



I NEED MORE...

Series Introduction

As believers, we are not immune from the world around us. Just open your phone, take a walk down the aisle of Target, or catch up on your favorite show on TV, and the temptations of the world will jump out to grab your attention.

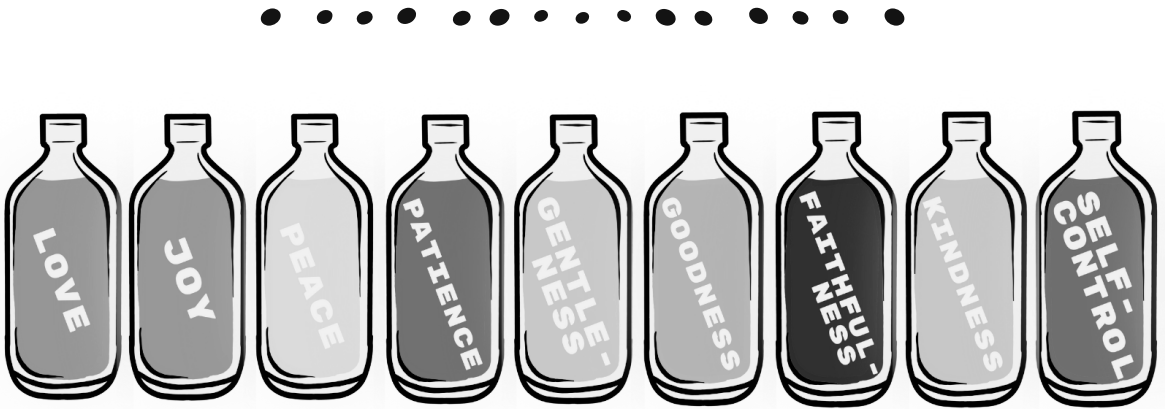
No matter how spiritual you think you are, we struggle with the selfish desires and temptations that surround us.

But the Good News is that we have a way to conquer the flesh and its desires, leading to spiritual maturity. Maturity comes through the power of the Holy Spirit, as we abide in Christ, and show others the same love God has shown to us.

Purpose of this study

- Learn the difference between being “spiritual” and being a mature disciple of Christ.
- Be challenged to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to form us into His likeness.

Over the next nine weeks, we’ll unpack how biblical love is foundational to the different “flavors” of the fruit of the Spirit.





BIG IDEA

In a time where the word “love” can be used in the same way to describe love for a spouse, a child, or pizza, it’s no wonder that we have a difficult time understanding and living out biblical love, the type of love found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (love God with all your heart, soul, and might). Today, we’ll be exploring the foundational flavor of love.

One of the first things we need to understand about love is that it is an attribute of God. We can't know everything about God; however, He reveals Himself to us in multiple ways. In His word, through nature, and in us, as we are made in His image. These are called communicable attributes.



OPENING DISCUSSION

Read: 1 John 4:8, John 17:24

1 John 4:8 tells us that God is love. This attribute has been a part of God’s character before the beginning of time. (John 17:24) We also read that God’s love is reciprocal. Meaning that He loves us, and as a result, we are able to love Him and others in return. His love is unchanging, never-ending, sovereign (because He is in control), and it is holy. And because God’s love is reciprocal, we are called to reflect it in our relationships with God and others.

1. How do these verses help you understand that love is not just something God does, but who He is?

What does God want me to do?

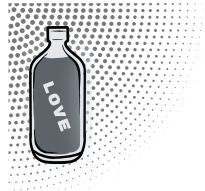
What difference does it make in your relationship with Him to know His love is eternal and self-giving?

God’s love is reciprocal, unchanging, never-ending, sovereign, and holy.

2. Which of these aspects is most challenging for you to reflect in your relationships with God and others?

What does God want me to do?

What practical step could you take this week to reflect that aspect of God’s love more clearly?



READ

1 Corinthians 13:1-13



APPLICATION

In this chapter, we see that those who are mature believers are marked by their love for God and their love for others. Paul's words make sense when we use them in the context of how we are loved by God. It's easy to see that this type of love is what makes us stand out as Christians, and without it, we are merely spiritual or, at worst, simply religious.

1. After reading 1 Corinthians 13, what two attributes of love is the Holy Spirit urging you to grow or become more mature in? (Hint: reread this passage and swap the word love with your name).

2. What is one thing you can do this week to make progress towards growth in that area?

We know that being spiritual doesn't necessarily equate to a solid biblical foundation. The ultimate expression of biblical maturity is saying no to me for the sake of we, just like Jesus did. Take a few moments to answer the following questions as a group.

1. How would you define spirituality, and how is that different from spiritual maturity?

2. How have you moved from a me-centeredness to a we-centered maturity?

3. Of the following expressions of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, which one would you say best describes you? Would your spouse or closest friend agree?

LISTENING TO THE LORD

Take some time to pray and seek the Spirit's guidance on what it would look like if you were to continue maturing in love. Be prepared to discuss and share what God has revealed to you in this area. Each week, we will begin our time by sharing what God wants us to know and how we have applied that to our walk.

1. What does God want me to know about Love?

2. What does God want me to do about it?

