

## LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

### LOVE DEFINED

Josh McDowell – August 10, 2014

This past Sunday, Josh McDowell taught that ***love is a choice*** and an ***act of our will*** to be obedient to God's commandment to love Him first (with reverence and humility) and love others by ***providing*** for needs and ***protecting*** them from harm (Matt 22:37-40). He also showed that every command of God are an expression of God's love for us and were given to provide and protect us. It is imperative we make sure we have ***nurtured/provided and cherished/protected*** ourselves in order to effectively and appropriately love others.

Jesus showed us a model of love when gave His life for our sin and left the Holy Spirit to help and protect us as we *walk* out our salvation. Our response should be to take care of ourselves physically, mentally, spiritually, and relationally (Luke 2:52) and then to demonstrate true love toward others by providing for and protecting them. Love is more than a word we say; it is a lifestyle we actively demonstrate to God, ourselves, and others.

### MEMORY VERSE

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

John 13:34-35

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

Recall a time when you did not feel loved by someone in your family, friendships, community or ministry; what was done or not done and how this make you feel? Did this impact your relationship(s) or relationship with the Lord, how?

### STUDY QUESTIONS

→ Read I John 3:16-20



- How does Jesus' sacrifice demonstrate true love of providing and protecting?
- Why is "laying down our lives" a proper demonstration of love? How does that work?
- V18 presents a contrast between "word or speech" and "deed and truth" – what is the point that John is making here?

→ **Read I John 4:7-21**

- How are we empowered to love God and others?
- What evidence supports our choice to love?
- How does our knowledge of God impact our action?
- What are some outcomes to putting the interest of others into action?
- What are some practical steps that you can take this week to demonstrate love to those with whom you are close (spouse, children, parents, friend, etc.)?
- Mr. McDowell stated that we must "love" ourselves before we can appropriately love others (Eph 5:28-29). What are some practical ways that you can do a better job of protecting and providing for yourself (*without becoming selfish and unhealthy*)?

## GROUP ACTIVITY

**Confess:** Share a time when you walked in the world's way of love and tell what was the outcome.

**Pray:** Pair up and pray that each would commit with his/her whole heart, mind, strength and soul to demonstrate God's love to our family, friends, foes and "neighbors" alike that needs would be met and God's light would shine through for all to see.



