

The Fruit of the Spirit: Love

DAY ONE: SUNDAY "THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT"

VERSE OF THE DAY: *Galatians 5:22-23* (say this aloud several times as a family)

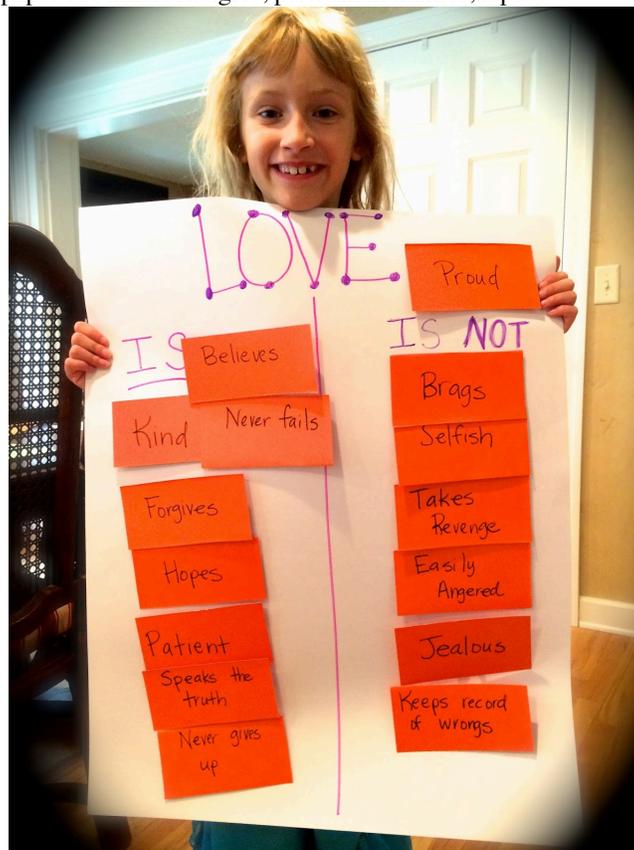
INTRODUCE THE PASSAGE (30 minutes)

- Begin with prayer and then ask questions like, "Who is the Holy Spirit?", "What do you think it means by Fruit of the Spirit?" You can talk about the fact that when you make the decision to follow Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside you. At the time we started this, we had one child who was a believer and the other was getting close to making a decision. It was neat for our younger child to learn that God would live inside her if/when she made that choice. It was also great for our older child to talk about how the Holy Spirit has helped her to produce this fruit.
- Next, read Galatians 5:16-23. If you have a child that is reading, ask him/her to read that passage. If you have younger children and you don't want them to know about "sexual immorality or sensuality" in verse 19 then you can read the other fruit of the flesh. We have a Kindergartener, so I didn't read those words aloud. There was plenty to talk about with "jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, envy" etc.
- Talk about fruit trees and how you can tell what kind of fruit tree it is by the fruit that are on it.
- Have your kids get a sheet of paper and draw what they think the two kinds of trees would look like. This gives them a great visual to compare and contrast. OR you could draw the tree portion and they could put the fruit on it. (The fruit of the flesh will probably be brown or black).
- Pick out a few of the fruit listed for each type of tree--talk about them or describe what they mean. Ask your kids questions, "What is idolatry?" "Why do you think jealousy is a sinful fruit?" Let your kids ask questions too.
- Ask your children what kind of tree they would want to be. (They'll point to the pretty tree they drew with the colorful fruit).
- Pray with your kids, asking God to teach all of you as a family about the Fruit of the Spirit.
- *Another idea: We are using a different fruit for each week we study. For love: strawberries, for joy: bananas, etc. I am making different dishes this week that include strawberries. When you are eating the desserts/snacks that you make with the fruit, talk about the fruit of the Spirit that corresponds. At the end of the study you could make a fruit salad with all 9 fruits to celebrate the end of the unit.*

DAY TWO: MONDAY "WHAT IS LOVE?"

VERSE FOR THE DAY: *Psalms 18:1* (Recite this together as a family first thing in the morning and again throughout the day. Post it somewhere in your kitchen or bathroom mirrors)

ACTIVITY: Posterboard, sheets of paper cut into rectangles, permanent marker, tape



- Before you meet together, grab a large sheet of poster board and write LOVE at the top. Then underneath the title, make two columns: IS and IS NOT. Cut out rectangular sheets of paper and label them with all the descriptions listed in 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7. For instance, on one rectangle you would write "patient" on another you would write "kind", and another "boastful", etc. Put a little masking tape on the back. As you can see, mine was not fancy at all, but the kids LOVED this activity.
- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 as a family.
- Have your kids take turns reading a rectangle and putting it in the appropriate column. If a child selects "easily angered" he/she would put it under the IS NOT column, and so forth. Do this until all the rectangles are on the board.
- Talk about each characteristic and be real and open about the aspects with which each family member struggles.
- Close in prayer, with each family member thanking God for His love, and confessing the aspect of Love that is most difficult for him/her. "God please help me to show your love by being more patient with my sister."

DAY THREE: TUESDAY "THE LOVE OF GOD"

VERSE FOR THE DAY: *Psalm 40:16*

Songs to sing together: "One thing remains", "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go"

ACTIVITY: Sheets of paper cut into hearts, permanent marker.



