

IN THE BEGGINNING WAS THE  
WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH  
GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD.

the gospel of

# JOHN

John 15:12-17

## Introduction

How believers relate to other believers is of critical importance. Division will destroy a body of people quicker than any other single thing. Division brings disunity to the body of Christ. It destroys the church's fellowship, witness, and can turn away the person seeking God.

Too many are known more for their grumbling, complaining, murmuring, and divisiveness than for anything else. Nothing cuts the heart of Jesus more than such self-centered and divisive behavior.

The relationship of believers to each other is of critical importance.

## John 15:12-17

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. **14** You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. **15** 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. **16** 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. **17** These things I command you, that you love one another.

# The Supreme Command

John 15:12

“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

The supreme command of believers is to love one another. They are to love one another just as Jesus has loved them. Jesus is clear about what He means. He loved man so much that He paid the ultimate price. He died and sacrificed His life for man.

# The Supreme Standard

John 15:12-13

“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.”

The supreme standard of believers is the love of Jesus Christ Himself. He paid the ultimate and supreme price of love. He died and sacrificed Himself for His friends.

The world loves with self-interest. Jesus loves in that He desires the best for others, even if it means paying a personal cost.

# The Supreme Bond

John 15:14-15

“You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. **15** 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.”

The supreme bond of believers is the bond of friendship. Believers form a bond of "friends," a spiritual bond founded by Christ Himself. Note that being a "friend" of Jesus is conditional. The believer is to hear and do the things Jesus is commanding.

True friends do not manipulate a relationship to their own advantage, but do the things they know will please the other person. If we “love” Jesus, we will keep His Commandments.

# The Supreme Bond

John 15:14-15

“You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. **15** 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.”

Look at the relationship that Jesus is calling us to. We do not merely serve Him, though He is worthy to be served. He is calling the disciples and us into something much deeper. God is calling us into friendship. He wants us know what He is doing, His plans, and His desires. He desires to share with us all that He has heard from the Father.

# The Supreme Purpose

John 15:16

“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.”

The supreme purpose of believers is to go and bear fruit. Believers are the chosen and ordained of Christ, and they have been given the very same purpose as Christ Himself: to go into all the world and bear fruit among men. This is one of the great verses of Scripture.

Note two points.

# The Supreme Purpose

John 15:16

“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.”

1. Believers are chosen and ordained by Jesus. We do not choose Him nor do we ordain and send ourselves out to serve Him.
  - ⇒ It is God who approaches and draws us. No one would come to God unless He takes the initiative.
  - ⇒ It is God who appoints us to live for Him and to serve Him. He gives us His Spirit to enable us to do so.

# The Supreme Purpose

John 15:16

“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.”

2. Believers are chosen and appointed for three very specific purposes.
  - a. To go as ambassadors for Christ, proclaiming the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Believers are the lights of Christ in this darkened world.
  - b. To bear fruit. This would be both in character and in number.
  - c. To receive the things of God. (Physically, Spiritually, Emotionally, and Intellectually)

# The Supreme Reinforcement

John 15:17

“These things I command you, that you love one another.”

Jesus' conclusion is forceful. The supreme command is repeated: love one another.

Jesus is serious about this! Do not allow petty issues to bring division in the church. This is not just our church but between believers in all churches. We must learn to love, pray for, encourage, and stand beside our fellow believers.

## So What ...

I want you to quiet yourself before God and think a minute...

First, are you a friend of God or just one acquainted with Him?

Second, how is your love for your fellow believers. Not just the ones you like, but the ones who irritate you. It is easy to like those who please us, but it is a supernatural love that allows us to love the unlovely. Do you need to restore a relationship? Ask Forgiveness? Reach out to someone who you know will drain your time and energy.

Remember, we are to love others as Jesus loves us.