

## Christ Inspired Love

Galatians 5:6, 22-25

### Preface

At the close of an important speech to Congress on January 6, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt shared his vision of the kind of world he wanted to see after the war was over. He envisioned four basic freedoms enjoyed by all people: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

In America we enjoy many freedoms but one freedom we still lack is freedom from ourselves; freedom from the tyranny of our own sinful nature.

Legislation and laws can't change man's basic sinful nature. It is not the law on the *outside*, but only love on the *inside* that can truly change a person.

We need another power within to be truly free, and that power comes from the Holy Spirit of God through Jesus Christ.

### Scripture Text

<sup>6</sup> *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*

<sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Galatians 5:6, 19-25 NIV*

### Introduction

**(show video, But Lord – Lady will not forgive friend)**

Why does our pride stand in the way of saying “I am sorry” or “I forgive you”? What great controlling power in us causes us to stubbornly refuse to reach out in forgiveness?

It isn't what is in us but what is not in us. What we are lacking is the fruit of the Spirit (Agape Love).

What is the “fruit of the Spirit?” **The fruit of the Spirit is the supernatural outcome of being filled with the Spirit of God.** It is the living proof that the Spirit of God dwells in us.

The fruit of the Spirit is the living proof that we are a born again Christian.

God's word says the world will know us as Christians by our love.

When Christ is alive in our hearts and being nourished by our prayers and study, His love inspires us to behave differently than the natural man.

### 1. Christ inspired love will resolves conflicts

Agape love takes the place of all the laws God ever gave. “*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*” solves every problem in human relations.

If you love people (because you love Christ), you will not steal from them, lie about them, envy them, or try in any way to hurt them. Love in the heart is God's substitute for laws of life.

<sup>34</sup> “*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*” John 13:34-35

For Christians, there is no place for selfishness, unconcern or hard heartedness. We are called to love. In fact, our ability to love others, is a direct reflection of the depth of our faith.

Whether it is a co-worker or a neighbor we should love others. What does this mean from a practical standpoint? It means:

- We never take joy in seeing others fall.
- We never desire to hurt others.
- We don't put others down or talk behind their back.
- We take the initiative to forgive and have fellowship.
- We are concerned about lifting others up.

Christ inspired agape love is unconditional love through which God loves us.

Do others see Christ in you because of this type of love?

Do you have conflicts with others in the work place, at church or elsewhere? Christ inspired love can resolve those conflicts.

## 2. Christ inspired love makes strong families

Hardly a week goes by that I do not find myself speaking with someone about family problems. It burdens me to see how much families today are struggling.

Some family problems involve teenagers and rebellious attitudes. Other family problems are centered around financial burdens or the husband and wife's inability to get along. Still others are feuds between siblings items of inheritance.

Christ inspired love is the solution to our family struggles. If we will just learn to love others more than we love ourselves.

What does this mean from a practical perspective? Just how far does this "love others above yourself" go?

When we put this into practice, we become more concerned about the happiness and welfare of our spouse than we are our own. Imagine the husband consumed with wanting to please the wife and the wife consumed with wanting to please the husband. What is the result? The result is two people making the rest of us sick watching them dote over each other.

Illus: I was challenged by this principal last night at 8:00 PM when my wife looked at me and said, "I need to go to Wal-Mart." I knew she wanted me to go with her. My entire body was screaming, "I ain't going!" But then I remembered this principal and went. But I sure rushed her through that place.

Illus: Not long ago Pam wanted to go to Belks to look at dresses. I had my excuses to stay home but I knew she really wanted me to go with her. I mentioned that I needed to go to Home Depot so she said let's go together. We went to Belks where she took inventory of the entire dress department only to pick out 6 dresses to try on. I sat patiently in the metal folding chair they so generously had outside the fitting room. When she came out she said she didn't like any of them. From there we went to the Bath & Body Works store where we purchased some fufu soap to go in the bathrooms. Then it was on to Dillard's where she tried on about 8 dresses and did purchase two. Finally, we went to Home Depot where I purchased a broom, some bug spray and wasp spray. I didn't have to check out every single thing in the department. I didn't try on anything and she didn't have to wait in a little metal chair for me. Later I started thinking about the entire experience. Initially I reasoned how I had gotten the raw end of the entire trip. Then when we got home, she started looking at her dresses and putting out her new soap. I thought about how much she enjoyed that little shopping trip. I realized what joy my little sacrifice had brought her. I was reminded that this is the way love is supposed to work.

We should love seeing others receive joy more than we desire joy for ourselves. Paul speaks of this when he tells women to love, honor and respect their husbands. He then tells men to love their wives as Christ loved the church.

Christ inspired love will not have you hung up on the words "submit" and "honor."

### 3. Christ inspired love makes life complete

With love in our heart, life is exciting and fulfilling. Without it, everything is black and white.

Without love, everything and everybody in life is for us or against us. We find ourselves constantly sizing everyone up.

Galatians 5:13 says, "By love serve one another".

As believers, our spiritual life is not complete until we flesh out our faith with love towards others. This means showing love to those we do not naturally desire to love. This means showing love towards others when there is nothing in it for us.

**Jesus wants us to love one another with a kind of love that convicts the world.** Our love for one another should be so profound that the world longs to know our Savior.

Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?" Jesus is asking each of us, "Do you love me?" If you do, you will love one another.

James reminds us in chapter two that faith is not dead. Faith is alive and faith produces works.

Our text says, *"The only thing that really counts is faith expressing itself through love."*

Love is the first quality of the fruit of the spirit. Love is what grows from our spiritual relationship with God. Our ability to love others is the first indicator of true relationship with God.

As Christians we are not complete until we bear the fruit of the Spirit. We are to bear the fruit that has the qualities of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

We don't get to pick one of these attributes and reject the others. If we are in the right spirit with God, we are to possess a fruit, a uniqueness that reflects all of these, the greatest of which is love.

### Conclusion

Illus: I am fascinated by machinery. I like watching that show on television "How's it's made." I would love to own a factory where we make something. I have a friend who owns a broom and bush factory. It is fascinating to watch those machines spit out brushes and brooms.

But machines cannot make fruit. Fruit is a living thing that must grow from a living organism. It cannot be manufactured.

The fruit of the Spirit cannot be imitated. You cannot pretend to love. You must be inspired by faith in Jesus Christ.

Illus: Billboard says, "Got Milk?" Got Love? Got Jesus? No Jesus, no love.