

First, Love

I. What is desired is Godly Character

1 Tim.2:15/4:12/6:11/ 2 Tim.2:22/3:10/ Titus 2:2-10/ 2 Peter 1:8-11

II. First, love

A. Its relation to other fruit:

1. Seems to encompass the rest (1 Cor.13:4-6/Eph.4:2)
2. Yet has its own distinct domain (2 Pet.1:5-7)

B. The distinctive mark of Christianity (John 13:34-35/ Rev.2:4/ 1 John 4:20/ 1 Tim.1:5)

C. A product of the Holy Spirit (Gal.5:22/ Rom.5:5/ 2 Tim.1:7)

D. It eclipses other factors

1. Trumps knowledge (1 Cor.8:1)
2. Trumps all gifts (1 Cor.13:1-3, 8)
3. Trumps even faith and hope (1 Cor.13:13)

E. Governs all other activities (1 Cor.16:14/ Gal.5:6/ Eph.4:15-16)

F. The whole of duty (Matt.7:12; 22:37-40/ Rom.13:8-10/ Gal.5:14)

G. The barometer of maturity (Col.3:14/ 1 Pet.4:8/ 2 Pet.1:7)

H. The practice of love (1 John 3:18)

1. Obedience to Christ (1 John 5:3/ 2 John 6)
2. Committal of self/life (John 15:13/ Eph.5:2, 25/ 1 John 3:16)
3. Committal of resources (1 John 3:17/ 2 Cor.8:8, 24)
4. Committal of service (Gal.5:13/ 1 Thess.4:9-12)
5. Governed by prudence and judgment (Phil.1:9)
6. Not restricted to those who reciprocate (Luke 6:27, 35/ Rom.12:20)