

Group Discussion/Devotions = Fruit of the Spirit is Love

Practical Meditation

Reflect on the following Scriptures that speak of who God is, who we are, and how we live a life in Christ.

- 1 John 4:8
- Gen 1:26-27
- John 15:5 in light of 1 John 4:7-9, 12-13, 16

Group Application Questions

1. The meditations above speak of our identity in God's image and the likeness of Christ. Look again at Gal 5:13-15. What we "do" has to come from who we "are" (or the consequence is to be inauthentic). Now re-read Gal 5:22-25. The traits listed really describe the first – love. In what ways is love "manifested" in your life, as the fruit that points to who you are in Christ? Maybe there are certain traits from this Scripture that you identify with, or perhaps you can think of behaviors that you engage in regularly that point to these traits. (This is not meant to be boastful, but rather to recognize where the Spirit is really working in your life and in your heart)
2. Now look at verses 18-21. In what ways can you give examples of how these "sins" are relational offenses? How do they violate the law of love in the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40)? (NOTE: reflect on which of these is the biggest struggle for you personally. Think of how it may effect your relationships)
3. Re-read Romans 5:8. Loving your enemies is hard, and may mean different steps of action at different times. In particular, how is God calling you right now to love someone who may be an "enemy" for you? How will you show them the love of God, knowing the love of God transcends, heals, and calls new life? Is there someone you have been unable to forgive? Read Luke 23:24, and spend some time in prayer on this.
4. Love is who we are in God – and like God has done with us – it leads us to action. Read one more time Gal 5:13-15. Paul talks of being free in Christ by being a servant (same Greek word as slave) to others. What is your reaction to this? What will you do as a result of this verse (or what is God calling you to do)?