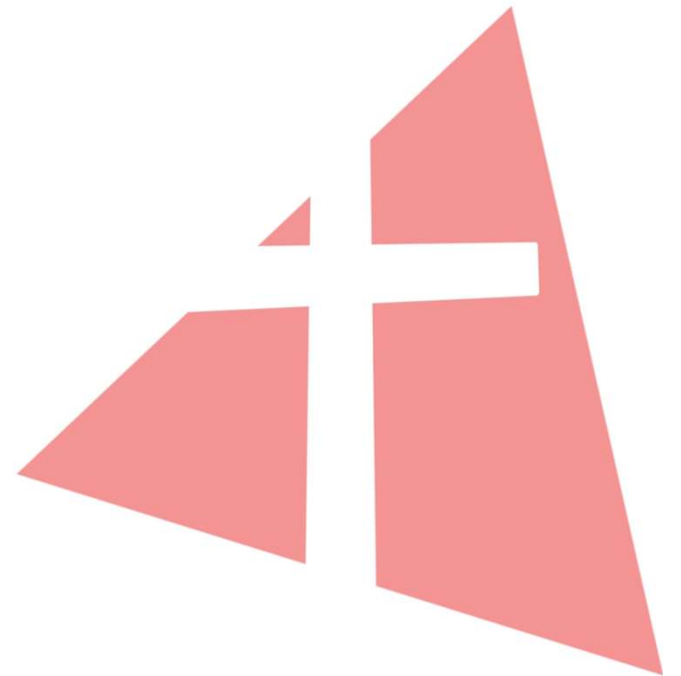


GOD'S LOVE

July 16th 2017

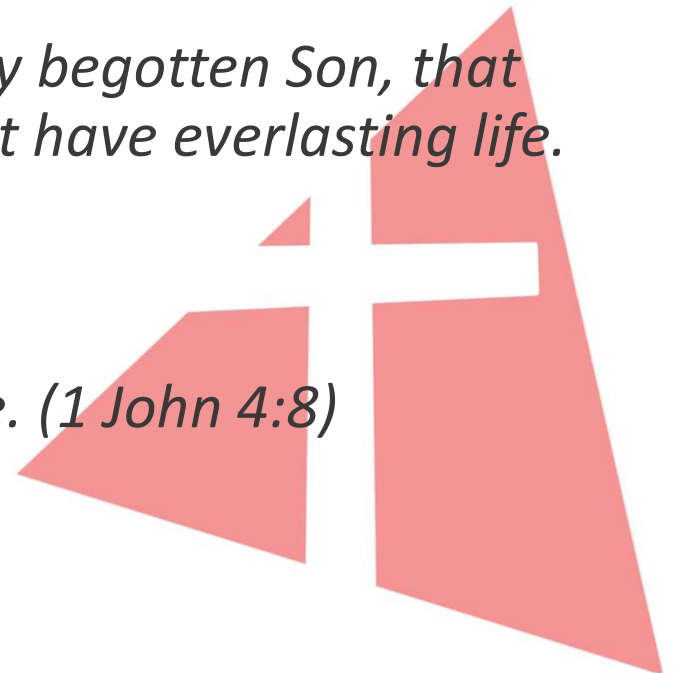


GOD'S LOVE

- Any serious Christian will come to the conclusion that the Bible teaches that “God is a loving God”

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

He that loves not knows not God; for God is love. (1 John 4:8)



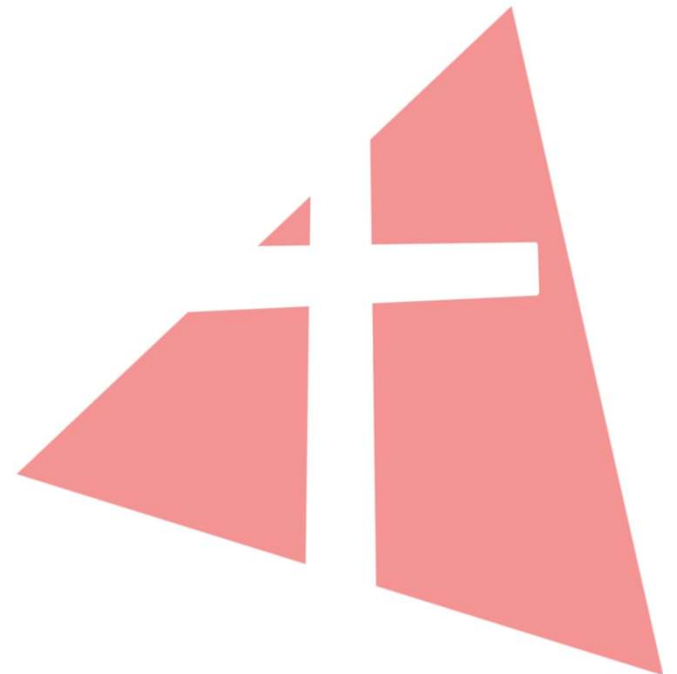
THEORY AND REALITY

- **Many Christians struggle with this concept of a “Loving God” when they go through difficulties**
 - If God really loves me, then why did THAT happen?
 - If God really loves me, He would have answered my prayer
 - If God is really so loving, then why do all these innocent people have to suffer?
 - ...



