

Renewed Friendships
All Things New #8 | John 15:9-17
February 20, 2022

Scripture Reading | John 15:9-17

Pre-Sermon Remarks

- Renewal series: personal, relational, and practical
- Very soon to announce what book of the Bible to study next
- Today: friendship. Playlist of 3 **CHEESY SONGS**

PRAYER

Introduction

- Can you remember your earliest childhood friend?
 - Jacob (NES TMNT), Ryan (sleepover), Roland (C&H)
 - Wesley: became a test pilot for new military planes
- As we get older, friendship becomes more challenging

Friendship Challenges

- Personal: time
- Personal: interests
- Personal: hurts
- Societal: individualism
- Societal: hyper-sexualization

You might say, *well that's just how it is. I guess friendship is not that important.* But we ignore friendship to our own peril, most importantly because friendship is a portrait of the gospel.

Big idea: Through the power of the gospel, God calls us friends

- Friendship with God and friendship with others reinforce each other

Friendship With Jesus

⁹“As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹“I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. ¹²“This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn’t know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. ¹⁷“This is what I command you: Love one another.

I. The God of Friendship

1. Friendship exists within God | 15:9
 - a. *As the Father has loved me...* | So often throughout the gospels
 - b. **Sam Andreas** If you are ever going to begin to understand the New Testament's teaching on the Trinity, how these three persons are one God, the first thing you need to know is that they are crazy about each other. I mean crazy. They talk about each other all the time. They think about each other all the time. They do things for each other all the time. This is most clearly seen in the New Testament among the first two Persons. In the gospel of Luke, for example, Jesus Christ's first words spoken and last words spoken are a reference to "my Father." And so much of what Jesus says in between is about the same Father. When the latter explicitly shows up in the gospels, it is to express how he feels about his "Beloved." The one is so into the other that they actually indwell each other...By the time you get through this kind of demonstration, seeing how they dote on one another, you are liable to wonder how God has any time for us at all.
 - c. No one metaphor for Trinitarian relationships: father/son, marriage, and FRIEND
2. Humanity made for friendship | 15:9-10
 - a. ...remain in my love... | **Four times** in this passage!
 - b. Garden: walking in the cool of the garden = friendship
 - i. Failure: buying the lie that something besides God will satisfy
3. Jesus came to offer friendship | 15:13
 - a. *No greater love than this, to lay down his life for his friends*
 - b. The **GOSPEL** is an invitation to friendship
4. God's friendship carries authority | 15:14, 16
 - a. *You are my friends if you obey my commands* | Not what we teach our kids, right?
 - i. Authority as creator, Holy in his power | Like being friends with a King
 - ii. Not too casual: a lot of people I knew who wore the "Jesus is my homeboy" shirt were not, in fact, obeying his commands
 - b. *I appointed you to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you.*
 - i. Because of the gospel, we are restored to our created purpose

So what is this friendship like?

II. The Shape of Friendship

1. Vulnerability, not guardedness | 15:15
 - a. *...a servant doesn't know what his master is doing.*
 - b. Intimacy and self-disclosure, and being met with love
 - c. With vulnerability comes the possibility of hurt
 - d. Caveat: good hurt bad bad hurt
 - i. **Matthew 7 6** Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

- ii. **Proverbs 27** ⁶ Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.
 - iii. Both you and the friend are imperfect people, so wisdom is needed
- 2. Commitment, not convenience | 15:16
 - a. *You did not choose me, but I chose you.* | No accident we're friends with God
 - b. Intentionality in marriage, in parenting, in business...why not friendships?
 - c. Covenant friendship? | 1 Samuel 18 ¹When David had finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan was bound to David in close friendship, and loved him as much as he loved himself. ² Saul kept David with him from that day on and did not let him return to his father's house. ³ Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as much as himself.
 - d. **Aelred of Rievaulx** Divine authority commands that many more be received to the clasp of charity than to the embrace of friendship. By the law of charity we are ordered to welcome into the bosom of love not only our friends but also our enemies. But we call friends only those to whom we have no qualm about entrusting our heart and all its contents, while these friends are bound to us in turn by the same inviolable law of loyalty and trustworthiness.
- 3. Enjoyment, not tolerance | 15:11
 - a. *I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.*
 - b. Far too many people don't realize that God enjoys them
 - c. Joy is an end, it's the goal of all the love and commitment and vulnerability
 - d. **C.S. Lewis** Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art, like the universe itself (for God did not need to create). It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things which give value to survival.

Jesus and Friendship

- Jesus and Mary, Martha, and Lazarus – “see how he loved him”
- Jesus and John – “the one Jesus loved” was alone at the cross, cares for mom
- Jesus loves us with this kind of friendship
 - Vulnerability
 - the cross - torn by the dogs
 - explanation - “here's why”
 - Commitment: intentionality of election and predestination
 - Enjoyment: God enjoys you

III. The Practice of Friendship

1. Prioritize friendship | intentionality
2. Be committed | explore the idea of covenant friendship, or at least more than the world
3. Be vulnerable | Note: seek will need to seek healing (back to intentionality)
4. Recognize seasons | In this life, friends will come and go
5. Put Christ first | If you belong to Jesus, friendship with those who don't know him will always have a limit. Seek to share Jesus with them.