

John 15:12-17

The Joy of Fellowship with Christ/Other Christians

As Believers Abide in Christ We Can Enjoy a Growing Fellowship/Friendship with Him and with Other Christians

The Importance of Forging a Dynamic Fellowship/Friendship with Other Christians 15:12-13 and 17

Notice this passage is bracketed at the beginning (verse 12) and the end (verse 17): with the command for Christians to love one another

^{12/17} **This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you...This I command you, that you love one another.** In 13:37 the Lord Jesus first commanded disciples to love one another as HE has loved us; in 15:12/17 He repeats the command for emphasis

Convicting Question

How does that truth relate to believers who...

Love (*αγαπη*) here is NOT primarily emotional (feelings) but volitional (the will) it is a relaxed mental attitude catalyzing positive thoughts and servant actions-in which we seek others' good consistent with God's highest glory

¹³ **Greater love has no one than this that one lay down his life for his friends.** The Lord here is obviously thinking of His ultimate work/sacrifice-His impending death on the cross.

Parallel Passage: Mark 10:43b-45

...whoever wishes to become [spiritually] great among you shall [willingly] be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall [willingly] be servant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

¹⁷ **This I command you, that you love one another.** This is the third time in the URD the Lord Jesus gives this direct command, Christians who are "hard to please, petty/implacable" are living in direct disobedience to that Which Jesus Himself thought so important He repeated it three times in His major teaching session the evening before His crucifixion!?!

Loving one another is NOT simply avoiding hatred/bitterness, malice, gossip etc. it also includes positive/proactive actions of “washing one another’s feet” and “laying our lives down for others”. One reason Christ loves the Church/church (and so one reason all Christians should love the Church/church) is it is an earthly laboratory in which each of us as Christians can agape one another; Ephesians 4:11-16

The Importance of Forging a Dynamic Fellowship/Friendship with Christ Himself 15:14-16

¹⁴ You are My friends if/as you do what I command you.

Friendship/Fellowship with Christ involves believers living lives of loving obedience (rooted in our being centered on/abiding in Him) which includes our connecting with and building up other believers.

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 things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Friendship/Fellowship with Christ involves believers coming to increasingly know Christ-His Word: His will/His ways

¹⁶ "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

Friendship/Fellowship with Christ involves believers bearing spiritual fruit (by abiding in Him) which includes effective prayer.

Take This To Heart

The BSOP for All Believers is to Forge a “Growing Fellowship/Friendship” with Christ and in His Name with Other Christians

Our close friends will make us or break us spiritually! Believers will NOT and cannot be “best friends” with every other Christian, but we can/should be “friends/friendly” as far as it depends on us to all other believers (Romans 12). This in turn is rooted in all our Best Friend, Redeemer and Lord has given to us and forgiven in us. In Him we must realize we simply do not have the right to hate/hold grudges-toward other believers...either inside and outside of our local church circle/denomination!

Principles of Fellowship with Christ 13:31-16:33

Prediction of Earthly Denial by Peter 13:31-38

Promise of Heavenly Provision by Jesus 14:1-14

Promise of the Indwelling Holy Spirit 14:15-26

Beware the Dangers of the World 14:27-31

The KEY to Fellowship: Abiding in Christ 15:1-17*

Beware the Dangers of the World 15:18-16:4

Promise of the Indwelling Holy Spirit 16:5-15

Promotion of Heavenly Promotion for Jesus 16:16-28

Prediction of the Disciples Denial 16:29-33

****John 15:1-17: The Heart of the URD***

John 15:1-6

As Believers Abide in Christ we can...
...produce spiritual fruit v1-5a
...avoid spiritual mediocrity and divine discipline

John 15:7-11

As Believers Abide in Christ we can...
...experience fullness of spiritual reality (in areas including
prayer, discipleship, love and joy)

John 15:12-17

As Believers Abide in Christ...
...we can enjoy a profound fellowship/friendship with Him
and in His Name with other Christians