**Fruit of the Spirit Study Questions\***

**Love**

Text: 1 John 4:7-16

1. According to verses 7-8, where does love come from?

2. Verses 9-10 say that Christ’s incarnation and death show us God’s love. How do these two events help you to understand God’s love?

3. How does God’s love motivate you to love others (vv. 11-12)?

4. What basis do we have for the assurance of love (vv. 13-16)?

5. Based on your responses to questions 1-4, write a one-sentence description of love. What significance does this kind of love have for you?

6. How have you seen God’s love demonstrated through other Christians?

7. Because God is love, what do we know about those whose lives are full of love (v. 16)?

8. No one has ever seen wind, energy, or electrons. We see only the effects of what they do. Likewise, no one has ever seen the love of God. As you look again at this whole passage, in what ways can you see the effects of God’s love?

9. Think of someone you find it especially hard to feel warm toward, someone you associate with regularly. Why is it difficult for you to love that person?

10. Recognizing that love is not based on feelings, what are some practical ways you can show the fruit of love to that person?

*Ask this loving Jesus to make himself increasingly real to you.*

\*Study questions are from Hazel Offner’s study guide, *Fruit of the Spirit.*

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"Love is patient". Patience is an aspect of the fruit of the Spirit. Ephesians 4:2 says, "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."

"Love is kind." Kindness is another aspect of the fruit of the Spirit.

"It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud." (In this sense, love is related to gentleness, which includes humility.) Jesus Christ is the greatest example of love because he "humbled himself and became obedient to death" (Philippians 2:8).

"It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered." Self-control is another aspect of the fruit of the Spirit. So are kindness, gentleness and peace.

"It keeps no record of wrongs." God blots out our transgressions (Psalms 51:1, 103:12); similarly, we need to forget the wrongs others have done us.

"Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth." "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

"It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." Faithfulness is one of the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit. God's "love endures forever" (Psalms 106:1, 118:1, 130:7, 136; Lamentations 3:22-23). "From everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him" (Psalm 103:17). God's love is unfailing. If we are to be like Him, then our love must endure and not fail. It needs to be always there for those whom we love.

**b. Other Scriptures.**

Love is sincere. "Love must be sincere" (Romans 12:9; see also 2 Corinthians 6:6). Sincere means that there is no pretense, sham or cover-up; "what you see is what you get."

Love builds up. "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8:1). Scripture repeatedly emphasizes the importance of edification, building each other up. "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification" (Romans 14:19); "encourage one another daily" (Hebrews 3:13); "try to excel in gifts that build up the church"

(1Corinthians14:12; see also 1 Corinthians 14:3-4, 26).

Love unites. "My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ in us, the hope

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