

John 15:12-26.

Last week we studied about the *“parable of the vine & branches”*,... *“benefits of abiding in Christ”*,... and *Jesus’ teaching on love*, *“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you”*, v. 9. Jesus continues on the theme of *“love”* in *verse 12*, where he refers to *“love”* as a **“commandment”** from Him.

II. The “Eleventh” Commandment, v.12, *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you...v. 17, These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”*

A. The Supremacy of Love.

1. You will remember that Jesus had already given this commandment, just a couple of chapters back, Jn. 13:34, *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

2. Jesus was **continuing** to teach his disciples of **“the nature of discipleship”** **after** His crucifixion, resurrection, & ascension.

a. Remember this was His last day with them prior to his death.

3. Paul had much to say about *“love”* in **I Cor. 13**. In fact in **vs. 4-8** of that chapter he lists a dozen characteristics of true love. And in **v.13**, Paul says, *“So now, faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”*

4. In giving this **“new commandment”**, Jesus is saying that outside the need for personal holiness, “love” should be the identifying characteristic of all believers!

5. We “Baptists” (& truthfully Christianity in general) have a “bad reputation” with this character trait of love.

6. Calling ourselves “Baptist” or a “Christian”, or to say we “believe in God & Jesus”, is nothing more than blatant hypocrisy,, unless we have personal holiness... & love toward others !!

B. The Supreme Example of Love, v. 13, *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”*

1. This statement of Jesus is often used to exemplify the most extreme act of love for another person... I have a military style t-shirt from the 9-Line organization with this verse printed on the

back. It uses Jesus' words [to refer to a fellow veteran](#) in the trenches, giving his life for his "band of brothers."

2. But let's not forget from whom these words came !

3. [Clarke interprets this verse](#), "No man can carry his love for his friend farther than this: for, when he gives up his life, he gives up all that he has. This proof of my love for you I shall give in a few hours; and the doctrine which I recommend to you, I am... going to exemplify myself." (WOW... what an example!)

4. Wow! [That person you are tempted to be angry with](#) needs to see "your example" of the love of Jesus... lived out in your life!

5. [Likewise the person who holds a grudge or bad feelings](#) toward you... needs instead to love you as Jesus illustrated His love for us!

C. Are You A Friend of Jesus?

1. You may not have thought of this lately, but [Jesus gives us this awesome privilege](#) (friendship with Him)... with a qualifier, v. 14, "[You are my friends if you do what I command you.](#)"

2. In v.13, Jesus says He would, "[lay down His life for \(His\) friends](#)", & then He **defines** His "[friends](#)" ! do you qualify?

3. Truthfully [none of us do 100%](#) of the time... but God understands that. (Oftentimes even better than we do!).

4. [I was a part of an "Ordination Council" Sunday PM](#) at Sulphur Springs Bapt. The gentleman we interviewed for ordination to Christian ministry kept saying he "[wasn't worthy](#)" to serve, & that he was "[a nobody](#)" But it appeared obvious by his lifestyle (spoken of by others present) that he indeed met Jesus' criteria to be ordained.

[As we say today](#), he was "[beating himself up](#)" over not obeying all the time.

By the "[mercy of God](#)", we are "[children of God](#)" and also "[friends of Jesus](#)", as we "[obey His commandments](#)".

5. [It's interesting](#) that Jesus **didn't** say "friendship with Him" was based on what we "[did not do](#)" (such as "[do not steal, do not kill, do not bear false witness](#)"). Often we (& the religious leaders of Jesus day) were quite proud of "what they **didn't** do"!

6. [Spurgeon](#), "Some think it is quite sufficient if they [avoid what he forbids](#). Abstinence from evil is [a great part of righteousness](#), but it is [not enough](#) for friendship."

D. Implications of Being Jesus' Friend, v. 15, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."

1. In Jn. 13:16, Jesus referred to His disciples as "servants".
2. As He is nearing his time of death on the cross, Jesus "calls them friends".
3. Wiersbe, "The 'obedience' Jesus speaks of here is not that of a 'slave', but of a 'friend'."
 - a. ...& there's a definite difference! It's an obedience from a **loving friendship**.... not just a **slave's obligation**.
4. As **His** friends.... we obey Him.
5. As **our** friend.... He tells us what He hears from the Father.
6. **Abraham** was "a friend of God", & **God** told **Abe** what he intended to do to Sodom & Gomorrah.
7. Jesus was telling them then what was to happen.... & He speaks to us today **in His Word**... & **through His Spirit**.

