

Full Joy In The Lord

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. This is the next message in our series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

Amen. Thank you very much. Take your Bibles if you would and open them to John chapter 15. I am so excited to get to share with you a passage of scripture God has used greatly in my life and I hope it will bless you today.

We can thank God for what he's done and what he is doing. John chapter 15. We're going to read a passage of scripture you've already been in now. This will be the third time and actually we could say more but we won't after today.

We'll move on down to the last part of John 15 and into John 16. But read John 15 1 with me if you would. The Bible said, I am the true vine and my father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

[1 : 07] Abide in me and I in you as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine. No more can ye except you abide in me. I am the vine.

Ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit. For without me you can do nothing. If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

If you abide in me and my words abide in you you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my father glorified that you bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciple.

As a father has loved me so have I loved you. Continue you in my love. If you keep my commandments you shall abide in my love. Even as I have kept my father's commandments and abide in his love.

These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you. That your joy might be full. This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you.

[2 : 12] Greater love hath no man than this that a man would lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth.

But I have called you friends. For all things that I have heard of my father I have made known unto you. You have not chosen you have not chosen me. But I have chosen you and ordained you.

That you should go forth and bear fruit. And that your fruit should remain. That whatsoever you shall ask of the father in my name. He may give it you. Let's bow our heads forward a prayer please.

Father God in heaven. I love you and thank you and praise you. For all that you're doing in our lives. I thank you for saving us. I thank you for taking us out of sin and degradation.

Out of sin and the deserving of hell. And giving us eternal life and making us new creatures. I thank you for salvation. I thank you for holiness.

[3 : 13] I thank you for desire to live for you. I thank you for the fact that you are doing the work in us. And it is your work and your ministry. And I thank you for that. I pray God today that you might cause your people to be full of joy.

To help them to realize that Christian service is a place of great joy. I pray God that you would do work in our lives. And I'll give you great glory and honor for all that you do. In Jesus precious name.

Amen. If you had an ink pen. And you were to go through and mark just the in use. In this passage of scripture. You'd realize that everything about living for God is in Christ.

That is a tremendous truth for us. A tremendous thing for us to do. If you were to realize Jesus is talking and he says I so many times. Down to verse 16 that it would shock you.

I challenge you to go back and read that and look that over. Let me just remind you what's going on. Jesus is leaving. He is dying this week. In the story where we are.

[4 : 15] We are hours from the cross. The shadow of the cross hangs over everything that he's saying and he's doing. They're feeling quite sad right now. He's been telling them I'm out of here.

He's been telling them that we've had this great ministry for three and a half years. But I will soon be gone. And I'm leaving here. There's a sadness settling over the guys. He's about to die.

He's about to be buried. He's about to rise again. And we know what a glorious victory that was. But if you can imagine having lived with hours after hour. 168 hours a week.

Every week for now almost a year and a half to three years. If you've been all that time together. And he said to you. I'm in my last week. And I'm going out of here. You would probably begin to sense.

Man we better enjoy every minute. They were probably wondering what's going to happen. Where's the ministry going to go. We were starting a church. We were preaching everywhere.

[5 : 08] We were seeing people saved. We were seeing people baptized. We were seeing God's work go forward. And now Jesus is leaving. What's going to happen. He told them.

If you would go back in your Bible right quickly. To John chapter 14. You'll notice that he already told them he was leaving. And he would prepare them a place. In John 14 1. He said let not your heart be troubled.

You believe in God. Believe also in me. He said hey guys let me tell you. I'm going to go prepare you a place. But notice how he starts off. In John 14. He said hey guys don't be upset. Don't be worried.

Don't think I'm abandoning you. I have a plan. My father has a plan. And we're working a great plan. God is doing some great things. In John 14 12. Look in your Bible right there.

In John chapter 14 and verse 12. He tells them hey I'm leaving. I'm preparing you a place. But you're going to be doing great things. God is not abandoning the ministry.

[6 : 04] All we started over the last few years. Is going to go on. And it's going to get bigger. Don't believe it's over. Don't give up. No God's got big things. Look at John chapter 14 and verse 12.

He said verily verily I say unto you. He that believeth on me. The works that I do. Shall he do also. And greater works than these. Shall he do. Because I go to my father. He says hey guys.

We're about to do some great things. I'm about to die. And be buried. And rise again. And ascend into heaven. But the church is going to march on. And God is going to do great things.

Through you. You're going to find out some wonderful truths. Even in this message. They're obviously uncertain and fearful about the future. What's going to happen. Jesus leaves. We already gave up our boats.

We gave up our fishing careers. We gave up our career as a tax collector. We left our mama. We left our daddy. And we've done everything to follow you. And now you're checking out. What's going to happen.

