

## Who am I in Christ #8: A friend loved by Jesus John 15: 1-17

**Objectives:** We want to begin to grasp that we are deeply loved by Jesus. We want to understand and believe that he knows us and considers us a friend. We want to see that we if we stay connected to Jesus that we will bear fruit.

### Launch

In March of 2018 global health company Cigna did a massive loneliness study in the USA. The study found that nearly 50% of Americans felt alone. The study mentioned that loneliness has the same impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. When it comes to mortality, it is better to obese than it is to be lonely. **Why is loneliness so horrible?**

The study interviewed 5 different generations (Gen Z (18-22), Millennial, Gen X, Boomer, the Greatest generation). Which generation do you think was the least lonely according to the study? (Greatest gen ages 72 and up). Which generation was the most lonely? (Gen Z by a lot). Why do you think people 18-22 are much more lonely than others? (The goal here is to allow people to talk. Interestingly the study did not blame social media.)

The study found that 68% of people 18-22 said that “no one knows them well”. How do you think that feeling would impact a person? How do you think it would impact a community if 2/3 of the people feel that no one knows them well?

As we continue our series on “Who am I in Christ” we are going to look at a fascinating message Jesus taught his disciples just hours before he was killed.

### Pray

### Explore

#### Read John 15:1-17

An important skill to learn when we study the Bible is to slow down and observe what it actually says. Today we are going to walk through this passage and make some observations.

Context- This teaching of Jesus happens hours before he is arrested and crucified. Judas has already left to betray him, it is only the 11 disciples and Jesus. *(note for leaders. This context is important because students often get off track about the “branches that get cut off”. Jesus was sharing these truths to encourage and prepare his disciples not to scare them into thinking they could be “cut off”. The repeated phrases of “abide” and “love” are what we should focus on.*

- 1. What do we observe about Jesus from this passage? Remember you don't need to put it in your own words yet. Let's just note what the text says.** Write on a white board.  
*(He is the True Vine- 1, He has branches- 2, He has spoken something that makes them clean- 3, He can be dwelt in and he can dwell in us, He causes fruit to grow- 5, He prunes (for good!), He has designed us for connection with Him 4-6, He is the son to the father, the father loves the son, He loves us- 9, desires joy for his followers- 11, chooses-16, He is the active agent- (chooses for fruit), has authority, calls followers friends, wants us to keep His commandments, He kept the fathers commandments, wants us to use his love to love others, makes known the will of the father, He is joy)*
  - **What stands out to you about these truths?**
  - Relationship is important to God. The desire to be known and loved is from God. Human friendship has its roots in the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit have always known and loved one another. Since we are created in His image we were made for true relationship where we know and love others like us. Loneliness is so horrible because we were created in God's image and therefore were created for genuine relationship. In other words, you desire community because you are made in the image of God who lives in perfect community.
- 2. What do we observe about His followers? What do we learn about those who are in Christ or abide in Christ?** *(dependent on Jesus for life and fruit- 4/5, chosen for the purpose of bearing fruit- 16, loved by Jesus- 9/12, friends of Jesus, Jesus abides in us, we designed to abide in Jesus, we can glorify the Father, able to love Jesus and obey, already clean- 3, get pruned, truth has been known to us, can do ask anything if we abide, have freedom to ask, we have His Word- 11)*
  - **What stands out to you about these truths?**
  - **Jesus repeats several times that he loves them and that they are his friends. Why do you think he wanted them to understand these truths?**

- **How would it impact your life if you truly believed that Jesus knows everything about you? How would it impact you if you believed he knows every evil thought and action, yet he loves you and calls you a friend?**
- 3. What does he expect from His friends? In other words, what are his commands? What do these commands mean?**
- *To abide/remain/dwell 11 times! (make your home with Christ, let His Words (the Bible) dwell in Him, spend time with Him, surround yourself in Him, continually coming to Him, letting His Spirit influence our lives, vitally united to the Vine, confessing our sins)*
  - *Love one another (lay down our lives for one another-13, put others before ourselves, bearing one another burdens, speaking truth in love)*
- 4. How does one become a friend of Jesus?**

### **Apply**

Keeping in mind the commands to abide in Christ and to love one another...

- **How will you enjoy the friendship of Jesus (abide in Him) this week?**
- **How will you reflect the friendship of Jesus (love one another) this week?**

**Vision (3 minutes)- Use your own words...**