

“The only thing we never get enough of is love, and the only thing we never give enough of is love.”

- Henry Miller

Day 5: Pride ≠ Love

READ: “If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.”

(1 Corinthians 13:1–3, ESV)

THINK: The key thought in this passage is that love makes the believers’ actions and gifts useful. We all have different gifts and must be empowered to use those gifts out of a deep and abiding love for God. Being sacrificial, very knowledgeable, or able to speak prophetically are all wonderful things, but all must be exercised in love. The original sin in the garden was pride, and there may be many activities that can cause us to be prideful but serving God, our sacrifice to God, or our ministry to others should never be done in prideful ways. Apart from the Lord, we can do nothing (John 15:5), and when we minister from that vantage point, using our gifts in love, wonderful things can happen.

DO: Read the passage that follows from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and take note of how love is described. Circle the emoji that best describes you and how you love. Are you weak in that area, ok, or doing great? Consider ways you can grow in those weaker areas.



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love does not envy or boast;



it is not arrogant or rude.



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it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.



Love bears all things,



believes all things,



hopes all things,



endures all things.”

“God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way.
He wants you to be just like Jesus.”