[7 : 01] What's going to happen to us. So he gives them a super encouraging message. In this passage of scripture. This John 15 is like super encouraging. Encouraging. Now could I just stop and say.

Many of you might have heard this message. It's almost a threatening message. But I'm going to prove to you right now. It is not that at all. It is this. It is. Man. God's doing big stuff.

God's going to work in your life. Great things are going to happen. Look at a key verse to help you understand it. John chapter 15 verse 11. Look at that verse with me. John chapter 15 verse 11. These things have I spoken unto you.

That my joy might remain in you. And that your joy might be full. Read that verse out loud with me. It's on the board behind me. It's in your Bible right there. In front of you. Would you read that out loud with me.

Are you ready? These things have I spoken unto you. That my joy might remain in you. And that your joy might be full. Now what was he doing when he wrote John 15 verses 1 through 16.

[8 : 00] When he wrote this passage of scripture right here. When he spoke to them. If you could just picture him. Sitting around with the guys. Talking about checking out of the earth. Talking about going on to heaven. Talking about what the future of the ministry would be.

What did he say? He said guys. This is a good time. This is going to be when I get excited. And I get happy. And I get a lot of joy. And you get a lot of joy. Because I'm telling you really good stuff.

I'm telling you really good stuff. If you miss that verse. You just might not understand the passage. If you miss that verse. You might not understand the passage. If you miss this verse right here.

John 15 11. You might think he's saying. Hey. You might get cut off. And you might be thrown in the fire. You might read the verse. And think you have to produce fruit. And I'm watching you. And if you don't do as much as other people do.

Then you're in trouble. And you might feel like it's almost a threatening passage. But it's not a threatening passage. Because he told us why he wrote it. He told us why he said it. He said I'm doing this.

[8 : 57] So my joy will be full. And your joy will be full. So I want you today. I want you to write down on a sheet of paper right there. How you can have full joy in the Lord. Full joy in the Lord.

And let me give you seven things you can write down. Out of this passage. That ought to excite you. And motivate you as you serve Jesus. How many of you love Jesus? Say amen. How many of you want to serve Jesus?

Say amen. How many of you really want God to use you in your life to count? Say amen. All right. Watch this. I'm going to tell you that you can be happy. You can have joy and fulfillment. And know God's going to do great things with you.

Number one. Write it down. Number one. The first promise he gave us is. I know it is. My joy can be full. Because I know it's not me working. But him. Not me.

But him. Write that down. Not me. But him. Not me. But him. Boy you can feel an awful lot of pressure. If it's you. That's got to do all the ministry.

[9 : 52] You can feel an awful lot of pressure. If it's you. That's got to raise the children. If it's you. That's got to live the holy life. If it's you. That's got to lead people to Christ. If it's you.

That's got to teach the Sunday school class. You can feel a whole lot of pressure. But here's what he said. John 15. One. I am the true vine. My father is the husbandman.

He. Every branch of me that beareth not fruit. He taketh away. Every branch that beareth fruit. He purges it. That may bring forth more fruit. For a long time. I felt like everything was my responsibility.

I felt like God saved me. And gave me eternal life. And then pretty well turned me loose. And said now go do what I saved you to do. And somehow along the way. It went from boy this is wonderful grace.

To man there's a lot of pressure on me. It was like. It was like God was good to save me. And to keep me out of hell. But my goodness. It's a lot of hard work and sweat. And he's never pleased.

[10 : 49] He's never satisfied. And I'm never quite good enough. And somehow I changed the focus. From what God was doing. To what Austin was doing. I became man focused. And Austin focused. Rather than God focused.

But look at the passage of scripture. You see. I'll try to win souls. And produce converts. And make disciples. And I feel like a failure when I don't. In all honesty in this room. Some of you.

When you hear about discipleship. You go. Man. I just give. I can't get involved. I can't do the stuff. I just don't measure up. I'm just not good enough. I wish I could be a disciple. I wish I could be like that.

That guy that runs the discipleship ministry. And I wish I could be like these other guys. But I just don't quite measure up. I'm just not quite. See the devil loves to play that game with you. And Jesus said. I'll just go ahead and tell y'all.

You can be happy about something. It's not about what you're doing. It's about what I'm doing. And when that changes in your heart. Man. All of a sudden. You can get joyful and realize. I am valuable. I am useful.

[11 : 43] Because God's at work. In my life. I am valuable. And I am useful. I do have personal responsibility. So don't take this out of context. I do have personal responsibility.

Look at verse 10. John 15 10. If you keep my commandments. You shall abide in my love. Even as I've kept my father's commandments. And abide in his love. I never escape. I'm a.

Obedience. I ought to obey. It's my desire. I want to show him. That I love him. I do hunger and thirst. And desire to be used to God. I do want to produce fruit. But I know. That it's not trying to convince God.