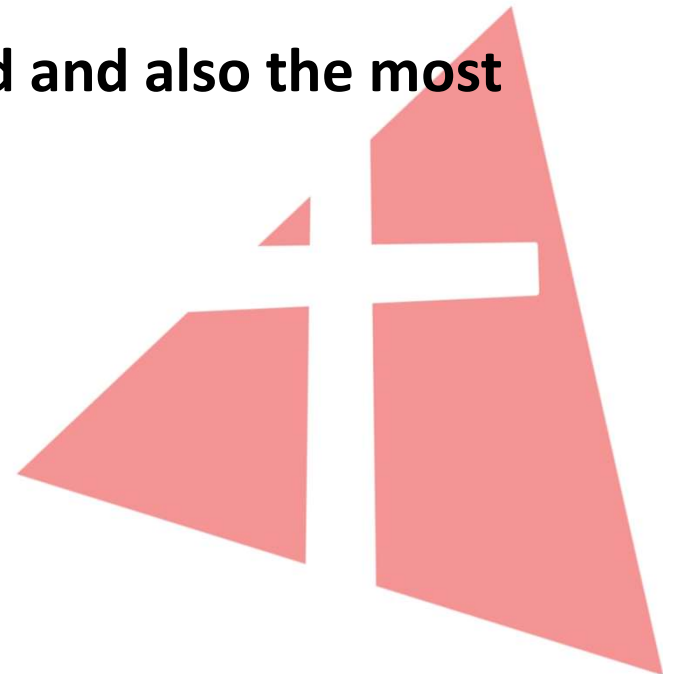
THE MISCONCEPTION

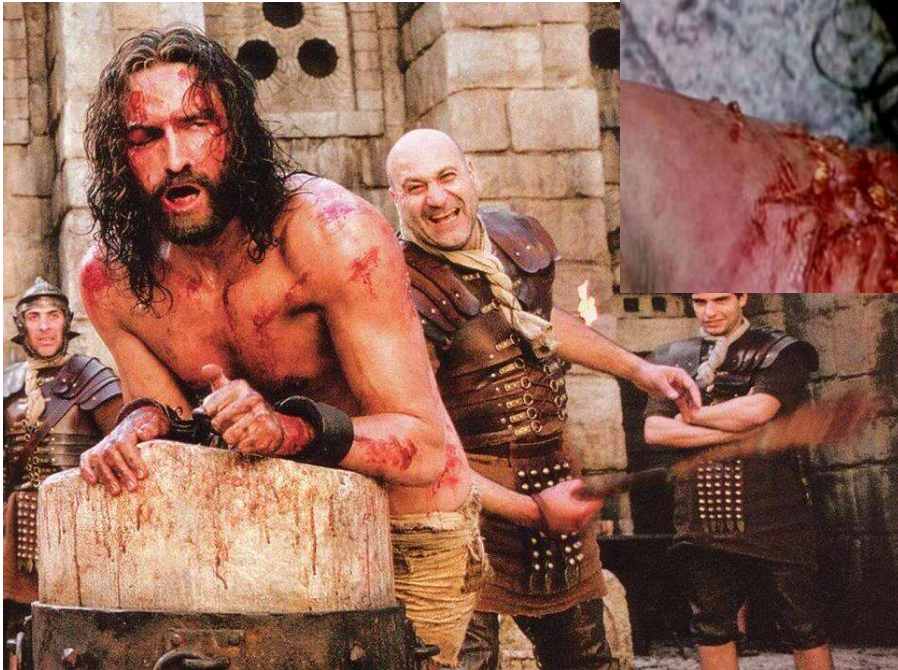
- **True love = Happily ever after**
- **Most people don't really know what love is**
 - A feeling?
 - “Chemistry”?
 - Special connection?
 - ...



REALITY CHECK

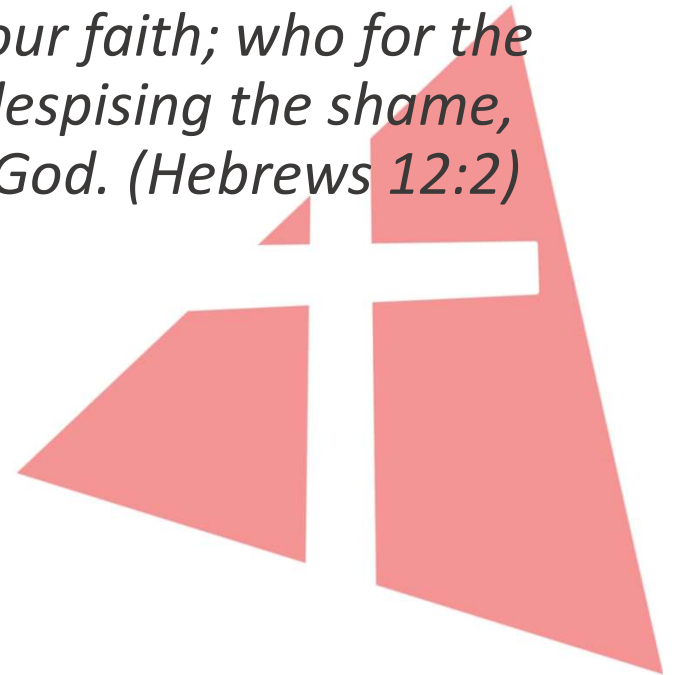
- **Who is the most loved person who ever lived and also the most loving person who has ever lived?**





WHY DID JESUS DO ALL THAT?

Looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)



LIFE IN THIS WORLD

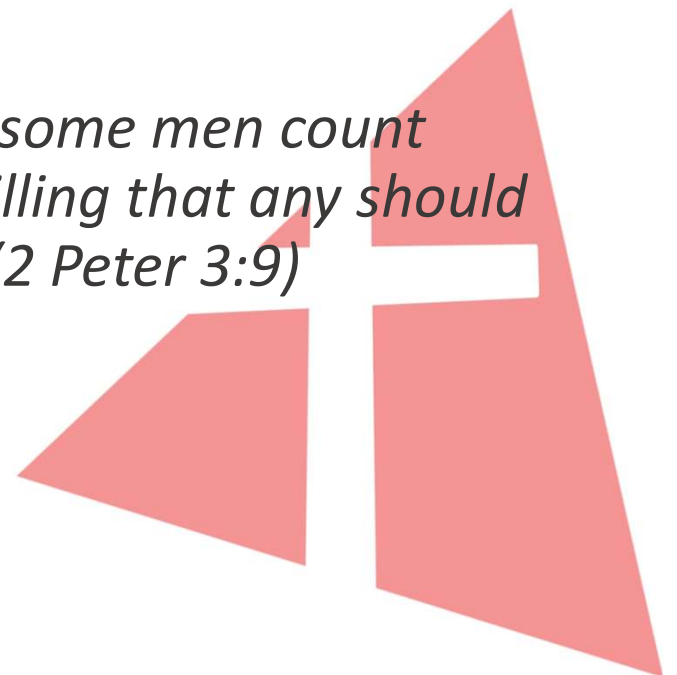
- One day, those who persevere in this life will live “happily ever after”
- Until then, God calls us to suffer in this life, like Jesus did, “for the joy set before us”



WHY DO WE SUFFER?

- **Suffering (somehow) leads to salvation**

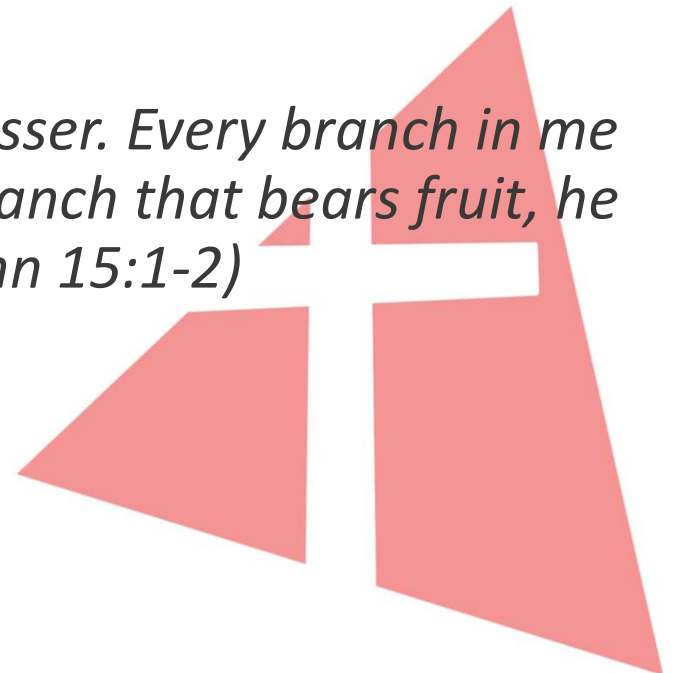
The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)



WHY DO WE SUFFER?

- **Sanctification**

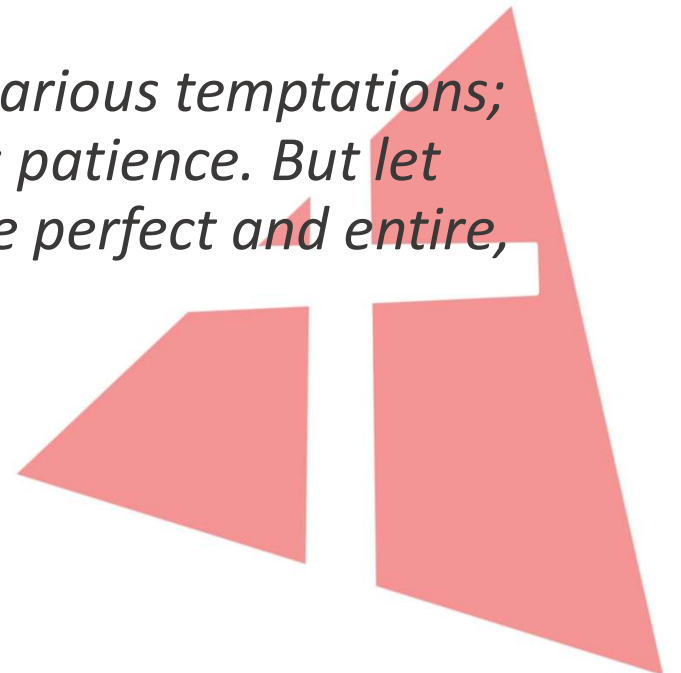
I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes it, that it may bring forth more fruit. (John 15:1-2)



WHY DO WE SUFFER?

- **Sanctification**

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)

