

LOVE

Theme: Love 4

Discipleship groups purpose: Each member being transformed into the image of the Son.

Key Truth: Love is not Jealous

Key Scripture: *1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,*

Read: Once again God is love so God is not jealous, but He is jealous for us. Worldly or fleshly jealousy is very different from Godly or kingdom jealousy. Fleshly jealousy is selfish, insecure, restrictive, suspicious, controlling, manipulative, smothering, obsessed, fearful and ultimately destructive.

None of these attributes are love. Love is the complete opposite of these attributes. Love doesn't know how to be jealous like this because love's nature is the complete opposite of these things. Love is free from all these attributes, hence love is not jealous. We have to be very careful that when we read that God is jealous for us and that the bible describes God as Jealous, we don't confuse fleshly jealousy with Godly jealousy.

Exodus 34:14 —for you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God

The context for this passage is God warning the Israelites not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and play the harlot with their gods. When we grasp the massive significance of the bridal covenant God has made with us and we have made with Him, when we said we would follow Him, we are apprehended to look at our own lives and ask are we playing the harlot inside our own covenant with God? The jealousy God has for us is to protect us from entering into this life of harlotry, where we give our heart and lives to another, rather than to Him.

Can you relate to any of these fleshly attributes above? The more we are perfected in love, these attributes cease to exist in us, so they don't come forth from us and be highly destructive. We can be jealous over a number of different things which cause us to fight, guard, defend, covet and ultimately destroy what God has for us. As we enter into love, our behaviour aligns itself to love, so we get set free from the power of fleshly jealousy.

Paul said he was jealous for the Corinthian church with a godly jealousy. This is the type of jealousy we want to come into and live our lives from. Once again the context for this jealousy is to present the church to their groom as a pure virgin, one that has not been with the world.

Can you see the kingdom mystery here? Love is jealous and pursues us, to release us from all the other lovers we have established in our lives, lovers who we will live for. Godly jealousy loves freely in the hope that all those who are yet to discover it in their lifetime have this opportunity too.

Questions:

1. In your own words describe what fleshly jealousy is?
2. How destructive is fleshly jealousy to a relationship with God and people - why?
3. Why must Godly jealousy be present in His body and not fleshly jealousy?
4. Why is love not jealous?
5. Share your own experience of God's jealousy for you ?

Application: What is one action we can take if fleshly jealousy is an issue for us?