

Put off the old nature and put on

The Fruit of the Spirit*

(Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:22-33)

Meet Musha And Gerta**

- **Love** is “the self” *surrendering to God* fully and completely by *servicing others* sacrificially and redemptively. Love is a *radical change* from self to unself. It is *a selfless and sacrificial investment* in the well-being of another. It is a *conscious decision* to act first in behalf of another rather than first in behalf of myself.
- **Joy** is love celebrating deeply (*chara*). Joy is that inextinguishable irrepressible, inexhaustible, inexplicable, inexpressible, *jubilance of spirit* which belongs to those who belong to God through Jesus Christ.
- **Peace** is the love *resting* quietly (*eirené*).
Peace is never merely a *negative absence*. It is always a *positive presence* --viz., *the presence of* God at the very core of our being. In this *presence* we rest quietly and trustfully whatever the shape of the adversity hostility or activity.
- **Long-suffering** (patience) is love enduring patiently (*macrothumia*). Loving humanity as an *abstract, theoretical, generic* entity is relatively easy. It is people, *specific individual persons*, whom we find difficult to love. So with the most demanding and aggravating of people, we are called to *endure patiently*. I believe there are two pictures that describe what this looks like: So with the most demanding and aggravating of people, we are called to *endure patiently*. I believe there are two pictures that describe what this looks like:
 - Spirit filled people are not *nitroglycerin-like*. They are long-suffering.
 - Spirit filled people are not *short-fused*. They are long-suffering.
- **Gentleness** (kindness) is love *performing* benevolently. (*chrēstotēs*).
This is the word that means *love in practical action*. The Greek word (*chrēstotēs*) sounds very much like Christos, and it wasn't very long before NT Christians made the connection *to be kind is to be Christlike!*
- **Goodness** is love *behaving* morally and generously (*agathōsunē*).
In the spirit filled Christian, “goodness” mandates 2 great qualities in us:
 - **Personal Integrity - Morally Straight.**
 - **Practical Generosity - Functionally Benevolent**In other words, goodness is much more than a sterile, clinical, squeaky-clean, *legalistic morality*. It includes a benevolent, sacrificial, *loving generosity*.
- **Faith (Faithfulness)** is love trusting fully and serving reliably (*pistis*).
in the most basic sense faithfulness means:
 - Keeping Promises even when it is difficult to carry them out.
 - Adopting as our own self the will and goals of God even during times of *Cultural Hubris*.
 - Standing by the Ones we are serving even when *Conflicting Pressures Arise*.
 - Standing alone in Defense of Truth even when it contradicts “*Political Correctness*.”
 - Believing that Obedience to Scripture Brings Ultimate Victory in spite of *Present Opposition or Disappointment*.



- **Meekness** is love *domesticating appetites* powerfully (*prautēs*). Meekness actually means the *strong restraint and productive channeling of power*. The ancient usages of *prautēs* underscore this basic meaning - it was used of:
 - A **Gentle** Breeze - Wind
 - A **Soothing** Word - Speech
 - A **Healing** Medication – Spiritual, Physical. Emotional
 - A **Generous** Relationship – Family and Friends
 - A **Proper** Disposition – Attitudes

Each of these is a *double-edged sword*. The one thing they have in common is “*power*” which needs to be demonstrated or tamed.

- **Temperance (Self-Control)** is love restraining sensual drives strongly (*egkrateia*). After an exhaustive study of this word in antiquity, William Barclay concludes: Temperance or self-control is nothing other than chastity (sexual purity) and *chastity was the one completely new virtue* which the Christian ethic brought into the world.

***The above work, part of “Strengthening Marital Integrity”, is adapted from Douglas McLaughlin, author and retired President (still vigorously working pastor-preacher-teacher) from Central Seminary in Plymouth MN.**

**** Gerta and Musha, a True Story:**

Two little together birds were purchased and brought into a loving and caring home. Native to Australia, the love budgie parakeets adorned a new habitat with their pretty colors and joy-filled companionship. They loved playtime, riding around on your shoulder, flying perch to perch, and having fun with echoes and mirrors. Rather quiet compared to some of the bigger squawker relatives, they learned to whistle or talk.



However, companionship came to a close after 5 good years. Little blue Gerta passed away leaving yellow Musha alone. A time of grieving befell family in the home. But soon, knowing that Gerta was now safely with her Maker, sorrow became replaced with precious memories. Most of all is a loving home with family individuals consumed moment by moment and day by day, filled with the Fruit of the Spirit. As such, *knowledge, words, and practice* in a home of Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Meekness, and Temperance Spirit-Control consistently provide security for all ... including Musha.