

LOVE TRANSFORMING: THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN US - Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22–25; 1 Corinthians 13

In Week 1 of our series entitled *God is Love*, we learned that **God defines love**. In no shape, form, or definition can we authentically describe love. Why? Because love does not begin with us—it begins with God. His character. His nature. His essence.

In Week 2, we saw that **Jesus embodies love**. Jesus is God's love stepping into history, wrapping a towel around its waist, and going to the cross. For us. For you. For me. For your family. For your neighbor. For the world.

Considering all these things brings up another question for us to consider, and the answer to this question is perhaps the most important from this series of messages. **How does that love actually change us?** So, that's what we are going to do today. We are going to look at some examples from Paul's teachings which will help answer that question.

Many Christians try to love others through sheer willpower. We grit our teeth. We try harder. We promise ourselves we'll be more patient, kinder, more forgiving, more merciful, more gracious. But biblical love cannot be produced by human effort. Remember, love is an action from God to us and is not based on any level of our performance. Biblical love — is the ultimate fruit of the Spirit.

God does not just command love. He empowers it. The same love that defines God and is embodied in Christ is now poured into us by the Holy Spirit to transform us from the inside out.

The Spirit Pours God's Love into Our Hearts

Read Romans 5:1-5 - Paul says, "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit." This is not a trickle, or a drip line. Neither is it like dumping a bucket of water on your head, where most of it ends up on the floor. Instead, it is an abundance, an outpouring of God's love – INTO- not onto your heart. This action from God occurs at the moment of a person's salvation. Paul explains in **Ephesians 1:13-14** – *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

The Holy Spirit:

- Makes God's love real, not theoretical.
- Heals our wounds with divine affection.
- Empowers us to love beyond our natural capacity.

The Spirit does not merely inform us about love—He forms us by it. What God revealed in Exodus and embodied in Jesus is now internalized through His Spirit.

Love Is the First Fruit of the Spirit

Read Galatians 5:22-23 - Paul lists love first because it is the root from which all other fruit grows.

- Joy is love rejoicing.
- Peace is love resting.
- Patience is love enduring.
- Kindness is love extending.
- Self-control is love restraining.

Guess what? Every person who puts their trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord, receives all of this from God. He doesn't just give a portion of it. Paul says that He pours it all out directly into our hearts. Sealed there for the purpose of guaranteeing we go through life – **LOVED!** Spiritual growth and maturity are not measured by giftedness, knowledge, or activity—but by love. The Holy Spirit's primary work is not making us impressive but making us Christlike.

The Spirit Forms Christlike Character

Read 1 Corinthians 13 - This chapter is often read at weddings, and for good reasons, but did you know that Paul wrote it as a rebuke to a gifted but loveless church? From this passage, we learn something great about how God's love works in our heart, through His Holy Spirit to change us.

Love is patient—even when people test you.

Love is kind—even when people hurt you.

Love keeps no record of wrongs—even when you are wronged repeatedly.

These things cannot be generated by our own will. They cannot be faked. These types of behaviors are not natural. When these things begin to show up in the lives of believers, the only explanation is that it comes through supernatural transformation. The Holy Spirit is a master sculptor, patiently chiseling away everything in us that does not look like Christ. Therefore, the transformation process is slow, intentional, and deeply personal.

The Spirit Empowers Us to Walk in Love

Let's go back and **Read Galatians 5:24–25** - Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh. Walking by the Spirit means daily surrender. It means, choosing love when the flesh wants revenge, choosing forgiveness when the flesh wants bitterness, choosing compassion when the flesh wants indifference. Walking in the Spirit is not about perfection—it is about direction. Step by step, the Spirit leads us into a life shaped by love.

Conclusion

The Spirit does not merely help us love—He transforms us into loving people.

God defines love.

Jesus embodies love.

The Spirit transforms us by love.

The invitation today is simple but profound: **Yield. Surrender. Walk in step with the Spirit.**

Are you ready to let the love of God reshape your heart, your relationships, and your life?