



February 15, 2026
A Few Last Words Before I Go
Friends of Jesus
John 15:12-17

1. **Sermon Outline:**

- a. Be A Friend of Jesus
 - i. Jesus laid down His life for you!
 - ii. You're invited to friendship, not bondage
- b. As a Friend of Jesus, Bear Fruit!
 - i. Serve
 - ii. Share Christ
 - iii. Pray
- c. Love One Another, Friend!
 - i. Friends of Jesus obey Him
 - ii. Loving one another isn't optional

2. **Sunday Afternoon** – As soon as possible after the sermon, consider:

- a. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- b. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- c. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- d. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- e. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

3. **Monday:**

- a. Read John 15:12-17 several times. First, read it quickly to get the big picture. Then read it slowly, meditating on the message/meaning of each phrase or sentence. Finally, read it again slowly, noting all of the places that apply to you personally.
- b. What would you say was the major theme of these six verses? How does this passage open and close? What does that literary device tell us about what Jesus was emphasizing?
- c. What does Jesus do in verses 12 and 17?
 - i. Does His command allow the disciples to make exceptions?

- ii. What part of verse 12 shows conclusively that His command that “we love one another” cannot be limited to just those we like, but must include everyone?
- iii. Read Matthew 5:43-48 and 22:34-40. How do you think these earlier teachings helped prepare the disciples for what Jesus is telling them in these verses?
- d. What is significant about the fact that verses 12 and 17 are commands? Do you think true love can be commanded? What does this suggest about the common notion of love prevalent in our society?

4. *Tuesday:*

- a. Read John 15:12-17 again, meditating especially on verse 13.
- b. How does verse 13 amplify or explain to the disciple what Jesus meant when He said “as I have loved you” in verse 12?
 - i. Read Romans 5:7-8 and 1 John 3:16. How do these verses clarify that Jesus was not just laying down His life for the disciples He was talking to, but had a much broader view?
 - ii. What is the significance of the word ‘greater’ in verse 12?
 - 1. If the “greatest love” is laying down one's life, what else must there be?
 - 2. Read 1 John 3:16 again, but then continue on through verse 18. How does John explain the full significance of Jesus’ command?
- c. The idea that we could love as Jesus loved us and that we would be willing to die for others seems humanly impossible. What did Jesus promise in verses from previous weeks’ study that make it possible (see 14:20, 23, & 26, 15:4)?

5. *Wednesday:*

- a. Read John 15:12-17 meditating especially on verses 13 & 14.
- b. What does “friend” mean to you? What differentiates a friend from an acquaintance?
 - i. What standard does Jesus set for us to be His friend?
 - ii. Do you think that Jesus is just referring to the most recent command to “love one another”?
 - iii. John the Baptist uses the same word for “friend” in John 3:29 in the context of “best man” at the wedding. What does that show us about what the Bible means when it uses “friend”?
- c. Two Old Testament men stand out as “friends of God”:
 - i. Abraham (see 2 Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8, and James 2:23)
 - 1. Think back on what you know about Abraham’s life. What qualified him for the title “friend of God” (consider, for example, Genesis 12:1-4 and 22:1-18)?

