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## Love, a true fruit of the spirit

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## Love, a true fruit of the spirit

### Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Love. Where would we be without love? Love is a strong reoccurring theme in our everyday lives and in the Bible. It is one of those emotions that we can not live without. Love causes so many different reactions and sensations that sometimes it is very overwhelming in both good and bad ways. But then again love makes everything better and the world would be nowhere without love. This raises another question; what is love and how do we know if it is "true" love or not? The Bible and life have a few suggestions to that always unanswered, can't really be explained, question."

# Brief Essays



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## Love, a true fruit of the spirit

By Courtney Ren

Love. Where would we be without love? Love is a strong reoccurring theme in our everyday lives and in the Bible. It is one of those emotions that we can not live without. Love causes so many different reactions and sensations that sometimes it is very overwhelming in both good and bad ways. But then again love makes everything better and the world would be nowhere without love. This raises another question; what is love and how do we know if it is “true” love or not? The Bible and life have a few suggestions to that always unanswered, can’t really be explained, question.

Two of the most famous Bible verses are based on love and are meant to portray what love is and how one can know whether it is “true” love or not. In I Corinthians 13 the meaning and characteristics of love are portrayed. The chapter states,

“<sup>1</sup>If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

<sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup>It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup>Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup>It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

<sup>8</sup>Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup>but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

11When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 12Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

According to this passage love is the very essence of living. Without love we would be nothing. Without love nothing is gained but everything is lost. Love is the most important fruit of the spirit.

In John 3:16 “true” love is exemplified. John 3:16 states, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son so that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” How much more can someone love you? God sacrificed his own son so that we would always have his love. Moreover, God’s son, Jesus, was willing to accept the cross, sacrificing himself, so that we could live in love and happiness. If that’s not true love, then what is?

In society today many musicians try to portray through their music love, faithfulness and sacrifice for the one loved. Songs such as Dolly Parton’s “I will always love you”, Whitney Houston’s “Greatest Love of all”, and U2 with “Love And Peace Or Else”. All genres of music have that one great love song, whether is be about a specific person or the world in general, that everyone wants to hear over and over and over again no matter what. That song brings out of people emotions that they normally do not show. Music is a great way to help express how one feels about someone else. All of these songs allude to the values and characteristics that the Bible uses to speak about love. Love is everything good in the world. It is joy and happiness. It is what puts a smile on one’s face. It is peace.

So how do we know it's "true" love and where would the world be without love? The latter is easier to answer than the former. Where would we be without love? Nowhere. That's the easy answer. Without God's love we would never have been born, we would never have existed, and this topic would never even have been an issue. Without love the world would be in worse shape than it already is. The songs that express love help the world to be a better place. They help people to see what love really is. The Beatles got it right when they sang "All we need is love." "True love" means sacrificing yourself for the other. It means putting that person above the rest. It means making yourself number two to the person you love. As Jesus did for all of us. However, the answer to the question "How do we know it's 'true' love" is harder to explain. It's different for everyone. It may be that feeling you get when you see the person walk through the door, it may be the smile on your face that you can't seem to get rid of, or just the feeling of freedom, carefree outlook and security you have knowing that that person will always be there for you no matter what. Whatever it is "true" love, is a gift from God. It brought us here and it will keep us happy while we live the life that God set out for us. Remember, "Love conquers all."