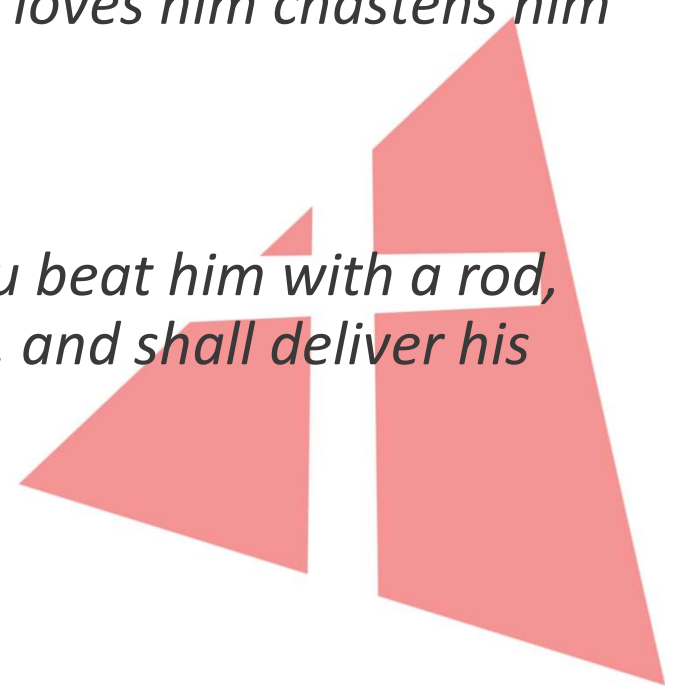


DISCIPLINE IS LOVE

○ The Bible on parenting

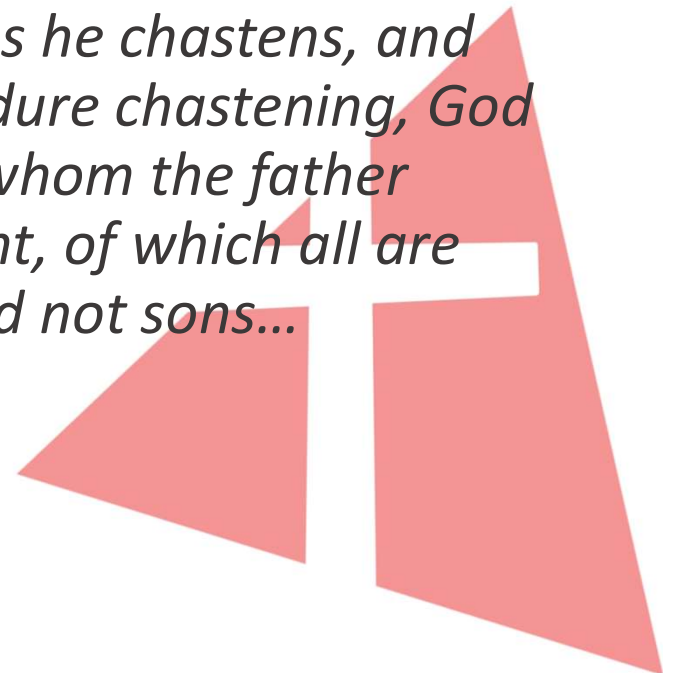
He that spares his rod hates his son: but he that loves him chastens him early. (Proverbs 13:24)

Withhold not correction from the child: for if you beat him with a rod, he shall not die. You shall beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from sheol. (Proverbs 23:13-14)



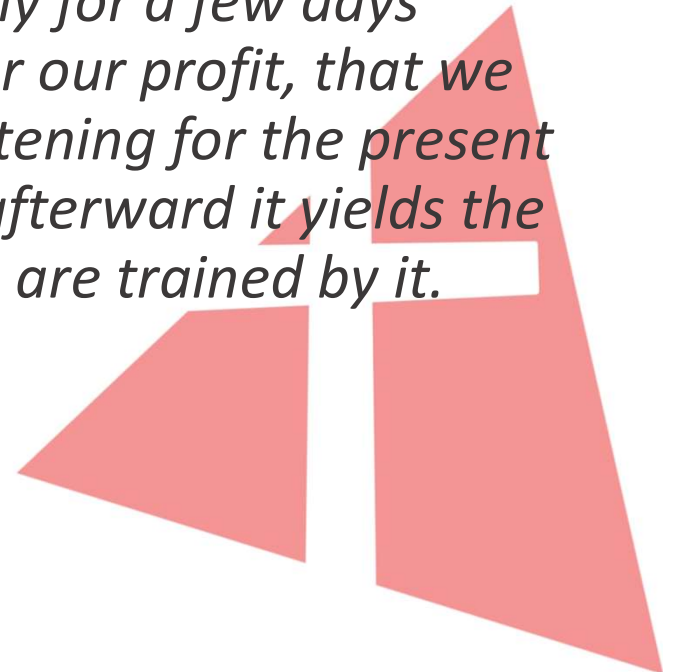
DISCIPLINE IS LOVE

And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children, My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not? But if you be without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then are you illegitimate children, and not sons...



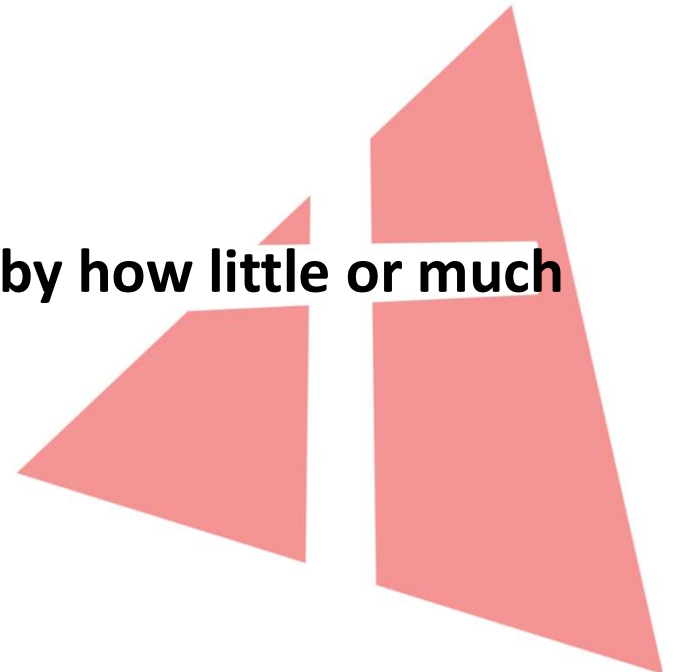
DISCIPLINE IS LOVE

*... Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are trained by it.
(Hebrews 12:5-11)*



