

Love, Friendship, Community

John 15:9-25

Love is as love does.

God is Love (1 John 4:16). The truth concerning the substance of God is that his 'being' is his 'loving'.

The expectation spoken by Jesus to the disciples is to follow in this example.

Love is to be the essence of Christian discipleship, not simply an ethical response.

The priority or focus of Jesus words is that of relationship.

The relationship is revealed through obedience and perseverance.

To say, "The priority is obedience. Just do what God says and that will keep you on his good side". Gets the words of Jesus very wrong.

vs. 9,	Love 3X	
vs. 10,	Love 2X	Obedience 2X
vs. 12,	Love 2X	Obedience 1X
vs. 13,	Love 1X	

Friends

vs. 14,	Friend 1X	Obedience 1X
vs. 15,	Friend 1X	

vs. 17,	Love 1X	Obedience 1X
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vs. 11, My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.
From peace (14:27) to joy.

Question: What is the joy of Jesus? How does the joy of Jesus complete our joy?

vs. 12-15, Let's talk about friendship.

We already have an example from the OT.

Abraham ->

2 Chronicles 20:7 Are you not our God who drove out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and who gave it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?

Isaiah 41:8 But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen,
descendant of Abraham, my friend —

Moses ->

Exodus 33:11 The Lord would speak with Moses face to face, just as a man speaks with his friend,

What did Jesus mean by friend?

Meaning #1

In the world of the OT, friends maintain confidences.

Genesis 18:17-19 Then the Lord said, "Should I hide what I am about to do from Abraham? **18** Abraham is to become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. **19** For I have chosen him so that he will command his children and his house after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just. This is how the Lord will fulfill to Abraham what he promised him."

Meaning #2

In Greek thought, a friend was like a “second self”.

Remember: **John 1:14-18** The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **15** (John testified concerning him and exclaimed, “This was the one of whom I said, ‘The one coming after me ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.’”) **16** Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from his fullness, **17** for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God. The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father’s side—he has revealed him.

- God revealed his glory by the giving of the law to Moses (a friend).
- God’s glory is fulfilled by the giving of his son (Jesus), the embodiment of the Torah in flesh. The disciples are a ‘new Moses’.

Meaning #3

Jesus shares with his friends the secrets of his heart, his possessions, and a willingness to sacrifice.

vs. 16, Specific and General

I chose you.

Genesis 12:1-3 The Lord said to Abram: Go from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. **2** I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Exodus 19:5-6 Now if you will carefully listen to me and keep my covenant, you will be my own possession out of all the peoples, although the whole earth is mine, **6** and you will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation.’ These are the words that you are to say to the Israelites.

Deuteronomy 7:6 For you are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.

Ephesians 1:4 For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him.

Revelation 17:14 These will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those with him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

Remember: Jesus is the true vine.

Jesus is sending his followers to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain (last).

1. **6:27**, Food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.
2. **8:35-37**, A son, not a slave, will remain in the household forever. So if the Son set you free, you really will be free.
3. **12:34**, The Messiah will remain forever. He conquers death through the resurrection.

What is John’s understanding of the Christian community?

Abiding in God’s love.

Being chosen by God.

Glorifying God by bearing fruit.

Keeping the commandment of love.

Being friends of God.

Having the joy of being a people belonging to God.

1. Experiencing the triune God through contemplation.
2. Living in relationship with one another as a manifestation of communion.
3. Being a people who express their commitment by means of active mission (declaring the good news of Jesus to every nation).

Question: Is this your experience? Is this your pursuit? Is this the focus of your energy (training)?

vs. 18-25, The teeter totter of Worldviews. (Both/And)

Luke -> has a more optimistic view

- Acts carries the mission of the good news of Jesus into a dark world. Those who speak boldly find favor with just officials (People of Peace).

John -> writes from a perspective that views the world as hostile.

The people of God are still people who are on offense...through the gifts of the Spirit.

“Christianity surpasses Judaism, at least theoretically, in its approach of love to all men, but its only genuine answer to the powerful wicked forces of this world is, as it seems, martyrdom.” ~ David Flusser, Israeli scholar

Verse 20 is central to vs. 18-25.

This is the main point!

Philippians 3:10 My goal is to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death,

Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God’s children, **17** and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

We continue to engage the hostility of the world through the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

Keep in step with the Spirit

Question: How are you keeping in step with the Spirit?