

John 15:12-17
Love and Friendship

INTRO: Intra-Trinitarian love and Christ's love for you is the foundation and starting point of Jesus' masterful teaching on "love and friendship."

"The Love of God *for* Christians (Jn 15:9) becomes the love of God *between* Christians (Jn 15:12-14)."

Today's sermon summarized in one sentence: "Jesus loves you greatly Christian friend,
and _____."

Jesus' sermon on Love and Friendship highlights 3 Great Truths

1) **The Savior's _____ love is the model for His friends' _____ love.**

(*John 15:12-14*; Rom. 5:6-8; Col. 3:12-14; Eph. 4:32)

Jesus' sermon on Love and Friendship highlights 3 Great Truths

2) **Jesus' Friends are Granted _____ concerning the Master's Affairs.**

(John 15:15; 16:12; Matt. 11:25-27)

3) **The Sovereign King _____ His Friends and Calls Each of Us to Love & _____.**

(John 15:16; 6:63-70a; Eph. 1-2)

For Further Reflection/Application: *Lord help us to be effectually doers of the Word!*

“*Love and Friendship*” is the central theme of this morning’s exposition of John 15:12-17.

Selfless, humble, sacrificial, (Christ-like) love is what King Jesus expects from His people; (His “friends” and true disciples). Compare and contrast Christ’s teaching on love in John 15:12-13 and John 13:34-35 with the so-called wisdom of this world. Note the dominate emphasis today on self-love and self-care.

In the song the “Greatest Love of All” by George Benson and Whitney Houston the lyrics are as follows; *Everybody searching for a hero/People need someone to look up to/ I never found anyone who fulfill my needs/A lonely place to be/ And so I learned to depend on me...The greatest love of all is happening to me/ I found the greatest love of all/Inside of me/The greatest love of all/ Is easy to achieve/Learning to love yourself/It is the greatest love of all.* Many books and songs today promote this unbiblical message. Carl Trueman describes “the rise and triumph of the modern self” in the West as “expressive individualism.” The Bible does not need to command us to take good care of ourselves; we do that quite well; (sometimes in great excess). Note Eph. 5:28-30. Relationships often break down and churches split because of carnal selfishness; Read Colossians 3:12-14.

Notice how God’s love for us in Christ ought to influence our interactions with others (especially beloved church friends/family- Galatians 6:10). Notice the flow of Jesus’ teaching on love and friendship. 1) God’s perfect love for Jesus and Jesus’ reciprocal love for God (John 15:9). 2) God in Christ’s radical love for us (John 15:12b). 3) Jesus’ “ode to love” commandment. John 15:12-14, 17. Love one-another!

A friend of King Jesus’ is a friend of mine! Do your actions and words demonstrate that you view your brothers and sisters in Christ as friends and family in the way you treat them? What are some ways you’ve experienced Christ-like love here at Lake Country Bible Church. What are some practical ways you can “love one another” (John 15:12-13, 17) this Christmas season? How can prayer be an expression of love? How can ministry service be an expression of love? How can sacrificial giving be an expression of love? How can you show Christ-like love to church family during happy times; (such as engagements/weddings/the birth of children)? How can you show Christ-like love to church family during hard times; (such as funerals; surgeries/cancer treatments; Christian persecution; etc)? Attending someone’s wedding from church is a simple way to flesh out John 15:12-13. Rarely are believers asked to sacrifice their life for a Christian friend (John 15:13); but we are given many opportunities to die to self in selfless service to one another.

“At Olive Garden, you’re family.” How much more should this be true within the spiritual family of God and within our own Christian households? What are some ways you witnessed (or heard about) familial love in action during the recent LCBC friends and church family Thanksgiving fellowship/feast?

Jesus’ commandment *to love one another* is no small thing seeing that many believers have been cut off from their unbelieving, biological families; others have been shamed and shunned by former non-Christian friends. Do you know anyone like this?

John 13:34-35 and John 15:12-17; is the Servant-King’s “ODE TO LOVE!” (see also 1 Peter 2:17; 1 Cor. 13.; Eph. 5:25).

Under the 2nd great truth when I say as trusted friends we receive “insider information” I simply mean glorious mysteries (now revealed). The Word of God (written and Incarnate) reveals the marvelous mind of Christ and the glorious will of God. The Savior grants obedient believers heavenly insights concerning redemptive-history and the glories to follow (read 1 Peter 1:10-12; see also Matt. 11:25-27).

To understand John 15:16 better see also John 6:63-70 and Ephesians 1:1-14; 2:1-10; Col. 3:12-14.

The Lord is zealous for His believing branches to bear much fruit. He ordains both the means as well as the end. Heartfelt obedience and fruits of love characterize Jesus’ true disciples and friends.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF JOHN 15 & REESTABLISHING THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

Thus far we've considered Jesus' Extended Garden/Vineyard Metaphor.

In John 15:1-8

- A) God the Son is the True Vine; (John 15:1a, 4-5, 7)
- B) God the Father is the Master-Gardener; (John 15:1b-2)
- C) Counterfeit Christians are the Fruitless Branches; (John 15:2a, 6; Mt. 3:12; Jn 13:21-30)
- D) Genuine Disciples are the Fruit-bearing Branches; (John 15:2b-3, 5, 8;)

By their *fruits* you shall know them is Jesus Christ's "own canon of sacred criticism."

We also saw how Jesus' teaching in John 15:9-12 on "Love and Obedience" is a 5- Stranded Cord.

The following 5 "cords" are interwoven and interconnected:

- 1) The Blessings of Union with Christ include peace, joy, and love.
- 2) Abiding in Christ's Love enables believers to bear even more fruit.
- 3) Believers Remain in Christ's Love through Heartfelt Obedience.
- 4) Heartfelt Obedience is the overflow and evidence of sincere love for Christ.
- 5) The Love of God in Christ motivates and compels us to sacrificial love and good deeds.

John 15:12-17; Jesus' Love and Friendship sermon- additional commentary

"John 15:1-17 is the magna carta of the Christian love commandment...The love that Jesus asked of his own is no other than that love ("just as") with which the Father had loved Him, the love that moved the Father to send His Son (and His Son to willingly come) into the world and to unite in Him, the True Vine, His people in the world, a new community... It is by this grand conception of being taken up in faith in Jesus into the love of the Father and the Son that the church can understand itself in its uniqueness in and for the lost world...By the fruits of this love of the disciples for each other, the Father glorifies Himself in this new community (the family of God/the Bride/Body of Christ), the vine he has planted."

Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John commentary*, p. 522.

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