

# The Gospel of John

## Chapter 15:11-27

October 5, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

- - Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
  - Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
  - Chapter 3 Spiritual Birth, Belief and Salvation vs. Unbelief and Condemnation
  - Chapter 4 The Ministry in Samaria, The Harvest, The Faith of the Nobleman
  - Chapter 5 Paralytic man healed on the Sabbath, Unity of The Father and Son
  - Chapter 6 The Bread of Life
  - Chapter 7 The public debates about Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles
  - Chapter 8 Public debates: Woman caught in adultery; The Son makes you free; Abraham's true children
  - Chapter 9 Jesus heals a man born blind.
  - Chapter 10 Jesus is the Door and the True Shepherd
  - Chapter 11 Our Lord is the Resurrection and the Life
  - Chapter 12 Jesus Anointed and Worshipped as King, God softens some and hardens some, Public ministry ends
  - Chapter 13 Jesus Loves His Disciples, Judas Betrays The Master
  - Chapter 14 The Way, The Truth and The Life
  - Chapter 15 Jesus is the True Vine

- **Review and Introduction**

Previously, Jesus introduced the image of the vine and branches and commanded the disciples to abide in Him. The reason for the command was based on the fact that apart from Christ we can accomplish nothing. All works that are not done in faith in Him are of no value in commending ourselves to God. Specifically, Jesus declared that their love for Him would be evident in the way that they loved one another. Just as He loved them and served them in humility so too His expectation was that they should be characterized by works of love toward each other.

### Exposition of John 15:11-27

- ● <sup>11</sup> *"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.*

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- It is rather amazing to see that Jesus' concern is for their joy. Being in Christ is not such a burden that we may not know or experience joy. In fact here He teaches that it is just the opposite; if we do not abide in Him we will not know true joy. The corollary to this is that those who are not in Christ cannot understand true joy because only by abiding in Him is joy even possible. This again shows how all things come to their fullness of understanding in Christ and apart from Him we can truly know nothing.

- ● <sup>12</sup> *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*<sup>13</sup> *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*

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- Jesus commands them to love each other in the manner in which He has (and will) loved them. As their disciples, they were commissioned by Jesus to make disciples of all nations by declaring the gospel and teaching that all should obey everything that Christ commands. This means that there is a direct application of this command to us as well. As disciples of Christ, we must obey all that He commanded and one of His primary commands is that we manifest our love for each other in a manner similar to the way He loves us.
- Notice that the love Christ commands is sacrificial. Love is not made manifest only when it is easy or convenient. Its greatest manifestation is when it is ultimate as in giving one's life for another. Although we will never be called upon by

God to die for others the way Christ did, (because we cannot make atonement for them as sinful creatures ourselves) we are told that we should not avoid love because of death.

● ● <sup>14</sup> *"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."*<sup>15</sup> *"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."*

- It is hard to fathom the creator of the universe calling any of us His friends. We who were once His enemies are now called His friends because of the reconciliation made through Christ. Where there was once a relationship of enmity, now all has been put right and we are fully restored to the Father through the obedience of the Son. This reconciliation has placed us in a relationship of friendship with our Lord.
- Those who do not do whatever He commanded are His enemies. It is these enemies who are being made a footstool for Christ. Once we were enemies of God and now He has made known to us all that the Father wanted Him to and therefore we are now called His friends.

● ● <sup>16</sup> *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."*<sup>17</sup> *"These things I command you, that you love one another."*

- Although there are a number of different levels of understanding this statement, its first application is to the selection of the disciples. Jesus did not negotiate with them when He commanded them to follow Him. Instead, Jesus picked them and caused them to follow Him. The same truth however, may be applied to the selection of the Elect. We are not included with Christ because we cooperated and came to a negotiated position. No, while we were still enemies of God and fleeing from righteousness, Christ died for us. That righteous death was counted as righteousness for us by grace through faith.
- As in other places in scripture, we see that our pattern for prayer is that we pray to the Father, empowered by the Spirit, and clothed in the righteousness of the Son. We do not pray to Jesus or the Spirit nor would we come before the Father in the name of the Spirit.

● ● <sup>18</sup> *"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you."*<sup>19</sup> *"If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."*

- Jesus has stated other places that the world would hate those who love Him. This is because of the world's hatred for Christ. The world loves those who participate in the same deeds that it does and even holds up as virtuous those who despise the name of Christ. We should consider whether the Christ we confess is visible to the world. If the world cannot see a difference, then they are not seeing Christ, because if they did they would hate us just as it hated Him.

● ● <sup>20</sup> *"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."*<sup>21</sup> *"But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me."*

- Again Jesus reiterates the basic principle that the servant is not greater than the master. The world will not develop a greater hatred for us than it had for Jesus. Because the world does not know the Father it hates His Son. Because it hates the Son, we too will be hated by the world. If the world approves of us without knowing the Father, then we should be concerned that perhaps Christ is not in us.

● ● <sup>22</sup> *"If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin."*<sup>23</sup> *"He who hates Me hates My Father also."*<sup>24</sup> *"If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they*

*would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.<sup>25</sup> "But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'*

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- Although this is a rather difficult verse to understand, taken in light of the other Scriptures, we cannot say that apart from the sins they committed against Jesus that they had no sin. We learn elsewhere that we are born in sin and that all have fallen away. Jesus says that He came and declared such a true, clear message that all excuse has been removed from not believing the specific revelation of the Father in the Son.
- There is a possibility that what Jesus is saying is that if He had not performed the various miracles to testify to His authority, that the Jews would have been guiltless in putting Him to death. The law of the Jews required death to those who blasphemed and if Jesus was not truly the Son of God then He truly was blasphemous. But because He spoke such a clear word and performed miracles like no one else, they are then guilty of murdering their own messiah.

● ● <sup>26</sup> *"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.<sup>27</sup> "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. NKJV*

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- Jesus explains that they will be witnesses with the Spirit of all that Jesus commanded to the world. This mission has been handed down for thousands of years and is the basis upon which we disciple the world today. We are told to bear witness of Him by making disciples and loving one another.
- Notice the triune nature of God here. The Spirit of Truth will be sent by the Son from the Father to testify to the glory of the Son. Let there be no mistake, the three persons of our God are one in purpose and essence.