

# Home Group Study Notes - 2/2/2020

## Fruit of the Spirit & Love in particular

### Icebreaker

What's your favourite food, and where's your favorite place to eat?  
Do you like fruit? What's your most favorite? Least?

### Discovery

We've started a new preaching series on the Fruit of the Spirit, looking at love today in particular.

Read Exodus 28:33 - (it's about the priestly robe Aaron wore when he 'ministered before the Lord' in the 'most holy place'. If you have a bit of time to prepare, have a look at the beginning of the chapter, and the few verses around v33 to get a feel for all this).

Like the golden bells and the woven pomegranates, alternating around the hem of Aaron's ephod, there are an equal number of 'gifts of the Spirit' (in 1 Corinthians 12) and 'fruits of the Spirit' (in Galatians 5:22 etc) - nine. Get people to call them out if they know them or as they find them in the bible.

(gifts: wisdom, knowledge, discerning of spirits, faith, miracles, healing, prophecy, tongues, interp of tongues.)

(fruit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control)

Key point - we need both the gifts and the fruit in our daily lives with God.

The last verse of 1 Corinthians 12 and the first verse of Ch 14 both say that, though spiritual gifts are really good to ask God for, love is the most important thing. These verses are like bookends around 1 Corinthians 13. Get people to look at this for themselves. Then read Ch 13, and think about this as you do.

Then read Colossians 3:12-14.

And finally, read Romans 5:5, and then this, from 1 John 4, '(v13) ... He (God) has given us his Spirit ... (v16) And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.'

### Discussion

Ask what people think the gifts and fruit of the Spirit are for.

(suggestions: gifts build people up, build the church, display God's power to the world, and confront people with the super-natural world, blowing scepticism out of the water !!!!; fruit glorifies God, helps us relate well, encouraging other Christians and drawing others to us, giving us opportunity to talk to them about God.)

Think what it would be like if people tried to use spiritual gifts without having any of the fruit of the Spirit. Try to provoke people to think about their own situation - what are they like re the fruit.

(try not to spend too much time on the gifts. Use mention of them just to consider the importance of having fruit.)

On Sunday, we looked at Love in particular. Think about the idea it 'binds all the other fruit together in perfect unity' (Colossians 3:14 you read out earlier). Why is love so important? Use 1 Corinthians 13 again to think about this.

On Sunday it was reasoned that God has poured his love into our hearts by his Spirit to enable us to understand how wonderful his love is. Look at how the reading in 1 John 4 above shows that.

Discuss.

(NB - it could be possible to think Romans 5:5 is about us receiving love as a gift. Sometimes God does bless us with an ability to really love others, but that's not what this verse is about.)

What do people think of all this?

How can we partner with the Spirit to open ourselves to the revelation of God's wonderful love? So much so that it changes how we see everything?

Think about the idea that revival comes when God's people are individually awoken to the greatness of God's love for them and the world, and provoked into action to help others receive that same revelation - through the word, prayer, worship.

Ask people who went through the 'fire tunnel' on Sunday what it was like. It's OK if some people didn't like it or get much from it. Hopefully many did!

## **Response**

Share with each other anything you feel the Spirit has been showing you tonight. Pray for each other.

Challenge people to choose to follow the way of love (1 Corinthians 14:1). Encourage one another to read the bible more - both in volume (to get a clearer picture of God's character in the OT and through Jesus in the NT) and to get a 'now' word each day through meditating on smaller sections of scripture.

And maybe, finally, encourage each other to talk to each other naturally in everyday conversations about what God is showing them about life as you spend time with each other.

God bless you as you spend time together.

Mike