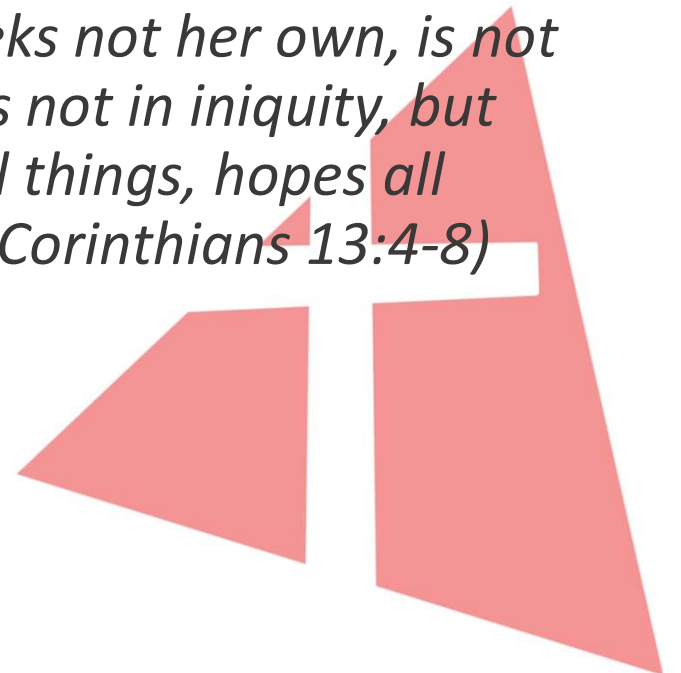
SO ... WHAT IS LOVE?

- **The Bible describes how God loves us**
- **We can measure ourselves whether we truly love God and other people!**
- **We will be judged by our love (not primarily by how little or much sin we commit)**



SO ... WHAT IS LOVE?

Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, Does not behave itself rudely, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, keeps no record of evil; Rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; Bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails: ... (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)



WHAT IS LOVE?

○ God is patient with us

Love suffers long

- We need to receive patience because of our sinfulness
- Are we patient that God's timing is perfect?
- Are we patient with other people?

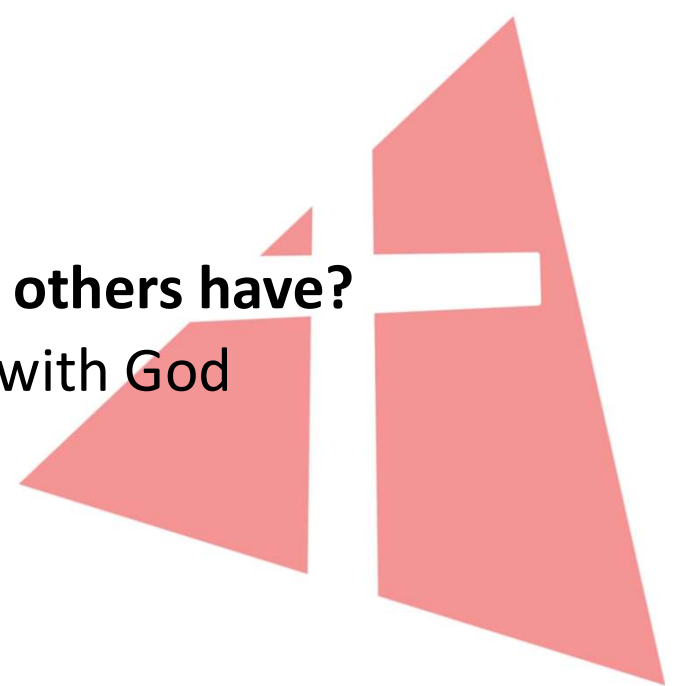


WHAT IS LOVE?

- **God has no reason to envy**

love envies not

- **Are we envious and jealous because of what others have?**
 - That shows that we are not truly satisfied with God

