

Friendship that Requires Love

Introduction

- In John 15:1-11, Jesus is teaching about a fruitful & effective life for a believer.
- Jesus is the true vine, the Father is the vinedresser & believers are branches.
- Believers are effective only if they persevere in faith & obedience to Jesus (v. 1-5).
- False believers will be revealed & destroyed in judgment (v. 6).
- Through prayer believers will remain faithful, fruitful & joyful in Jesus (v.7-11).
- Jesus then addresses the power of love as He faces His own death & resurrection (v. 12-17).

I. Love from God (Jn. 15:12-13)

A. The duty of love (v. 12)

Only a believer is capable of this love [ἀγαπάω] & understands how Jesus has loved us – “as I have loved you” (1Jn. 4:7). Every believer is commanded to love God as the highest priority (Mt. 22:37-38). The second great command is to love others (Mt. 22:39). Love is a command & duty. Love is a permanent obligation, duty & debt owed by every believer for a lifetime (Rom. 13:8). God’s love is permanent & eternal (Rom. 8:38-39).

B. The sacrifice of love (v. 13)

Jesus is the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29). As the Lamb, His life’s purpose was sacrificial – please the Father & redeem lost sinners (Jn. 14:31; Lk. 19:10). Jesus lived the perfect life for our righteousness, died for our sins & rose from the dead to guarantee our redemption – sacrifice. The motivation for His sacrificial lifestyle & death was love – “Greater love”.

The sacrificial lifestyle & death of Jesus is the model & motivation for believers to love one another (1Jn. 3:16).

II. Friendship with God (Jn. 15:14-17)

A. The benefit of divine friendship (v. 14-15)

Any believer who willingly obeys Jesus is a friend of Jesus (v. 14). A friend (φίλος) is one who is on intimate terms or in close association with another. In order to love Jesus & be His friend, a believer must obey Him (Jn. 14:15; 15:14). A friend of Jesus is privileged to know the revealed will of God as we obey (v. 15; Jn. 7:17; 1Co. 2:16; Rom. 12:1-2). We are privileged to know God’s plan & purpose from the scriptures while we obey. Both a slave & friend of Jesus must obey Him – a slave without explanation, but a friend with explanation.

B. The choice of divine friendship (v. 16-17)

Believers are humbled with our privileges of friendship – “chose” & “appointed”. Believers are humbled with any success of friendship – “bear fruit”. Believers are humbled by the need for prayer of friendship – “whatever you ask”. Believers must love each to be effective in ministry (v. 17; 13:35).

The privileges of friendship with Jesus motivate humility toward Christ & love for other believers.

[Jn. 15:12-17](#)

APPL: Without the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ none of this teaching is true for us; it's all fantasy & wishful thinking. Without the death & resurrection we know nothing of God's love for us, we have no example of love, we have no motivation for love, we have no right relationship with God, we have no right relationship with each other, we do not know how to love God or each other, our lives & ministries are in vain; we are "still in our sins... If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Our hope is not in vain, this is reality for us; we have experienced the power of love in our own lives personally.