

Love One Another
Romans 12:9-21

There are some things that just go together. Peanut butter and jelly. Summer and vacation. Biscuits and gravy. June and weddings. October and the North Carolina State Fair.

Here is another perfect pairing you might not have considered – spiritual gifts and the fruit of the Spirit.

Fruit of the Spirit
Galatians 5:22-23

Is it:

But the fruit of the Spirit is:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Patience
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-control

Or:

- Love
 - Joy
 - Peace
 - Patience
 - Kindness
 - Goodness
 - Faithfulness
 - Gentleness
 - Self-control

There is too much to convey about the Greek in this text but it might help to know that participles and infinitives make this passage more descriptive than directive.

Michael Middendorf All uses of the noun *love*, thus far in Romans, communicate the love of the Triune God – the Father (5:5, 8; 8:39), Christ (8:35), and through the Spirit (5:5) for us.

Applying verse 14: I know how some of you apply this verse. “Lord, please bless Arnold, and show him how he has wronged me. Convict him, Lord, and help him to repent.” How about this prayer, “Lord, bless Arnold in every area of his life. Bless him spiritually, financially, emotionally, and relationally. Bless his family and bless his neighborhood. And in the ways that Arnold has wronged me, be gracious and merciful to him as I would want you to be with me had I sinned against him.”

Robert Mounce To love God is to regard evil with horror. Unfortunately, familiarity with a culture that is shaped by the forces of Satan has lulled too many believers into a state of general tolerance for whatever deviant behavior is in vogue at present.

Friedrich Nietzsche (not a believer!) on bitterness: Beware that, when fighting monsters, you yourself do not become a monster. For when you gaze long into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you.

Douglas Moo Paul views “coals of fire” as a metaphor for the “burning pangs of shame.” Acting kindly toward our enemies is a means of leading them to be ashamed of their conduct toward us and, perhaps, to repent and turn to the Lord, whose love we embody.

Scripture Associated with the Message

Ephesians 4:15 (after spiritual gifts are listed in 4:9-14) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1 Corinthians 13 – the love chapter comes after two sections about spiritual gifts in 12:13-31

Romans 12 – after verses 3-8 about spiritual gifts, then 9-21

Philippians 2:1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.** 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. 27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

55 “O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Deuteronomy 32:35 Vengeance is mine, and recompense,

for the time when their foot shall slip;

for the day of their calamity is at hand,

and their doom comes swiftly.’

36 For the Lord will vindicate his people

and have compassion on his servants,

when he sees that their power is gone

and there is none remaining, bond or free.

Proverbs 25:21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat,
and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,
22 for you will heap burning coals on his head,
and the Lord will reward you.