

the fruit of the spirit

(part I – love and joy)

Read Galatians 5:16-26

1. Why do you think it is important for us to live 'by the Spirit'?

Simple comprehension to open with - God commands us to as Christians; it helps us to not live by 'the sinful nature'; those who don't will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

love

2. In a single sentence how would you define love?

A question to get them thinking.

In the bible there are four different words that are translated into English as 'love'. Hopefully you can identify with each of these different types.

- storge - Family love (child \leftrightarrow parent)
- eros - Romantic / sexual love
- philia - Real love / affection between good friends
- agape - Unconditional love

3. What do we learn about love from the following passages? (Try to identify which type of love is being spoken about)

1 John 4:7-12 - *Love is from God; demonstrated through Jesus.*

John 3:16 - *Sending Jesus is unconditional love.*

John 13:34-35 - *God loves us, and so we should love others.*

John 15:12-13 - *Jesus is the ultimate example, and commands us to.*

Ephesians 5:1-2 - *Everything we do should be focussed on love.*

1 Peter 4:8 - *Love prevents us from slipping into sin.*

1 John 3:16-20 - *God's love is unconditional, and so should ours be.*

4. What is your natural response to people whom you find hard to love?

Again to get them thinking about their nature. Probably stuff like – avoid them; pay them out; fire up at them etc.

5. What would a biblical response be?

Remember that we must love them as God loves us. Actually enact that love towards them. We may need to make up for ways in the past in which we have failed to do this.

joy

6. In a single sentence how would you define joy?

Again to get them thinking about what it might mean.

7. What do we learn about joy from the following passages?

Psalm 16:9-11 - *We can have joy in God's presence. Security in God = joy.*

Psalm 28:6-7 - *Joy in God's mercy. We can trust Him in everything.*

Psalm 37:3-4 - *Be joyful for everything God provides for us.*

Psalm 97:1 - *Be joyous that the LORD reigns!*

Philippians 4:4- *Rejoice in the LORD always!*

1 Peter 1:3-9 - *Be joyful in our salvation.*

8. In what sort of circumstances do you usually find joy?

Answers will probably be – when we do well at something; exciting events; hanging out with mates etc.

9. As Christians, what should we find joy in?

Fellowship with one another; that our God is so great; our certain hope of salvation.

10. Why is it that we often find this hard? How can we help one another in this area?

This question is a chance for some practical 'meaty' application of this part of the study.