

## ROLC Small Group Discussion – 24 February 2008

### Topic – The Power Of God’s Love

#### 1. What is one key truth we learn from 1 John 4:19 (NKJV)?

*“We love Him because He first loved us.”*

- The motivation and foundation of true discipleship is knowing and experiencing God’s love
- A disciple is one who’s responding to God’s loving initiative by loving and following Him.
- The Christian life without the reality of God’s love is a useless, powerless and religious exercise. We must first experience and receive God’s love, then we can love God and others.

#### 2. a) There are 4 Greek words for ‘Love’:

- Eros - Physical, sexual, romantic love
- Storgeo - Natural family affection
- Phileo - Friendship, brotherly love
- Agape - God’s kind of love which is totally self-giving and unconditional

#### b) What do you think is the difference between agape love and the other 3 kinds of love?

- Agape love is supernatural and comes only from God, whereas the other kinds of love are basically natural.
- Agape love is unconditional, whereas the rest may be conditional and limited in their expression.  

God’s unconditional love is inclusive and available to all who believe. But those who refuse to repent won’t be able to experience and enjoy His love. God loves the sinner but hates the sin.
- Agape love is totally selfless, whereas the rest can be selfish, demanding or even manipulative.
- God’s love doesn’t sloppily wink at sin; it’s “tough” love that empowers us to change.

#### 3. What are some benefits/blessings of God’s love?

##### a) Security and self-worth

→ Read Eph 3:17-18 (Amplified Version)

*“17 May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, 18 That you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God’s devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it];”*

**i. (V 17) How can Jesus really settle down, abide and make His permanent home in our hearts?**

- Firstly, we must allow Jesus to uproot from us all the wrong roots in our lives – rejection, fears, rebellion, pride, insecurities, suspicions, etc.
- Secondly, we invite Him to establish and ground us securely in His love and it's done through faith.

**ii. (V18) How can we apprehend and understand the reality of God's love?**

- Only through the revelation of the Holy Spirit.
- "Revelation" means – The unveiling of one's spiritual eyes to enable us to see things which were closed to us before.

**iii. (V18) Why is "power and strength" needed?**

- Implies effort and discipline which must be exercised on our part, if we want to receive revelation. As in Rom 12:1-2, we must commit our lives to Christ Lordship.

**b) Strengthens faith and confidence – Gal 5:6 (Amplified)**

*"For [if we are] in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith activated and energized and expressed and working through love."*

**i. What is the connection between faith and love?**

- Faith is activated, energized and works through love.
- Faith is confidence in God's love for us and His ability to meet our needs.
- Faith is resting in God and His faithfulness to fulfill His Word.

**ii. How do we approach God? Heb 4:16 (Amplified)**

*"Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it]."*

- Come fearlessly, confidently and boldly

**iii. What hinders us from approaching God confidently?**

- Sin-consciousness, sense of unworthiness, condemnation, guilt and shame
- Doubts and fears
- Feeling that we aren't good or holy enough
- Unsure of His willingness to hear us or to help us
- Ignorance of God's Word
- Wrong perception of Father God
- Sense of rejection

**4. Look at Rom 5:5 (NLT) and answer the following questions:**

*“And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.”*

**a) How can we overcome disappointment?**

- When we know solidly in our hearts that our God really loves and cares for us and whatever problems we may be facing, He hasn't forsaken us, but has a plan for our good.
- Must learn not to look to people too much, as they are the source of most of our disappointments.

**b) How can we experience the reality of God's love?**

- By opening our hearts to the ministry of the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to fill us with God's love.
- We must have the desire to cry out to God for more of His love.