

LOVE

Love is an emotion of deep affection, care, and concern. It is an unconditional giving of self to others regardless of their condition or circumstances.

As you learned in your study of spiritual gifts, love is the key to operation of all spiritual gifts. It is also the quality from which all spiritual fruit develops. This is revealed when you compare the passage on the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians to the "love passage" in I Corinthians 13:

I Corinthians 13:1-7

Galatians 5:22-23

Does not seek her own,
is not selfish or self-centered.

Love

Love does not rejoice in iniquity
but rather rejoices in the truth.

Joy

Love is not easily provoked, but
is serene and stable.

Peace

Love suffers long, perseveres,
is patient.

Longsuffering

Love is merciful, thoughtful,
and concerned; it envies not.

Kind [Gentleness]

Love is great, gracious, and
generous; it is kind and good.

Goodness

Love thinks no evil, but has
faith in God and others.

Faithfulness

Love is humble and gentle,
does not vaunt itself.

Meekness

Love is disciplined and
controlled, does not behave
itself unbecomingly.

Temperance

Faith, which is both a gift and fruit of the Spirit, works by love:

...but faith which worketh by love. (Galatians 5:6)

The spiritual fruit of love is not love as it is often depicted by the world. It is a love that is "unfeigned". This means it is a holy love. Unfeigned love is the type of love you are to show to others:

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. (I Peter 1:22)

You are to love God:

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. (Mark 12:30)

(See also I John 2:5,15; 3:11-17; 4:7-20; 5:2; II John 1:5-6; Deuteronomy 6:5; Luke 10:27)

You are to love your enemies:

**But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you...
And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same...
But love ye your enemies, and do good.... (Luke 6:27,32,35)**

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matthew 5:43-44)

You are to love your neighbors as much as you love yourself:

...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Matthew 19:19)

Jesus wants you to love others as much as He loved you:

**A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. (John 13:34)
As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love...
This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you.
(John 15:9,12)**

**And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.
(John 17:26)**

It is by our love for one another that we will be recognized as Christians:

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:35)

If you do not love other believers God's love is not in you:

**He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.
He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. (I John 2:9-10)**

(This is a very important truth. Study it further in John 13:34; 14:15,21,23,31; 15:9-19; 17:26; 21:15-17).
Your love is to abound [to increase]:

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment. (Philippians 1:9)

And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men...(I Thessalonians 3:12)

You are to be rooted and grounded in love:

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height; And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:17-19)

You are to "forbear" or relate to others in love:

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. (Ephesians 4:2)

You are to keep yourself in love:

Keep yourselves in the love of God... (Jude 21)

...follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. (I Timothy 6:11)

Your work for the Lord is to be a labor of love:

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love... (I Thessalonians 1:3)

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. (Hebrews 6:10)

As we near the end of time here on earth, the love of many will not endure. It will "wax cold". This means people will become uncaring:

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. (Matthew 24:12)

But we are given the assurance that nothing can separate us from God's love:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35,38-39)

David wrote much about love. See Psalms 31:23; 18:1; 40:16; 97:10; 116:1; 119:97, 113, 119, 127, 132, 159, 163, 105, 167; 122:6; 145:20. Study the book of I John. One of the major themes of this book is love.