

John 15: 9-17

Context

This week's passage comes within the context of Jesus' final speech to his disciples before his passing. In the immediate verses before our passage, Jesus had used the language of himself as a vine. In our passage for this week, Jesus is elaborating on that imagery by describing what it looks like for us to belong to him as his branches. As we read this week, pay attention to the identity that Jesus calls us into and the actions that this new calling entails. While the language may be lofty, invite Spirit to speak into your own life and pierce your heart.

Hearing

- Before we dive in, what are some big themes that stand out to you as significant in this passage? Or from the sermon this past weekend?
- In v 9, Jesus invites us to “abide” in his love. One could translate this as “make your dwelling in my love.” Jesus’ own identity is as the beloved Son of God. Now, he confers on us the identity as his beloved disciples and friends. What does it mean for us to have our identities framed by his love? How does that frame our self-image? What does God feel when he thinks about us?
- Our identities as God’s beloved require our participation. Just as for someone being a musician means that they actually play music, so too does our new identity mean participating in God’s love. Abiding in God’s love means following his commandments, especially his commandments to love. How does this impact your understanding of obedience in the Christian life? How does it influence your motivation for obedience?
- In vv 14-15, Jesus draws a distinction between being his friends and his servants. Servants do not know why they follow orders, but friends have knowledge of God's purposes. How does our knowledge of Jesus and the gospel help us to obey him? How does it help us to love others?
- In v 13, Jesus describes the extent to which he loves us and that we are to love others—the point of laying down one’s life. Note, this is not just a willingness to give one’s life but the very doing of it. While we may not all be called to be martyrs we are called to radical acts of love. What are some practical ways you can love others? How can we practice this radical love as a life group?

Obeying (application):

- This week spend time in prayer considering your identity as beloved of God and Christ. Reflect on the Spirit’s invitation to radical acts of love and ask Spirit to show you how you may participate. Come next week ready to share at least one action you have taken as a result.