

# “Gospel of John: Being a Loving Friend”

Dr. Geoffrey Plummer  
Calvary Baptist Church

January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## Scripture

### John 15:9-15

“Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.”

“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.”

“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”

“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”

“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”

“You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”

## Last Week

We talked about vines and branches

Are you a good branch or a bad branch?

What does it mean to abide in Jesus?

Will you abide in Him?

## This Week

We continue in John 15 with Jesus continuing His dedicated teaching of the Disciples

Is Jesus your friend?

“What a Friend I have in Jesus”

### Proverbs 17:17

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”

### Proverbs 18:24

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

More importantly, are you His friend?

## James 2:23

“Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and **he was called a friend of God.**”

How do you know if you're a friend of Jesus?

Jesus gave the disciples the qualities of a loving friend

First, friends of Jesus have an abiding love:

## Abiding Love

### John 15:9

“Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; **abide in My love.**”

The Greek word for “love” here is **agape** -> that deep, enduring, and sacrificial love

We looked in-depth at that word “abide” last week

The Greek word is **meno** which means “to remain”

“Just as the Father” loved Jesus, Jesus has loved the disciples

John commented on Jesus’s love for them earlier in the Gospel:

### John 13:1

“Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, **He loved them to the end.**”

John repeatedly called himself “the disciple that Jesus loved” for a reason – **five times he wrote that**

Jesus loved them “to the end” -> to completion

John thought, “You couldn’t love anyone more than Jesus loved them”

**Jesus called them to remain in that love**

Don’t do anything to leave My love, Jesus says

Do not leave the fellowship of blessing

Stay with Me!

The criticism of the church in Ephesus by Jesus was that they “left their first love” – **Revelation 2:4**

**A true friend STAYS -> through the good times, through the difficult times, at ALL times, they are there for you**

Second, friends of Jesus have an obedient love:

## Obedient Love

### John 15:10

**“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.”**

You might ask yourself, “How do I show that I am a friend of Jesus?”

Jesus said, if we keep His commandments, we show that love for Him

The Greek word for “keep” or “observe” is **téreó** which means to guard or watch over

The idea is that they never leave your mind

### Deuteronomy 11:18-21

**“You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. **You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them,** as long as the heavens remain above the earth.”**

Pretty vivid reminder of what God required of all Israel

Israel was promised great reward for obedience to God -> land and large families

What are we promised for obeying the Lord?

Jesus answered that in the prior chapter we looked at:

### John 14:21

**“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”**

We are promised the Father’s love and an intimate relationship with the Son

Jesus will disclose Himself to us -> revealing to us His guidance and in-depth knowledge

**“just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love”**

Jesus was the example for us to follow as He followed the Father’s words to a letter

Third, friends of Jesus are filled with joy:

## Joyful Love

### John 15:11

“These things I have spoken to you **so that My joy may be in you**, and that your joy may be made full.”

What does the word “joy” mean to you?

Many people think joy means happiness and they confuse the two words

The Greek word for joy is **chara** which means “to understand God’s favor or the recognition of His grace”

Living in joy means that you understand how blessed you are by God

The stresses and difficulties of life do not phase someone who lives in joy

In the equation of life, nothing dissuades someone from the overall joy of His blessing

They echo like Paul:

### Romans 8:18

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

They align with Jesus better:

### Hebrews 12:1-2

“Let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**”

They sing, “soon and very soon, I am going to see the King!”

Fourth, friends of Jesus love their brothers and sisters

## Fellowship Love

We call that a fellowship love

### John 15:12

“This is My commandment, **that you love one another, just as I have loved you.**”

Jesus reiterates something He sent earlier in the Upper Room

**John 13:34** -> “A New Commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you”

We have covered this in great detail on prior Sundays here

Our love for each other IDENTIFIES as His disciple

**John 13:35** -> "By this ALL men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Jesus explained this when talking about the final judgment:

**Matthew 25:31-40**

"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

34"Then the King will say to those on His right, '**Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.** For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

37"Then the righteous will answer Him, '**Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?** And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'**"

Fifth, friends of Jesus are examples of sacrificial love:

**Example Love**

**John 15:13**

"Greater love has no one than this, **that one lay down his life for his friends.**"

There is no better example of love than the Lord's willing sacrifice of His life at the cross

Laying down your life for someone else in this manner is not often found in our world

Do we truly understand what sacrificial love is about?

We sacrifice when we put others ahead of ourselves

John explains that for us in his first letter to the churches:

**1 John 3:16-18**

"**We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

John wrote that we should be willing to lay down our life for our brothers and sisters

He explains that to be something we can do every day through providing for others

He does not understand how someone can see a brother or sister in need and turn a blind eye to the situation

He questions, **“how does the love of God abide in him?”**

It is a rhetorical question -> the answer is that God's love does not abide in him

He writes that love is something expressed not only with the tongue but also with the hands

James similarly wrote:

### **James 2:14-17**

**“What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and **yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.”****

If your love is all lip service with nothing behind it, that's not real love, is it?

The true friend sacrifices for their brothers and sisters

### **Being A Loving Friend**

Jesus summarizes that He is the true friend the disciples will need

But they need to return His friendship

### **John 15:14-15**

**“You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”**

Obedience to His words puts you on the inside with Jesus

No longer a slave, not understanding the fullness of God's plan

Jesus discloses the Father's plan to His friends

Jesus reveals Himself to us so we understand obedience, joy, fellowship, and sacrificial love

### **Prayer**

### **Benediction**