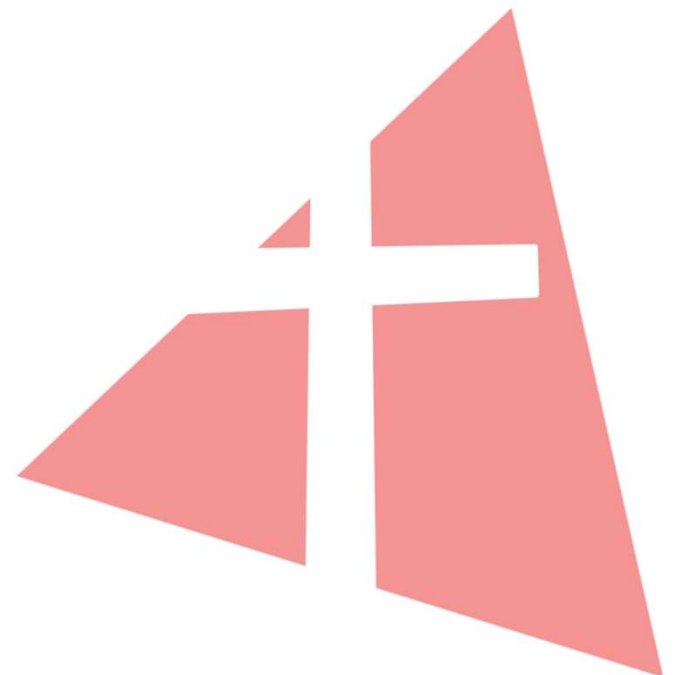


WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Love doesn't boast**

love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up

- **Jesus chose humility for a time**
- **Everything we have is from Jesus**

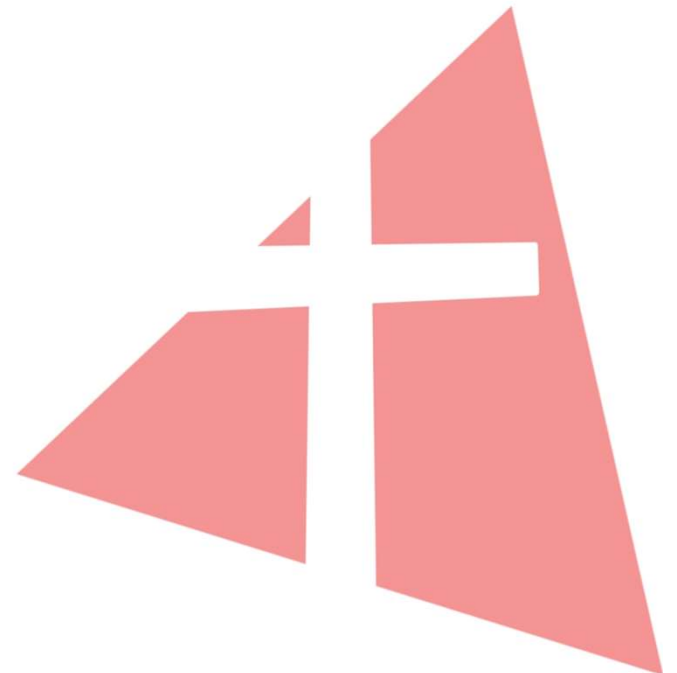


WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Love is selfless**

seeks not her own

- **Jesus demonstrated perfect selflessness**
- **What is the motivation for what we do?**
 - Why do I do what I do?

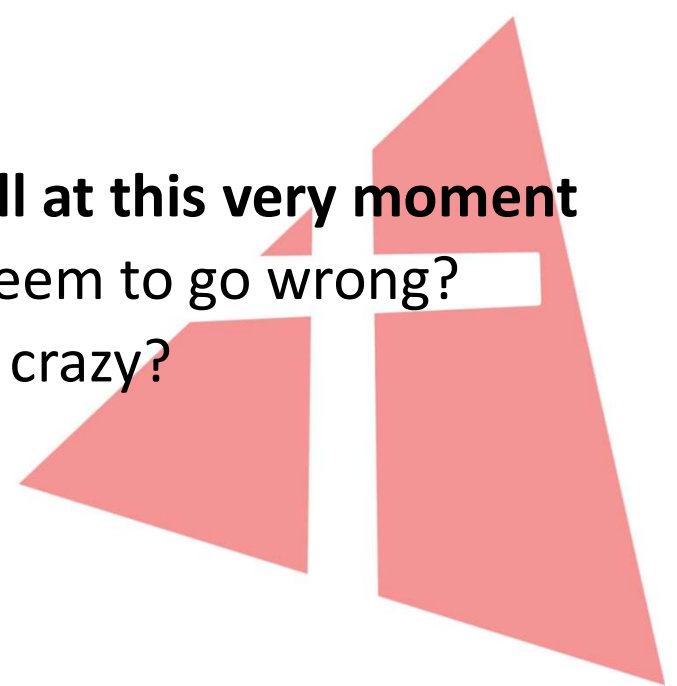


WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Controlling anger**

is not easily provoked

- **God has the right to throw you and me in hell at this very moment**
 - How do we respond to God when things seem to go wrong?
 - How do we deal with people who drive us crazy?

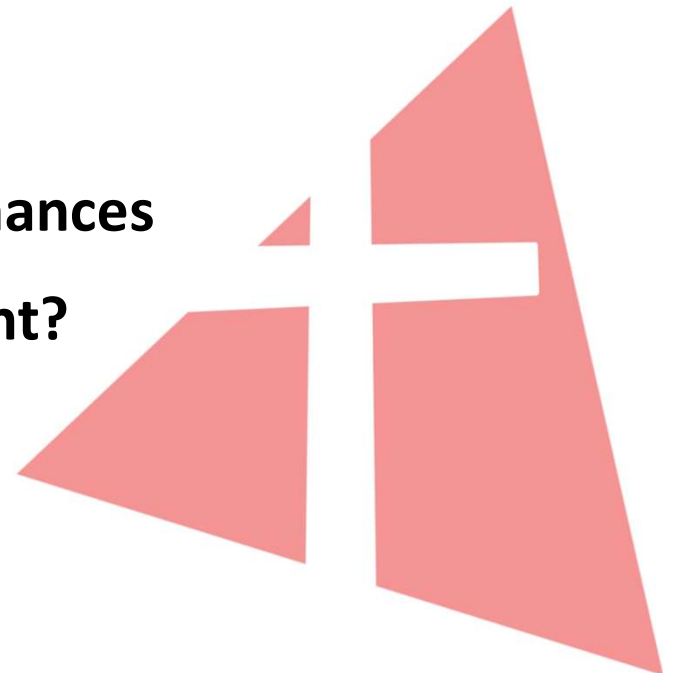


WHAT IS LOVE?

- Keeping no record of evil

keeps no record of evil;

- God gives us many, many, many, many 2nd chances
- Do we give a 2nd chance to people who repent?



WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Truth (Aletheia)**

(Love) Rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

- **God will NEVER rejoice in us “committing sin with good intentions”**
 - E.g. “Missionary Dating”
- **Do we try to justify our actions with “a good reason behind a bad deed”?**
 - “We love each other, that’s why we have sex”

WHAT IS LOVE?