E. Chosen For a Purpose, v. 16, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."

1. **ESV footnote:** "...does not negate the disciples' willing decision to follow Jesus when he called them. Jesus is emphasizing that the ultimate factor in determining who would follow him was Jesus' own choice. Gk.— 'eklegomai'=to chose or pick out from a group'.
2. He chose us.... for more than a "rescue from eternal punishment"....
... **that (we) would go... bear fruit... & that our "fruit should abide"**.
3. **Chuck Smith reports, Dr. Charles Finney** (father of American revivalism)

had a very powerful ministry through the Word of God. He was a lawyer before he became a minister, and he was able to set forth the scriptures in a very logical order and sequence. Five years after his meetings, in the various communities, they made a survey of those that had gone forward in Finney's meetings, and it was discovered that eighty-five percent of them were still going on with the Lord. Their faith was not based upon an emotional appeal or an emotional moment, but was based upon facts of God's Word. ...and it was lasting fruit "that your fruit should remain".

4. In Jesus' "great commission" He said, "**as you go, make disciples**".
5. Jesus intends for us "to go".... **with a purpose**.
6. **If every morning we ask God to lead us** to someone who needs to hear about Jesus... our who needs a "**cup of cold water.... in the name of Jesus**", we can count on being used by Him that day.

7. “Try it... you’ll like it.”

F. Real Purpose In Prayer, , v. 16, c, “.... So that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

1. These words of Jesus remind us of v. 7, “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”
2. In both verses **Jesus is promising to answer the prayer of**, v. 7, ... those who “abide in (Him)”...
3. **And** in v.16,c, to those who “go and bear fruit... that remains”.
4. **Too often** our prayers are like our Christmas list to Santa Claus !
5. If you **remember** from last week, (Spurgeon) “It becomes safe for God to say to the sanctified soul, ‘Ask what thou wilt, and it shall be done unto thee.’
6. We covered v. 17, earlier with v.12.

III. A Warning, vs. 18-26.

A. A Spiritual Reality, v.18-21.

1. V. 18, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you... v.20, Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.”
2. John would again remind believers, 1Jn.3:13, “Do not be surprised brothers, that the world hates you.”
3. The hatred of believers follows a pattern seen in the world since Cain killed Able.
4. Tacitus spoke of the people who were “hated for their crimes, whom the mob called Christians.” And Suetonius spoke of ‘a race of men who belong to a new and evil superstition.’
3. The “world” Jesus speaks of is made up of the people... organizations... philosophies... and purposes that are anti-Christian.
4. The reason “this world” is against believers Jesus says is, v. 19, ...“because you are not of the world...”
 - a. And for this same reason, v. 20, says they persecuted Jesus.
5. Jesus has, v.19, “...chosen us out of the world...”
6. Paul 2 Cor. 6:17, “... come out from among them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing...” (Isa, 52:11).
 - a. Our lives should be **noticeably different** than “the world”, as we “come out from among them”.

7. v. 21, “But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.”
 - a. The basic reason for rejecting & persecuting Jesus (& us) is, “because they do not know him who sent me.”
 - b. Jesus said the same thing to the religious leaders, Jn. 8: 19, “... You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also”.

B. Revelation Brings Responsibility, v.22-25,

1. v. 22, “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin”.
2. One scholar has said, “Because Jesus did come and speak to the world, they knew something of God that they did not know before. This made them “without excuse.”
 - a. The “sin” they were guilty of (among others!) was rejecting the supreme revelation of God that came in Jesus Christ.
3. v. 23, “Whoever hates me hates my Father also.”
 - a. These of Jesus’ day (& our day as well) who reject Jesus in effect “hate” Him... & the Father as well.
 - b. v. 25, “But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’”
4. When Jesus came into the world, He not only split time into
 - a. BC and AD, He also divided every human being into
 - b. those who believe & those who do not...
 - c. those who love Him & those who hate Him.
5. Jn. 3:16, 18, “For God so loved the world that he gave...., Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already...”
6. Again Jesus said, Mt. 12:30, “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.”
7. When those who have rejected Jesus stand before Him at “the Great White Throne”, they will be “without excuse”.

C. Hope And Purpose, v. 26, ““But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”

1. Jesus will teach more regarding the Holy Spirit in ch. 16, but for now Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as “the Helper, whom I will send... from the Father”.

2. The Holy Spirit (God Himself) was to come.
3. Acts 1:8, Jesus said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
4. Without Him (the Holy Spirit) those early disciples (& us today) would be easy prey for Satan.
5. The “Helper” is not only within us to “help” us, but also “to bear witness about (Jesus)”.
6. Someone has well said, “If spiritual things happen that are not consistent with the nature of Jesus, it isn’t the Holy Spirit doing it.”
8. Scripture does tell us that in the end times “False prophets will come (Mt. 25) will arise and lead many astray”.
 - a. We will need to “...test the spirits to see whether they are from God”, 1Jn.4:1.
- 9, Jesus in v. 27, goes on to say, “...and you also will bear witness...”.
10. Friend, the very purpose we are left here & not taken on to Heaven at our conversion... is to “bear witness... bear fruit” for our Lord.
11. Tasker has said of this verse, “The witness of the Advocate and the witness of the apostles are in effect a single witness.”
12. Jesus put it this way, “Without me you can do nothing.”
13. Now... as obedient friends of Jesus,... let’s go and bear fruit... & be a witness... for Jesus !