

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 1, 2005

Passage: 1 John 4:17-21

Memory Passage: Psalm 130:3-4

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1 John 4:17-18.** What does John mean when he speaks about this love being made perfect? What does the word *perfect* mean?
- (b) Literally, the Greek should be translated, “In this, love has been made perfect with us” (or “within us”). *Whose* love is John talking about?
- (c) How is this apparent from 1 John 2:16? What difference does this make in our understanding of verse 17?
- (d) What is the result when this love is made perfect in us? What does it do for others who see it (1 John 4:12)?
- (e) The same word for “boldness” is translated as “confidence” in 1 John 2:28 and 3:19-21. What does it do for us (1 John 4:17)?
- (f) What does “perfect love” eliminate from our lives? Does this mean that we will never have any fears again? On what basis?
- (g) *Family:* Read 1 John 4:17-18. What have we learned so far about love from John’s epistle? What are the effects of His love on our lives? Pray that each of you can share the Lord by showing His love (1 John 4:12) this week.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1 John 4:17-18.** Consider Romans 8:16 and 2 Timothy 1:7. What do these verses tell us about fear in the believer’s life? How can we get to the place where we do not fear?
- (b) How do non-believers respond to this day of judgment (Acts 24:25)? How does God’s love in us change our view of this coming judgment? What is the judgment that John is speaking about (Matthew 10:15; 12:36; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:7)?
- (c) Should believers have any fear (1 Peter 1:17; Hebrews 12:28)? How is this fear different?
- (d) What is the result of the first kind of fear (1 John 4:17-18)? What is the result of the second kind of fear (1 Peter 1:17; Hebrews 12:28)? How does God’s love for us affect even this kind of fear (Hebrews 12:5-15, 18-28)?
- (e) What does John mean, “*as He is*, so we are in this world?” What is the *ground* or *foundation* of the believer’s confidence?
- (f) *Family:* Read 1 John 4:17-18 and Hebrews 12:28. Discuss what it means to “fear God?” Why should the non-Christian fear Him? How is that fear different from a believer’s fear of the Lord? Pray for someone that does not know the Lord. Pray for an opportunity to explain God’s judgment and His salvation to them.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1 John 4:19.** What great truth does John remind us of? Why would he tell us this at this point?
- (b) *When* did God first love us and *what* was our condition (1 John 4:10; Ephesians 2:3-5; Titus 2:3-5)?
- (c) How does remembering this give us confidence before the day of judgment (1 John 3:20-21)?
- (d) What was Paul’s attitude toward judging himself before that time (1 Corinthians 4:1-5)?
- (e) Read Psalm 130:3-4. What conclusion does the psalmist make about what will be the outcome if God judges all our sins? How does His forgiveness enable us to “stand?”
- (f) *Family:* Read 1 John 4:19 and Psalm 130:3-4. Talk together about why God’s love for us is so special and so surprising. Discuss what would happen if God judged us for every sin we have ever committed. How would you feel, knowing that day was approaching? How does knowing God’s love in Jesus change that?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read 1 John 4:20.** Why should we love our brother? What affect does this have on our witness (1 John 4:12; John 13:34-35)?
- (b) Which seems easier to you – to love God or to love others? Why does John reverse this? Can a person really love God when he hates his brother?
- (c) In 1 John 3:15, what does John say about the person who hates his brother? What did Jesus say about this in Matthew 5:21-26? What is the greater priority: going to worship or reconciling with a brother? Why?

(d) Read Matthew 18:23-35. What kind of punishment is given to the servant? What is Jesus teaching his disciples about (also Matthew 18:21-22)? Why is this so essential (Ephesians 4:32)?

(e) *Family*: Read 1 John 4:20-21 and Matthew 18:21-35. Talk about how forgiveness and love go together. Why is forgiveness essential for real love? Confess any ways that you have wronged each other this week and ask for God's forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:9).

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 John 4:21.** What is *the* commandment that we have from the Lord? Read Matthew 22:37-40.

(b) What commandment did Jesus give to His disciples (John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; 17:21)? How important is this commandment (Matthew 22:40)?

(c) Read Romans 13:9-10 and Galatians 5:14. How did Paul view the command to love one another?

(d) What did he say to do in Galatians 6:2, and 10? How is this similar to 1 John 3:16-18?

(e) *Family*: Read 1 John 4:20-21 and Romans 13:9-10. How does love *fulfill* the law? Is there ever a situation where biblical love is contrary to the law? Explain. Talk together about someone that you can visibly show God's love to this week (Galatians 6:10). Pray that God will allow you to be instruments of His love.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. What alone can give us confidence as we stand before God? What is *perfect love* and how does it affect us? Why is love such an important theme to John? Should it be to us also? Why? What would you say to someone who does not love those around him but says that he loves God? Pray that the teaching of God's Word tomorrow might help all to see God's love more clearly and have confidence before the day of judgment.

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The Results of Love

“There is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear...”