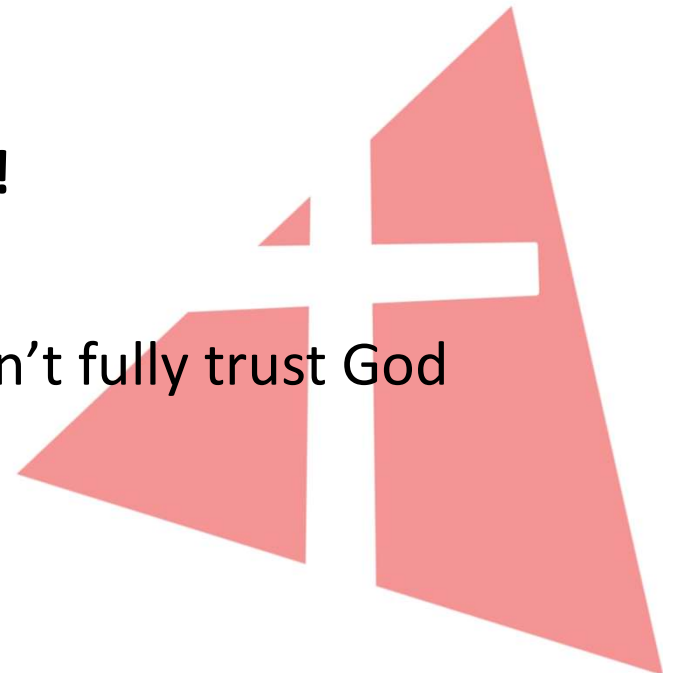
- **Unshakable Trust**

believes all things

- **Consider what it means that God trusts YOU!**

- **Do we truly trust God in everything?**

- Any sin we commit is evidence that we don't fully trust God

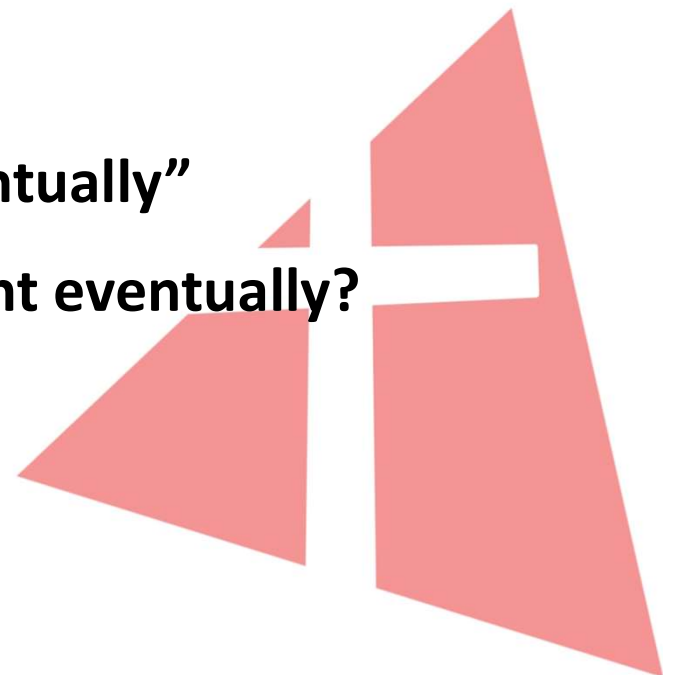


WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Trusting that “things will turn out right”**

hopes all things

- **God trusts that “we will turn out alright eventually”**
- **Do we trust that God will make all things right eventually?**



WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Perseverance**

endures all things

- **Jesus chose to endure the most painful and shameful treatment**
- **Do we endure what other people are doing?**



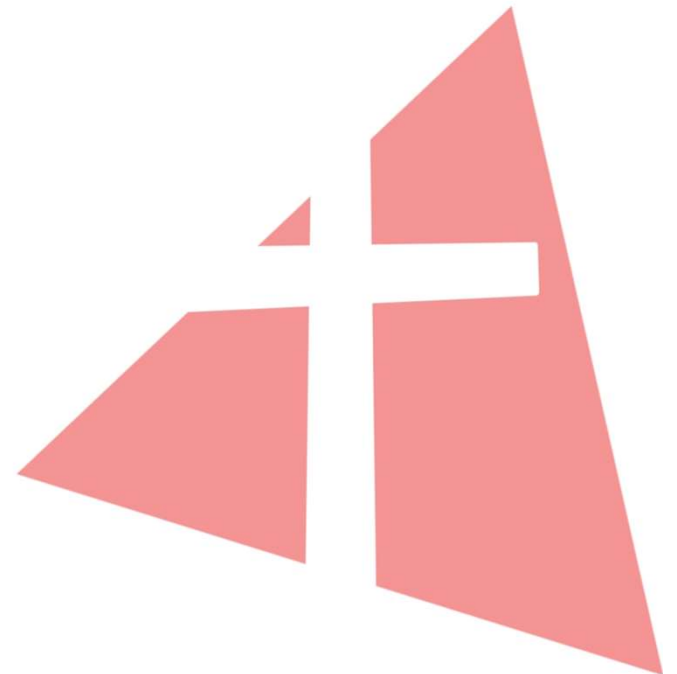
WHAT IS LOVE?