2. Despite being a “friend of God,” how did Abraham view himself (Genesis 18:3 & 5)?
 - ii. Moses (see Exodus 33:11)
 1. Think back on what you know about Moses’ life. What qualified him for the title “friend of God”?
 2. Despite being a “friend of God,” how did Moses view himself?
6. **Thursday:**
 - a. Read John 15:12-17, meditating especially on verses 15 and 16
 - b. What differentiates a servant (or bondservant/slave) and a friend?
 - c. According to verse 15, whose initiative was it to do what was necessary to become a friend instead of a servant?
 - i. What do you feel is significant about Jesus saying, “all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you”? Do you have any friends with whom you share everything?
 - ii. How does the knowledge that Jesus is talking about in verse 15 relate to the promise He made in John 14:26? How does John 16:12-13 show us that this is an ongoing activity?
 - d. What is significant about the beginning of verse 16? How does it relate to passages such as John 6:37, 44 & 65? In our relationship with Christ, who chooses whom?
7. **Friday:**
 - a. Read John 15:12-17, focusing on verse 16.
 - b. In addition to choosing, what else does verse 16 tell us Jesus does?
 - i. Read Luke 10:1-4. Based on this example, what might we conclude “appointing” means in our lives?
 - ii. What is the objective/outcome of being appointed?
 - iii. What is the nature of the fruit that the appointed will bear? How might John 6:39 and 10:28 relate to what Jesus is teaching here?
 - c. Before bearing fruit, what are the “appointed” told to do in verse 16? What other command of Jesus does this remind you of (see Matthew 28:19)?
 - i. Given Jesus’ emphasis on “going” why do you think it is so hard to find Christians who are willing to go?
 - ii. While “go” can certainly mean different things in different situations, do you think that we are being obedient if we restrict our “fruit bearing” to where we are?
 - d. How does verse 16 reinforce what Jesus told His disciples in John 14:13-14? What does it suggest about the importance of this teaching that Jesus gives it in chapter 14, here in 15, and then again in chapter 16 (16:23-24)?
8. **Saturday:**

- a. Read John 15:12-17 one more time, focusing on verses 12 & 17.
- b. After a week's study of the passage, how do you feel about Jesus' command?
 - i. What are the practical implications for Christians in America today?
 - ii. How should this command affect your life?

9. **Application:**

- a. Although seldom evident in our society, love and obedience go hand-in-hand in Jesus' teaching. It is expected that if we claim to love Him, we will obey, and our obedience in turn will be the evidence of our love. Years ago, it was traditional for the wedding vows to include the phrase "love, honor, and obey," but as our society became more individualistic, it became unacceptable. The question we might ask ourselves is, have we, in an effort to make Christianity more attractive to individuals, deemphasized "obedience" to the point it is no longer recognized as an inherent part of being a Christian?
- b. Jesus appointed us and commanded us to go. For many, it may be His will that going is just into our immediate neighborhood. But given the vast number of people in our world who have never heard the Gospel message and, unless something drastically changes, never will, God must expect "go" to mean more. Pray that God will lead workers to go into the fields where "the harvest is plentiful but the laborers few".

10. **Pray:** This week, please pray for these two unreached people groups that IMB has highlighted in their 2026 *Loving the Lost through Prayer* guide:

- a. **Tajiks of Uzbekistan:** The Tajiks (TA-jiks) of Uzbekistan are concentrated mainly in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and the fertile Fergana Valley, once a significant stretch along the Silk Road. Along with their Tajik language, they speak Uzbek and some Russian. Their culture has been shaped by centuries of Persian influence, Islamic traditions, and Central Asian history. The Tajiks in Uzbekistan play an important role in the country's rich social fabric, contributing to economic development, academia, and the local cultural scene. They blend their traditional customs with modern Uzbek culture while preserving their unique identity through festivals, music, language, and literature. Like the Uzbeks around them, they follow Sunni Islam. Ask God to raise up a gospel witness in Uzbek cities, where many Tajiks live.
- b. **Khorasani Turks of Iran:** Khorasani (kor-ah-SAH-nee) Turks live in the northern part of the Khorasan province of eastern Iran. Many are farmers who raise livestock and grow crops such as wheat, barley, and saffron. Others make jewelry and glassware or weave carpets and tapestries. While many learn Farsi, the national language, their heart language is Khorasani Turkish. Although education is available to all children, literacy rates remain low for girls in the villages. With no known Khorasani Turkish believers in Iran and no gospel resources in their heart language, Khorasani Turks need God to make a way for them to learn the truth about Jesus. Pray that God will send Persian believers to tell the Khorasani Turks the good news of His love for them.