

OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

WE WILL REMEMBER (1 SAMUEL 7:12)
NOVEMBER 11, 2018



SERMON OUTLINE

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

MAIN POINT

Jesus has shown us the truest form of friendship in laying down His life on our behalf.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

1. When you meet someone new and are asked to tell about yourself, what do you say?

2. What does your introduction reveal about your personality and your priorities?

Leader: We each carry a number of descriptors that tell our story: Husband. Wife. Dad. Mom. Church member. Co-worker. Our designations reveal who and what is most important to us. The designations we use to describe ourselves clarify which relationships get the biggest share of our time and attention.

In John 15, Jesus said those who followed Him in obedience were His “friends.” This designation had been previously used in Scripture only to describe Abraham and Moses. Jesus’ teaching here is a significant one: His relationship with His followers is one marked with closeness and fueled by a mission.

DIGGING DEEPER

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 15:12-13.

3. Looking at the command in verse 12, what's your initial response? Why do you respond the way you do?

4. Why did Jesus define love the way He did in verse 13? What are some defining characteristics of this type of love?

Leader: In these verses, Jesus laid down a primary expectation for His followers: they were to love each other. This love they were to demonstrate was to be a real, sacrificial love that followed the example of Jesus' love for them. Earlier in John 13:34-35, Jesus taught that love was to be a distinguishing mark of His disciples. Others would recognize them as Christ followers based on their love for each other.

5. When have you experienced the kind of love discussed in these verses? What do you think your life says about your being a disciple of Jesus based on the way you love others?

6. What are some intentional things you can do to love others in a new way that shows the love of Christ?

Leader: The disciples were not only to receive Jesus' love, but they also were to extend it to others. Remaining in Christ's love did not mean that they merely basked in their blessings, but that they would live in such a way that His love was evident to everyone they met. Challenge the group members to think beyond one-step practical action items. This love is to be a way of life and not something that is only shown occasionally.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 15:14-17.

7. What do these verses teach us about the kind of relationship Jesus intends for us to have with Him?

8. How did Jesus model true friendship in the gospel accounts?

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Leader: Some of the elements of true friendship exhibited in the life of Jesus include trustworthiness, truthfulness, and commitment. These are all elements we should seek to display in our relationships as well. Jesus has shown us the greatest commitment possible in giving up His life, that we might be restored to the Father.

9. What can we learn about our role in God's kingdom from verses 16-17?

10. Looking back at John 15:5 and how Jesus used the idea of fruit, what is the spiritual fruit He referred to?

Leader: The fruit in verse five cannot be an evangelistic fruit, but must be the fruit of love. The fruit in verse five is produced as the branch remains in the tree, Jesus.

11. When you look at our church, what kind of spiritual fruit do you see God developing? What about when you look at our small group?

Leader: Jesus called His followers to obedience and to a close relationship with Himself. It shouldn't be a surprise that He followed this with a commission to produce spiritual fruit. As His people, we're given all we need to follow Him in obedience as we seek to fulfill the tasks He gives us in our church and community. We're His friends and, as such, we're commanded to demonstrate His love to others in our community. When we do, the Holy Spirit brings about spiritual fruit in our lives, in the lives of those around us, and in our churches.

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

12. What benefits are produced in our lives when we love as Christ commands us?

13. What is holding you back from obeying Jesus' commands in these verses? How does verse 13 inspire you to live as Jesus did?

PRAYER

Close your group time in prayer. Thank God for the intimate relationship He desires to have with each of us, and for the privilege of being called His friend. Ask for wisdom to

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

recognize the opportunities we have to love others the way Jesus loves us.

MEMORIZE

¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. - John 15:13

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

JOHN 15:12-17

15:1-17 This allegory is at the heart of Jesus' farewell discourse to the disciples. The OT used the vineyard or vine as a symbol for Israel, God's covenant people, especially in two "vineyard songs" (Isa 5:1-7; 27:2-6). However, Israel's failure to produce fruit issued in divine judgment. Jesus, by contrast, is the true vine, and His followers are to remain in Him and produce much fruit for God.

15:13-14 In the OT, only Abraham (2Ch 20:7; Isa 41:8), and by implication Moses (Ex 33:11), are called "friends of God." Jesus extended this privilege to all obedient believers.

15:16 In first-century Palestine, disciples typically took the initiative in attaching themselves to a particular rabbi, not vice versa. As a well-known dictum declared, "Provide yourself with a teacher." Jesus broke with this custom and called His own disciples. Appointed recalls the OT description of God's appointment of Abraham (Gen 17:5; cp. Rm 4:17), the ordination of Levites (Num 8:10), and Moses' commissioning of Joshua (Num 27:18).

15:18-16:33 This final major unit in Jesus' farewell discourse deals with the world's hostility toward Himself and His followers and with the future ministry of the Holy Spirit.