

September 26, 2021
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
John 15:12-17

“You’ve Got a Friend in Me”

- I. Believer’s Relationship to Jesus (Abide) – 15:1-11
 - A. The Picture (Vineyard)
 - B. The Priority (Abide)
 - C. The Promises
- II. Believer’s Relationship to Believers – 15:12-17
 - A. The Picture

B. The Priority

C. The Promises

So What?

Discussion & Application:

1. Describe the closest friend you ever had. What qualities / actions made them such a great friend? What are some hallmarks of true friendship?
2. What does the Bible say about friendship? Look up some verses (ex: Prov. 17:17; 18:24). What biblical people had a great friendship?
3. Why are there so many songs written about Jesus being a friend? (What a friend we have in Jesus; Jesus, what a friend for sinners...). Write down and share the qualities of friendship demonstrated by Jesus. Are you that kind of friend?
4. What is the priority for believers in relationship to other believers? Read John 13-17 and write down the ways believers are supposed to treat one another. Now do the same with Phil. 2 and Rom. 12:9-21.
5. What do you think went through the minds of the disciples when Jesus told them to love one another just as He loved them? List some specific ways that Jesus loved His disciples. Jesus would lay down His life the very next day for His "friends." How does Romans 5:6-11 describe the people Jesus died for? What are some ways that we can lay down our lives for our friends?
6. In what sense is obedience a test of true friendship? (Jn. 15:14)
7. Bosom friends are those who can be transparent with one another. Slaves simply need to be told what; friends are told why. Do you find it difficult to be transparent (honest, vulnerable, willing to reveal the deep desires & motives of your heart)? If so, why do you think that is? If not, share some ways you have learned to be open and honest with others.
8. One man said, "When we are born, we are dependent. We then spend a big portion of our lives trying to become independent. If we mature, we become interdependent." What do you think he meant by that? How could believers in a local church practically live out interdependent relationships?
9. Many people complain about not having any (or many) friends. What helpful insight do we gain from the way Jesus made friends in John 15:16? What are some ways you could take the initiative to reach out in love and develop more intimate friendships in our church?
10. Why did Jesus repeat the command to love one another so many times? (Jn. 13:34f; 15:12, 17; Lev. 19:18; Mt. 5:44; Gal. 5:14; 1 Th. 4:9; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 Jn. 4:7ff; Eph. 5:1-2) Why is it so hard to love other people; even believers? How could we make it easier for other believers to love us?
11. Read Heb. 10:23-25. What are some specific things you could do each time you gather with other believers at church to stimulate them to love and good deeds? Get up earlier on Sunday mornings and prayerfully consider how you can better impact fellow believers when you arrive at church.
12. Practical suggestions this week: 1) Abide in Jesus. Let Him fill you to overflowing with His love so you can pour it out on others. 2) Take the initiative to make friends at TBBF. Don't wait for others to come to you. Invite people over to your home for a meal (or go out to a restaurant). Ask them questions about their life, interests, desires, plans... Then open up and share things about yourself with them. 3) Be generous & sacrificial in the way you love others in the church. Meet practical needs. 4) Take the time to pray with and for people. Sincere prayer is a window to the soul. Friends that pray together, stay together. 5) Add some more practical suggestions of your own. Make plans to implement them this week.