

**“Are You a Friend of Jesus”**

**John 15:9 - 17**

**Big Idea – It’s important I know what Jesus expects of me as His friend.**

**Intro:** 2 weeks ago looked at the 7<sup>th</sup> “I AM” statement of Jesus in John’s Gospel. I Am the Vine” – as branches in the Vine, we have the privilege of abiding and the responsibility of bearing fruit – read “abiding/remain” verses and “fruit” verses.

15:2, 4-8

Review?: different kinds of spiritual fruit are named in the Bible. We bear fruit when we win others to Christ (Rom. 1:13). We are a part of the harvest (John 4:35-38). We bear fruit as we grow in holiness and obedience (Rom. 6:22). Christian giving is fruit from a dedicated life (Rom. 15:28).

Even our good works, our service, grow out of our abiding life (Col. 1:10). The praise that comes from our hearts and lips is actually fruit to the glory of God (Heb. 13:15).

"The fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-23) is the kind of Christian character that glorifies

A true branch, united with the vine, will always bear fruit. Not every branch bears a bumper crop, just as not every field has a bumper harvest (Matt. 13:8, 23), but there is always fruit where there is life. If there is no fruit, the branch is worthless.

Our Lord had spoken about peace in John 14:27 “I am leaving you with a gift— peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”

Now in this chapter He mentions love and joy

John 15:9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; **abide/remain in My love.**

10 When you obey my commandments, you remain in **my love**, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and **remain in his love.**

11 I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your **joy will overflow!**

**Love, joy, and peace** are the first three "fruit of the Spirit" named in Galatians 5:22-23.

**Abiding in Christ certainly ought to produce His love, joy, and peace in our hearts. Because we love Him, we keep His commandments; and, as we keep His commandments, we abide in His love and experience it in a deeper way.**

**Love not guilt should be why we obey Him** and do what He wants us to do!

In John's Gospel you find Jesus speaking about the Father's love for Him. We so emphasize God's love for the world and the church that we forget that the Father loves the Son. Because the Father does love the Son, He has put all things into the Son's hand (John 3:35) and has revealed all things to the Son (John 5:20). The Father loved the Son before the foundation of the world (John 17:24); He loved the Son when the Son died on the cross (John 10:17).

The amazing thing is believers today can experience personally that same love! Jesus prayed "that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them [the disciples and believers today]" (John 17:26).

So, As branches in the Vine, we have the privilege of abiding and the responsibility of bearing fruit.

Now we look at who Jesus friends are: **Big Idea – It's important I know what Jesus expects of me as His friend.**

John 15:12 "This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

13 There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.


14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

15 I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me."

### **What does Jesus expect of His friends/followers/disciples**

1. Love for one another as Jesus loves us – vs. 12 & 17

Jesus loved us when we were in our sins, Jesus loved Judas who betrayed him

2. Obedience to His will out of love  , not guilt.

If your church/preacher/faith makes you do whatever you do out of guilt, it's not Bible Christianity – it's a sham!

### **3. Listening to the things He tells us – vs 15**

These things are found in His Word – you can't abide and obey without daily making time for relationship – Him to you through the Word and you to Him through prayer.

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent...rightly studying the Word of truth-notice contrast in next verses: 2 Timothy 2:16 Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behavior.

17 This kind of talk spreads like cancer, as in the case of Hymenaeus and Philetus.

18 They have left the path of truth, claiming that the resurrection of the dead has already occurred; in this way, **they have turned some people away from the faith.**

Contrast this with the demands/expectations of false gods and religions:

#### **False gods Demands of their followers/disciples**

In India, there are men who strip off clothes, cover their naked bodies with white ashes, neither cut nor comb their hair and plaster their heads with cow manure (because the cow is sacred in that country) and endure every type of torture imaginable to try to gain the favor of their god.

The Sun Gazer of India sat naked every day for fifteen years gazing at the bright sun, until his eyes were slowly burned out and his limbs withered away from inactivity. He was serving his god in the sun.

The Sadhus of India, who afflict themselves by lying on beds of nails for years, show the same fervency of conviction.

Then, there is the Hindu who held his arms up for twenty years. They soon were stiff from that position, but he illustrates the willingness of others to sacrifice themselves to appease their gods.

The Jehovah's Witnesses, with their strong conviction about blood transfusions, willing to let their children die rather than go against their ideas, are an example of others putting us to shame in conviction.

The Japanese Hell Divers making their suicidal plunge into an enemy ship, only to be blown to bits themselves, tragically illustrate the point.

And finally, the Muslims drive our point home with their bloody oath, "I will sacrifice my life to take the life of one or more infidels."

## **Why did Jesus choose His friends**

### **1. Love for us – John 15:9, 12**

### **2. To go and represent Him and bear fruit that remains - John 15:16**

### **3. So we would love one another – John 15:17**

the church should be a hospital for sick, broken people, not a showroom for perfect people. You know why? There aren't any perfect people, we're all broken in some way or another.

If true believers, we're all just sinners saved by grace!

Are there churches that abuse people? Absolutely!

Are all churches and all Christians like that? No, thank God!

People need the kind of unconditional love and acceptance that Jesus gave when he told the woman caught in the act of adultery and about to be stoned, "Neither do I condemn you (but now listen to this last part) go, and sin no more!"

(John 8:11)