

“The Fruit of the Spirit is Love ...”
Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJ)

Axe – “wise men say only fools rush in but I can’t help falling in love with you” a waiter dropping dishes, another man jumping off a motorcycle, a nurse letting her patient’s wheel chair roll into the street - cars crashing, things burning, total chaos is happening but the people “in love” because of Axe cologne or perfume do not notice any of it!

I. Love is seen, even in the animal kingdom –

1. Even our Lord Jesus acknowledges the protective nature of hens toward their young –

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37 NKJ)

2. Job 39:13-17 contrasts the stork to an ostrich calling the stork “kindly stork” in Hebrew the word for stork literally means “kindly mother.”

"The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, But are her wings and pinions like the kindly stork's? ¹⁴ For she leaves her eggs on the ground, And warms them in the dust; ¹⁵ She forgets that a foot may crush them, Or that a wild beast may break them. ¹⁶ She treats her young harshly, as though they were not hers; Her labor is in vain, without concern, ¹⁷ Because God deprived her of wisdom, And did not endow her with understanding. (Job 39:13-17 NKJ)

Both the male and female stork share in child rearing duties, feeding, cleaning up after, training, and guarding the little birds –

So much do STORK parents LOVE their little ones, it has been told that if a nest CAUGHT FIRE, both stork parents will stay and die in the fire with the little storks if the little ones are not able to fly away!

Similarly, older storks are also cared for by their young!

Today I watched a robin in our front yard, I thought by now that they should all be gone.

With winter 'round the corner Snow on its way surely something must be wrong.

Then in that old oak tree I finally saw her Where she sat gazing down upon her mate

And the song that she was singing Seemed to say "I'll be right here" "I'd like to go, but your love's made me stay."

He's got a broken wing And that's why he can't fly

She just can't leave him there, So she stays by his side

They're just like you and me, Oh you should've heard her sing

They won't give up It's just a broken wing.

I wish we all could learn What they seem to have found

To love our families When trouble comes around

I'll bet that God saw fit To show them unto me

Him on the ground, Her in that tree

Yet, it is not only birds ---

3. *Even alligators protect their young, sing mating / love songs, rub noses, male alligators even make bubbles on their backs to attract the female etc...*

4. *God has programmed these loving instincts into His creatures to encourage their multiplication – and to help them survive*

²² **And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." (Gen 1:22 NKJ)**

II. Love is part of our humanity, as we are created in God's image –

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every

creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ **So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:26-27 NKJ)**

"... for God is love." (1 John 4:8 NKJ)

1. *Jesus Himself acknowledges a kind of "love" even among the ungodly –*
⁴⁶ **"For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"** ⁴⁷ **"And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? (Mat 5:46-47 NKJ)**

2. *It is this "love" that there are so many songs written about – Pat Love, in her book, "The Truth about Love" describes this "love" as developing in four stages:*
- (1) Infatuation / Falling in Love*
 - (2) Post-Rapture*
 - (3) Discovery Stage: Gathering Information, Clarifying Roles; Defining Love & Building Trust*
 - (4) Connection*

Now, I believe she describes the first stages somewhat accurately when she describes certain chemistry happening in our brains causing "a delightfully positive attitude, increased energy, decreased need for sleep, and a loss for appetite."

She says this chemical mix, being "in love" lasts usually six months to a year. Then the "post-rapture" stage starts and it is at this point many marriages fall apart, as people go back to being themselves.

She also says about the first stage, "falling in love" --- "The brain is an incredible creation; it begins working long before your birth and does not stop until you fall in love." Page 28

This agrees with what my atheist friend named Elizabeth said, "Love is irrational." Now, this makes sense, if you believe in evolution, if you believe the chemical mixture bring attraction came about by pure chance.

Yet, if you believe in God, love is much more than a chance chemical reaction in our brains –

3. Ungodly “love” also is impacted by sin and without Christ’s influence degenerates into lust, adultery, idolatry, etc...

Hollywood typically portrays love in this sinful way, The Bridges of Madison County --- a movie that glorifies adultery as true love –

Notice too Pat Love’s discovery stage includes “defining love” implies love is something every individual or couple defines for him / her or their selves ... according to this, God would be optional!

III. Love as a “fruit of the Spirit” –

1. Love as a fruit of the Spirit means that the best “LOVE” does not come naturally to us as sinful human beings –

¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:16-23 NKJ)

- A. A dependence upon God is taught here as well as elsewhere – John 15:5; James 1:17

"I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (John 15:5 NKJ)

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (James 1:17 NKJ)

B. I believe the Spirit / God gave us, created in every man, the capacity for love (He created natural things as well as spiritual - Psalm 104:30)

You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth. (Psalm 104:30 NKJ) Meaning even natural love should be attributed to the Holy Spirit!

He created the chemical mix, the phenylethylamine, the dopamine and the norepinephrine that RESULT in that wonderful feeling of being “in LOVE”

These chemicals make even non-believers:

- **Make a relationship a priority**
- **Make another person’s need a priority**
- **Make us more patient**
- **Make us positive and forgiving**
- **Make us joyful**
- **Help us overcome great obstacles (ain’t no mountain high enough)**
- **Make us show LOVE creatively and constantly**

yet that love which rises above our sin nature is a fruit of the Spirit – Galatians 5:16-17

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. (Galatians 5:16-17 NKJ)

2. Love as from God, means “love” the true and best love, does have a definition, and though wonderful beyond knowledge, it is knowable –

¹⁴ **For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

¹⁵ **from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,** ¹⁶ **that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,** ¹⁷ **that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted**

and grounded in love,¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height--¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:14-19 NKJ)

A. *Love is defined and described - in the Scripture –*

Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NKJ)

These words define and describe love, in terms of who we are and what we do, even in an intentional way --- we can love in a First Corinthians 13 even without the FEELINGS / chemicals

Yet, I believe when we love in the way prescribed in 1 Corinthians 13, we do not fall into the feelings of LOVE --- but we stir those GOOD FEELINGS!

Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law. (Romans 13:10 NKJ)

B. *Direction in regard to the priority of Love is given in Scripture –*

³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."³⁸ "This is *the* first and great commandment."³⁹ "And *the* second *is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (Mat 22:37-40 NKJ)

According to the Bible Love and the 10 Commandments / God's LAW go together!

3. *This Love, which is a fruit of the Spirit, is also the Love of Christ and displays His glory, even to a lost world –*

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.⁶ For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.⁸ But God

demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:5-8 NKJ)

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.³⁵ "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35 NKJ)

IV. Application:

- 1. Love as we are taught about it in Scripture is not irrational, it is not unknowable, it is not something about which every person or every couple can make up their own DEFINITION, but it is defined by Scripture and by God and God gives us direction about it in Scripture.*
- 2. Do not despise "love" wherever you see it, our capacity to love, even non-Christians, love songs, even love in the animal kingdom is a gift of God, He gave us this wonderful capacity, even though sin distorts it –*

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (James 1:17 NKJ)

*This I believe is WHY Love, even our love for each other, is a connecting place to a lost world – **John 13:34-35***

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