

None of these graces are natural to any individual; all are supernatural and are available to every believing person. The great question is, "What happened on the way from studying Gal. 5:22 & 23 to the reality of interpersonal relationships with other believers?" For our purposes, we ask, "Why is it that those who by gifts and training know the most about Christianity fail so often to relate to one another in a truly Christian manner?" The gap between theory and practice needs to be closed.

The first item on Paul's list is so important it should be singled out for special treatment. Love is the crown of the Christian graces. Like the divisions in an orange, the other eight terms on Paul's list are sections of this one fruit. The word "love" in the English language is emotion-packed and is often wrongly described as a "feeling." Love is, first of all, an attitude which issues in action. Love is defined in Scripture by what it does. If one word could be found to define what love does, it would probably be the word "give." Love gives, or love is giving, rather than getting.⁵

In a most helpful discussion of "love," John W. Sanderson directs attention to Lev. 19:9-18 for a biblical commentary on loving one's neighbor.⁶ This same passage is used here as a source

⁵Adams, Christian Counselor's Manual, p. 119-120.

⁶John W. Sanderson, The Fruit of the Spirit, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Corporation, 1972), p. 46.