

## John 15:9-17

**After telling the disciples in vv. 4-7 to remain in Him (the Vine), in vv. 9-10 Jesus now commands them to remain in His love. How do we do that? "Obey My Commands".....**just as Jesus, our Perfect Example, kept His Father's commandments. Everything He did was in obedience to the will of God. In doing so, He remained in the constant enjoyment of the Father's love.<sup>1</sup>

The love which the Savior has for us is the same as the love of the Father for the Son. That thought should blow our minds and cause us to fall on our knees and worship! It is the same in quality and degree. It is "a vast, wide, deep, immeasurable love that surpasses knowledge and can never be fully comprehended by man."<sup>2</sup>

**Why did Jesus tell the disciples to remain in His love (v. 11)? What was in it for them (and us)?** Complete joy! The amount of joy in our lives is directly proportional to our obedience level.

Jesus found His own deep joy through obedience to God His Father. And He wanted His disciples to have that same joy that comes from dependence upon Him. He wanted *His* joy to be their joy. Man's idea of joy is to be as happy as he can by leaving God out of his life. The Lord taught that real joy comes by taking God into one's life as much as possible.<sup>3</sup>

**What was the next command Jesus gave His disciples (v. 12)?** Jesus summarized His teaching with the command to love one another, just as He had loved them (cf. 13:34-35).

**Why did Jesus command them to love one another (v. 12, 17)?** He would soon leave them. They would be left in a hostile world. There could be tension and the possibility of contention between them. It was imperative, especially for their testimony, that they love and encourage one another. Plus they needed to avoid being "Lone Rangers" in their world; they would need to stick together and stand united against the enemy. We must do the same today.

**How did Jesus command His disciples to love (v. 12)?** Love one another "*as I have loved you*," i.e., following the example of the humble, sacrificial, service of Christ. Jesus set the "love bar" high!

**How did Christ display His love (v. 13)?** He gave His life for as a ransom for all. The disciples were called to this type of love and devotion.

**What example did He give them (v. 13)?** Love for a friend reaches its zenith when one willingly sacrifices his or her life for that friend. Jesus had spoken of His love for His disciples (v. 12). He would shortly show them how great it was by making the supreme sacrifice for them. After that they would not only have His command to obey but also His example to follow.<sup>4</sup>

Their love should be of such a nature that they should be willing to die for one another. People who are willing to do this do not fight with each other. The greatest example of human self-sacrifice was for a man to die for his friends. The disciples of Christ are called to this type of devotion. Some people lay down their lives in a literal sense; others spend their whole lives in untiring service for the people of God.<sup>5</sup>

**What else was in it for the disciples to remain in His love (vv. 14-15)?** Friendship with Jesus. "Friend" is another relative term like "abiding" and "fellowship." A person can be a casual friend, a close friend, or an intimate friend, depending on his or her love and loyalty. All believers are God's friends in one sense, but abiding believers are His special friends on a deeper level, because they seek to obey Him consistently (cf. Psalm 25:14).<sup>6</sup>

**How do you get to be Jesus' friend (v. 14)?** The key is simple obedience. But our obedience must be active, for Jesus said, "*You are my friends if you do what I command.*" Our friendship with Jesus is conditioned upon our obedience. For the Christian, obedience is not tied to a check list but is motivated by a love for the Lord.....a desire to please him. It is not a drag. It is not performing..... not trying hard to earn His favor. It is something we want to do, not something we must do. It is something that brings us great joy.

We show that we are His friends by doing whatever He commands us. This is not the way we *become* His friends, but rather the way we *exhibit it* to the world.<sup>7</sup>

**What point was Jesus making in v. 15?** He was emphasizing the difference between servants and friends. Our friends are taken into our confidence and we confide in them important things. For Jesus this meant telling them about their impending future without Him.

A servant does not have a close relationship with his master, as friends have. Normally, a servant does what he is told without understanding his master's mind or business. Since Jesus had opened Himself to His disciples, the title "servant" did not fit their relationship.<sup>8</sup>

**What was the basis for His choosing the disciples (v. 16)?** The same as the basis for choosing us – for His good pleasure.....His grace.....His love. In the Jewish culture it was common for disciples to choose their rabbis. Even today students love to seek out the teacher of their choice and to attach themselves to him or her. Jesus upset that apple cart. In this case, the rabbi was choosing His own disciples. However, His choice was not based on His assessment of their future potential (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

**What was the purpose of His choosing?** So that they would produce lasting fruit. Fruit here refers to the salvation of souls. The Lord chose the disciples to go and bring forth *lasting* fruit. He was not interested in mere professions of faith in Himself, but in genuine cases of salvation.<sup>9</sup>

The secret of effective service is prayer. The disciples were sent on a mission with the guarantee that the Father would grant them whatever they asked in Christ's name.<sup>10</sup>

**Why did Jesus repeatedly remind his disciples to love one another (v. 17)?** What would it take to impact the world as He had done? It wouldn't be their speaking abilities, their miracle-working powers, or their courage. Jesus said the world would be drawn to His message when it saw His followers continuing to love each other (13:35).

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<sup>1</sup> MacDonald, W. (1995). Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments. (A. Farstad, Ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1550.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on John, 2023 Edition (published by <http://planobiblechapel.org/soniclight/>), 410.

<sup>5</sup> MacDonald, W. (1995). Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments. (A. Farstad, Ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1551.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on John, 2023 Edition (published by <http://planobiblechapel.org/soniclight/>), 410

<sup>7</sup> MacDonald, W. (1995). Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments. (A. Farstad, Ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1551.

<sup>8</sup> Edwin A. Blum, "John," in The Bible Knowledge Commentary: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 326.

<sup>9</sup> MacDonald, W. (1995). Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments. (A. Farstad, Ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1551.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.