- **Everlasting**

Love never fails

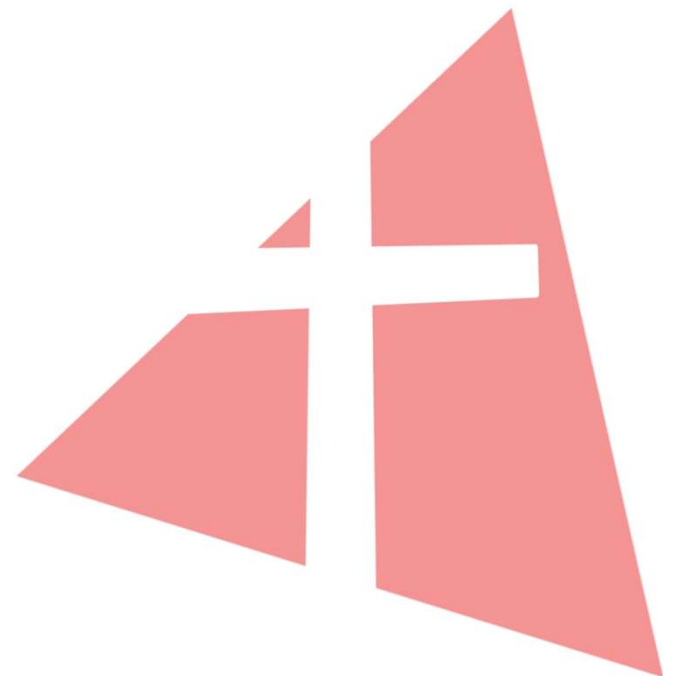
- **God's love is unconditional**

- **Is our love for Him too?**



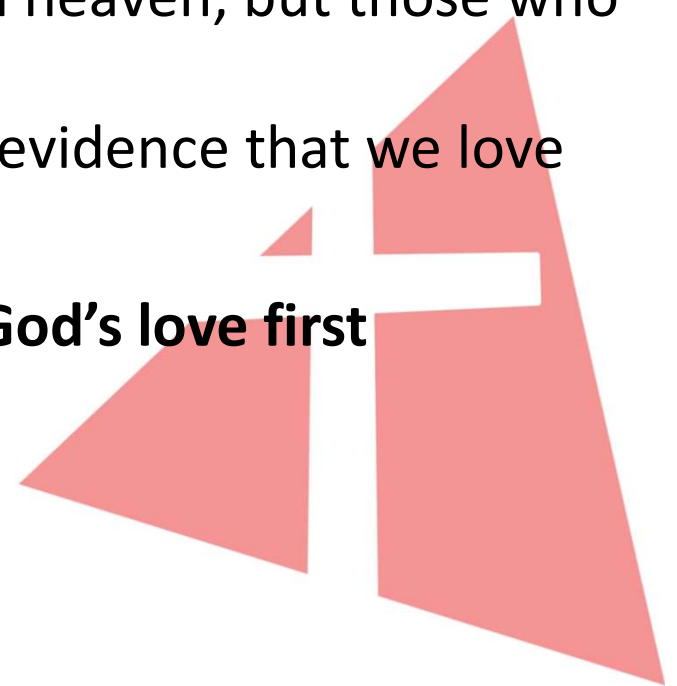
GOD'S LOVE

- **Love is not what society thinks love is**



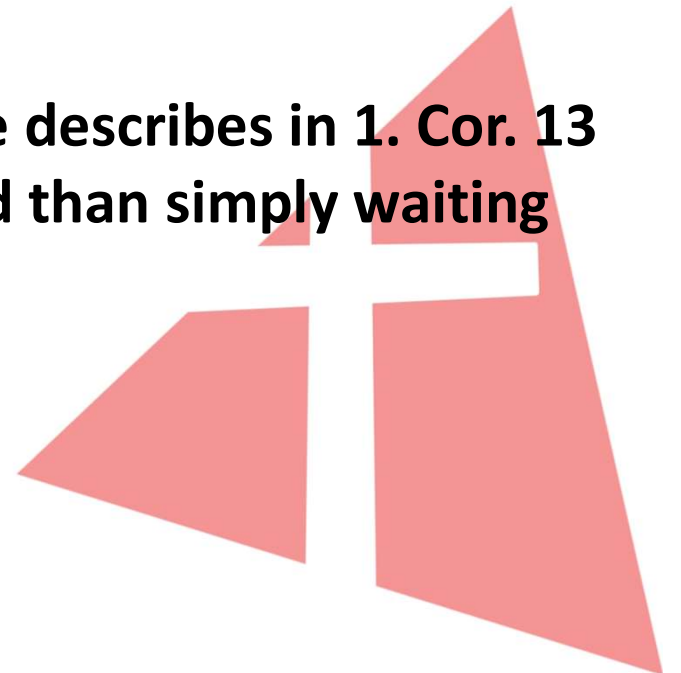
OUR RESPONSE?

- **We need to examine ourselves regularly whether we truly love God**
 - Not those who are loved by God will reach heaven, but those who love God
 - “Feeling in love with God” is nice, but not evidence that we love God
- **We can only love God if we have embraced God’s love first**



TRUE LOVE

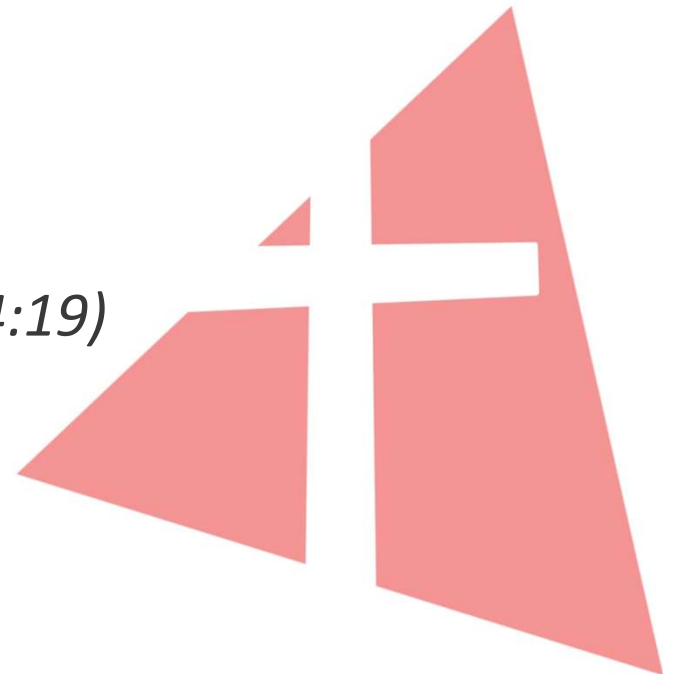
- **The physical manifestation of God's love is wonderful, but only the tip of the iceberg**
- **Meditating on these attributes that the Bible describes in 1. Cor. 13 allows us to go much, much deeper with God than simply waiting for an "emotional high"**



GOD'S LOVE TRANSFORMS US

- **The deeper we go in God's love, the more we receive God's love, the more loving we will become**
 - Towards Gods
 - Towards other people

We love him, because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)



GOD'S LOVE TRANSFORMS US

- I want to love God and other people the way God defines love
- How about you?

