

Week of June 7, 2009

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Monday

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

To measure Spirit filled love you can not make a comparison between your nature and that of another. You must compare your nature of love with that of God. "For God so loved the world..." is a standard that will not be met by any human, no matter the extent of our sacrifice. There will always be room for growth in our walk of love. Such is not a point of discouragement but of challenge. Ask God to show you a place to grow in love today, not in the feelings of love but in action, not in comparison to another but in a reflection of God's love.

Tuesday

Gal. 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love...

Three different New Testament words are translated by the English 'love'. One describes the love you share with friends. We describe it as 'brotherly love'. One describes the love of romance and passion. Such is the love God created for husbands and wives. But the word used in Galatians 5:22 is the highest form of love. It is 'agape' love. It is love as God loves. A life submitted to God can transcend the mere love of human nature and begin to reflect the love of God. There is no selfishness in such love. This love grows as a fruit of God's presence in our lives and from our yielding to His control.

Wednesday

1Cor. 13:4-7 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Spirit filled love is not a feeling, so it is not demonstrated by how you feel toward someone. Spirit filled love is not dependent upon another's worth, so it is not limited to those who are worthy. Spirit filled love is demonstrated by your acts, deeds, and words as they are addressed to, about, or carried out on behalf of another. One cannot claim to love and then act or speak in a way that is harmful to another. Love does not carry tales or listen to them. Love does not get even or settle scores. Love is patient with faults and encouraging to another's successes.

Thursday

1John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

How can I love as God loves? How can I love the world? You can love another by sharing the love of God, the love God demonstrated at the cross, with those around you. Sharing the message of Jesus is the most loving thing anyone can do for another. To witness of God's plan of salvation in Christ is to share the promise of heaven, healing, and eternal life. To do any less is not loving. Pray that God will allow you to love someone by sharing His message of grace with them today.

Friday

Gal. 5:19-20 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: ...enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions...

Ouch! Sometimes we walk much further in the flesh than in the Spirit. Sometimes the fruit of our garden is far more damaging than productive. God is not honored or pleased when our conversation or life is characterized by deeds such as these. We are not happy nor can we be content when we are bearing the fruits of the flesh. Even our good fruit is rotted by too close association with spoiled fruit of the flesh. Cut off such fruit and cast it away. Let the Spirit prune it from your life. Those who belong to Jesus have crucified the flesh. (Gal. 5:24)