

## Jesus and the Fruit of the Spirit

Ponder: Loving as Jesus loved

Scripture: “And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling aroma” (Ephesians 5:2, NKJV).

Jesus perfectly manifested every aspect of the fruit of the Spirit. For example, the first characteristic of the fruit of the Spirit is love (Galatians 5:22), as opposed to hatred, which is a work of the flesh (v. 20).

Jesus demonstrated love in the ultimate. One obvious quality of His love would be its sacrificial nature. Jesus Himself said, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13). Paul wrote of “the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). In some of the opening words of the Revelation, John praised “Him Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (1:5).

Fortunately for us, Jesus’ love is not only sacrificial, but enduring. He didn’t stop loving us once He had made the atonement for our sins. He continues to love us in good times and bad. Paul marveled at the enduring, constant love of Christ as he asked, “Who shall separate us from the love Christ?” (Romans 8:35). His answer, in short, was that nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (v. 39).

The sacrificial, enduring love of Jesus comprises a wonderful example for us. We are to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit just as He did. So, as members of Christ’s body, let us love as He loved! Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34). Sacrificial love should characterize us as it did Him.

And our love should be enduring, even as His was. Maybe you have heard of “If” love, “Because” love, and “Anyway” love. In the first case, I love you “If” you compliment me, agree with me, and let me have my way. Ugh! That’s not love, it’s being self-absorbed!

In the next case, I love you “Because” you’re attractive, talented, and rich. Rather shallow, did you say?

To be like Jesus, we would say, “Regardless of any of those things, I love you ‘Anyway!’”

Let’s love like Jesus!

Song: “I Stand Amazed”

Prayer: “Loving Father, we do, indeed, stand amazed at the love of Jesus. Help us, we pray, to love as He loved. In His name, Amen.

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