



FRUIT(FULL) Love

#npfruitfull

Week 2
2 of 10

April 18, 2021

Bottom Line: The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Icebreaker: If your growing-up family had one rule, “The only thing that counts,” what would it have been? Or, what is your today’s family “only thing that counts”?

Key Verse: Jesus: *“So I give you now a new commandment: Love each other just as much as I have loved you. For when you demonstrate the same love I have for you by loving one another, everyone will know that you’re my true followers.”* John 13:34-35 TPT

Galatians 5:22-23 describes for us the fruit of the Spirit. A believer’s life SHOULD be producing these things. There are no exceptions. You can’t say you’re something without producing the fruit to back it up. Paul uses this word, “fruit” intentionally. Why? because fruit is “grown,” not “created.” It is developed, not made. It is cultivated in our lives. Paul kicks off this list with the word “LOVE” because every other thing is built upon this attribute. “Agape” love is the love that is 100% selfless. No conditions and no strings attached. This is the love Jesus is referring to when He says: *“Love one another just as much as I have loved you.”*

Jesus made it clear how this love plays out in real life. **Love is a COMMAND**, not a suggestion. It means that we should make it our mission to understand every aspect of what it means to love. It should be the focus of our daily lives. **Love is a CHOICE.** Reflecting Jesus, Paul tells us, *“Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it—because it does”* (1 Corinthians 14:1 MSG). We can’t command feelings, but we can make choices. Love is a choice, not a feeling. It is controllable. **Love is an ACTION.** Once again, it is not a feeling. It is something we do. **Love is a COMMITMENT.** Sometimes love is difficult. At times you will need to choose to persevere. You will have to do the opposite of what you feel. You will commit to love like Jesus has loved you, regardless.

So how do I love? **1) RECEIVE GOD’S LOVE.** Ask God to help you experience and feel His love for you. **2) FORGIVE IN LOVE.** You will never outgrow the need to forgive. It will always be essential. **3) THINK IN LOVE.** Your constant focus must be, “What does love require of me?” **4) ACT IN LOVE.** Without acting in love, nothing you say or do will matter in the here and now or in eternity. What does love require of me?

THINK IT OVER >>>

What was the most significant part of Sunday’s message to you?

A believer’s life SHOULD be producing the fruit of the Spirit. There are no exceptions. You can’t say you are something without producing the fruit to back it up. Discuss how this applies to you.

How do you see love being the foundation of all the other fruits? Pick one and show how that works.

Some people believe agape love (unconditional and no strings attached) is impossible and unreasonable for humans. Discuss.

Love is a command—something we should make every effort to do. How do you “make every effort” to understand what love requires of you.

If love were a feeling, we would not be commanded to do it, because you can’t make yourself feel. You CAN make yourself choose. How do you choose love when your feelings aren’t cooperating?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

Have you done anything yet today because love required it of you? How did it feel to do it?

What does it feel like to be the recipient of words of love without the accompanying action?

How do you muster up the grit of committed love when it is exactly the opposite of what you feel?

Have you struggled receiving and experiencing God’s love? Why do you think so? What has helped you?

How does forgiveness figure in loving like Jesus? How about your thinking patterns?

How do actions show your level of love?

If a person can’t get love, they will strive for attention. Do you see that in any of your relationships? What does love require of you?

NEXT STEPS

1. Pray for a daily experience and acceptance of God's love for you.
2. Spend time daily thinking over your actions, relationships, places you will go, and what love will likely require of you in each situation.
3. Ask Jesus to keep His agape love foremost in your thoughts and choices each day.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: 1 Cor. 1:1-3

Tuesday: John 13:34-35

Wednesday: Matthew 26:39

Thursday: Eph. 3:18-19; Rom. 8:35, 37-39

Friday: 1 Cor. 13:4-8a

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)