- Before you meet as a family cut out hearts from any kind of paper and label each with a verse: John 3:16, John 13:34, Romans 5:8, Romans 8:35-39, 1 John 3:1
- Hide the hearts around the house.
- When you gather, have your kids go on a scavenger hunt to find the hearts.
- They will LOVE this step. If you have teens, let them hide the hearts.
- When they come back, have your older children read the verse listed from their own Bible. For younger children, you can read the verse on their heart.
- Ask the questions:
 - Where does love come from?
 - Who does love begin with?
 - Do these verses talk about feelings or actions? (A huge point that will be made this week is that love is more than words or feelings---true love requires action!)
 - What are God's actions that show us he loves us?
 - Talk about the Gospel--that we don't earn His love and that he loves us even while we are sinners. (Romans 5:8)
 - Talk about other ways God shows His love: providing yummy fruits and vegetables for us, sunshine and rain, providing for all our needs.
 - Emphasize to your kids that God's love NEVER fails. No matter how many times we mess up, He is waiting there for us to turn back to Him. He will never leave or forsake us. His love is unconditional.

DAY FOUR: WEDNESDAY "OUR LOVE FOR GOD"

VERSE OF THE DAY: *Psalm 63:3*

Songs to sing together: "Love the Lord your God" by Lincoln Brewster, "Father I Adore You"

- Just like yesterday, cut out hearts (I made them a little smaller so that the kids could see that God's love for us is much bigger than we could ever love Him).
- Use the following verses: Deuteronomy 6:5, John 14:15 & 14:21-23, 1 Peter 1:8, John 15:9
- Have the kids go through the scavenger hunt again to find the hearts.
- Read the verses from the Bible.
- Ask the questions:
 - What do these verses say about how we show God we love Him?
 - Why do we love God? (this will bring in what you covered yesterday).
 - What are some ways we can show God we love Him each day?
 - Give Him praise and thanks
 - Spend time with Him
 - Obey His Word
 - Obey your parents
 - Talk about Him throughout your day and acknowledge Him

DAY FIVE: THURSDAY "OUR LOVE FOR OTHERS: FAMILY & FRIENDS"

VERSE OF THE DAY: *Psalm 116:1*

Songs to sing together: "Beloved, Let Us Love One Another" (1 John 4:7 & 8)

- If your kids are up for the scavenger hunt again, then repeat the same steps using these verses: 1 John 3:16, John 15:12 & 17, 1 Peter 4:8, 1 John 4:7-8, Matthew 19:19
- If not, then simply sit down as a family, read and discuss the verses
- Today, your family will spend time talking about how each member can show love to each other. I'm substituting the name "Martha"
 - Martha, how does your brother show you love?
 - How do Mommy and Daddy show you love?
 - How can you show love to _____? (family member)
 - Martha, in what ways would you like for Daddy to show you he loves you?
 - Spending time with you
 - Lots of hugs and kisses
 - Speaking Encouraging words over you
 - Helping
 - *Just as an aside, if you have never read The Five Love Languages of Children by Gary Chapman, read it. It is a wonderful source for discovering what speaks love to your child.*
 - Have your kids make a list of these answers to hang in their room. It is a great reminder to them of how they can love other family members.

DAY SIX: FRIDAY "LOVING OUR ENEMIES"

VERSE OF THE DAY: *Psalm 119: 47, 127, 165*

- Begin today with prayer.
- Give each family member a sheet of paper and ask them to write down a list of names of people that they either don't like or with which they have trouble getting along. Younger children who can't write yet can talk about the friends in preschool who get on their nerves, etc.
- Have each family member share why they have difficulty with the names they listed. You may have older kids/teens who don't want to talk about it. That's okay. Just tell them to write the name down--they won't have to tell the rest of the family who it is. But, hopefully every family member will feel comfortable sharing. If moms and dads share openly, the kids usually follow suit.
- Let's see what God's Word says about loving our enemies:
 - Proverbs 10:12 & 15:17
 - Matthew 5:43-46
 - Luke 6:27-36
 - Ephesians 4:32
 - Read the parable of the two debtors Luke 7:40-43
 - As children of God and followers of Christ who have been forgiven much, how should we then treat our enemies?
 - Give some examples from your own life about how God empowered you to love your enemies. Personal testimony goes a long way.
 - Talk about how hard it is to show love to our enemies--be real with your kids.
 - Have your kids write down a plan for what they can do to love their enemies.

- This may open up the topic of bullying in school. Be ready for that conversation and decide as parents how you feel God leading you to guide your child if he/she is bullied.

DAY SEVEN: SATURDAY REVIEW

- As you spend time together at dinner, or at a designated family time, ask your kids:
 - What did you learn about love this week?
 - How did God challenge you?
 - What do you want to do differently?
 - What was your favorite scripture about love?
 - What was your favorite song?

OTHER IDEAS AND RESOURCES:

- I am working on sample PDF files that you can download, print, and use in your own home. Coming soon!
 - Teenagers and older kids may appreciate Francis Chan's *Crazy Love*. You can read portions of this wonderful book to them. The first few chapters really give a picture of just how much God loves us. There are also short video and audio teachings of Chan on his [website](#). These are awesome and your kids will respond to what he has to say.
 - Older kids may also enjoy a more in-depth look at the different kinds of love described in scripture: *eros, phileo, and agape*. Talk about the differences between these three kinds of love and which reflects God.
 - Beth Moore's study [Living Beyond Yourself](#) is another wonderful resource you can use to teach the Fruit of the Spirit.
- I hope that this simple, easy way to teach your children about God's love will help give you ideas! If you have your own ideas, PLEASE share them in the comment portion of this blog!

Things I Love About You...

(Every family member should fill one out for the other family members)

• _____, you show God's love
(Insert name here)
when you _____.

• I see Jesus in you when you
_____.

• I love your _____.

• Your _____
make(s) me smile!

THE TRUTH ABOUT LOVE...

Love began with God.

God is Love.

Love is God's idea.

We need God's help to show true love.

People will know we belong to God
when we show His love.

True love is not a feeling.
Love is action, not just words.

True love is not fueled by the wants of
the other person, it is fueled by the
needs.