

**1 JOHN 4:11-21(NLTSE)** “Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 12 No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.

13 And God has given us His Spirit as proof that we live in Him and He in us. 14

Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. 15 All who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, have God living in them, and they live in God. 16 We know how much God loves us, and we have **put our trust in His love**. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

17 And as we live in God, our **love grows more perfect**. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face Him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

18 Such love has no fear, because **perfect love expels all fear**. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love. 19 We love each other because **He loved us first**.

20 If someone says, “I love God,” but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don’t love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? 21 And He has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their Christian brothers and sisters.”

- The only way to truly love God, is to let Him love you first. In other words, allow the full expression of Jesus’ love, to come to fruition in your life.

**JOHN 15:16(NLTSE)** You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name.

- Allowing Jesus to love us, will get us to the point where He radically changes us from the inside out:

**EZEKIEL 36:26(NLTSE)** And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

**2 CORINTHIANS 3:3(NLTSE)** Clearly, you are a letter from Christ showing the result of our ministry among you. This “letter” is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on tablets of stone, but on human hearts

- Letting Jesus love us, makes our lives like a letter, that the world reads, giving the world undeniable hope and the promise of a better life.
- Letting Jesus love us means our complete surrender to Him. What does this surrender mean? It means allowing ourselves to be **led** by the Holy Spirit instead of being **driven** by other things
- We must allow ourselves to respond to the Holy Spirit who lives inside us, instead of reacting to external influences.
- Letting Jesus love us means we embrace His correction in our lives:

**PROVERBS 3:11-12(NLTSE)** “My child, don’t reject the Lord’s discipline, and don’t be upset when He corrects you. For the Lord corrects those He loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.”

**HEBREWS 12:7-12(NLTSE)** “As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as His own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? 8 If God doesn’t discipline you as He does all of His children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really His children at all. 9 Since we respected our earthly fathers

who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever?

10 For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might **share in His holiness**. 11 No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

12 So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong."

- The purpose of God's discipline, is for His love to be perfected in our hearts and for us to share in His holiness.
- What does "love perfected in our hearts" really mean? It means seeing ourselves, as God sees us, seeing others as God sees them and seeing God as He really is.
- If you consider that God allowed Joseph's leadership to develop under Pharaoh, Potiphar and a jailer, Moses' leadership while looking after Jethro's sheep, David's leadership under Saul who was trying to kill him, Daniel's leadership under Nebuchadnezzar, high priest of a false god and Paul's leadership under Gamaliel, under whom is God developing your leadership and discipline?
- Could God be developing our leadership and discipline, under a government like ours, for the very purposes of His love being perfected in our hearts?
- Will you let Jesus love you and develop his Godly discipline in your life?

### **CARE GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What happens in our lives, when we allow someone's love to influence us?
2. What changes does Jesus' love bring in our lives? (see 1JOHN 4:16) How does this trust in God, change the way we live?
3. What areas in your life, do you need to allow God's discipline and correction? Discuss these in the group and pray for one another around these issues.