To allow me to have fruit. It's his will. He is at work in my life. Getting me ready to bear fruit. And more fruit. And even much fruit. He started a work in me. And he'll finish the work he started in me.

He is moving me along the way to maturity. He's at work. In me. And he is not finished. Now watch this way. Just a second. Somewhere along the way.

[12 : 40] I almost got the feeling that. Man I want God to use me. And I want to be a success in the ministry. And I want to see great things happen. And I want to raise godly children. And I want to have a good home. And I want to have a good testimony.

And I want to. And I want to. And I want to. And everything I wanted was good stuff. Everything I wanted was good stuff. But I mean. I messed up. My kids didn't always do right. I didn't always have the best attitude.

And my wife and I used to fight like cats and dogs on the way to church on occasion. And so you know when the best day to fight is? Church day. Amen. I mean. You can't find the kids shoes on Sunday morning.

But you can find them on Monday morning. It's amazing. All week long. Everything's fine. But on Sunday morning. Everything goes wrong. Your wife wakes up early to go to work on Monday morning. In a good mood. Late on Sunday morning.

In a bad mood to go to church. Let's just be honest. And somewhere along the way. Somewhere along the way. I lost the joy. Somewhere along the way. I lost the joy. That's what he's saying in this passage.

[13 : 35] And he said. Hey. It's not you. God's at work in you. Yes. Keep on wanting to be used. Yes. Keep on wanting to see souls saved. But realize something.

God is at work in you. He's lifting up that vine. He's cleaning up that. Not the vine. The branch. He's cleaning up that branch. He's preparing that branch. Pruning that branch.

Cleaning that branch. He's working in that branch. And it's that branch through the vine. That's going to give forth fruit. And it's God doing the work. Beautiful truth. Say amen right there. Beautiful truth.

God is at work in my life. And he's not finished with me yet. God is at work in my life. And he's not finished with me yet. Number two. Second thing. That's going to give you great joy. Number one.

It's not me. It's him working in me. Number two. My joy can be full. Because I know he's cleaning me up. Write down number two. He's cleaning me up. He's cleaning me up.

[14 : 30] To be used more. I know God's at work in me. Cleaning me up. And preparing me to use me. Now listen here. He's saying all this to the apostles.

Can you imagine what the apostles have to be thinking right now? This is really written originally to the twelve apostles. And he says to them. Guys I'm leaving. And you've got to. Would you look at this. Listen to this.

You've got to understand what they would have thought. No. You're leaving. It's always been about you. It's always been you preaching. It's always been you healing.

It's always been you doing everything. It's always been you. And now you're leaving. You're dumping it on us. It's going to be us. What? And he says.

No it's not going to be you. I'm still going to be in charge. And I'm still going to be doing the work. And it's still going to be my stuff. Can you say amen right there? The second thing he said was. You guys won't be as useful as you ought to be.

[15 : 26] Let's clean you up. So I'm going to clean you up. I'm going to get you more usable. By God. Look if you would in verse 3. John 15 3. Now you are clean through the word.

Which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me. And I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself. Except it abides in the vine. No more can you. Except you abide in me.

Now look at this. Look at this. I can be happy. Because I know he's doing the work. I can be happy. Because I know God's working in me. But I can also be happy. Because he's cleaning me up.

I'm not a paper plate. He throws in the garbage. When he gets through using it. Just a little bit. We are not. We are not throwaways. We are real plates. We're real.

We're real utensils. That he's going to use. And he looks and he says. Austin I could use your life. But it needs to be cleaned up. And I'm like. Boy I know that. And you know that. And I wish I was all ought to be.

[16:23] But I don't know how to clean me up. And here's what he says. Oh I'll do the cleaning. I'll do the cleaning. I'm good at this. I'm doing the work. And I'll do the cleaning. Look if you would. Verse 3 and 4. Clean through the word.

He uses his word to clean me. He uses his word to cleanse me. As I read and study and meditate. As I hear Bible preaching through the word of God. God works in my life.

God changes me. He shows me my sin. Myself. And my failure. Bible preaching. As we read through the Bible. As we read these verses. It's like man I begin to see.

That I need him. And I begin to see how great he is. And I begin to see how wonderful he is. And I begin to see how weak I am. And I begin to see things that don't please him. And in my heart I get a desire to want to clean up.

And I want to confess sin. I want to do right. Because the word of God is at work in me. Can you say amen right there? How many of you have seen God change you? Say amen. How many of you can say. If I look back six months.

[17:21] If I look back a year. I can see God's been at work in me. I can see where there were things I used to didn't even think were wrong. And today they're gone from my life. Because the word of God showed me my sin.

Showed me myself. Showed me my weakness. And God changed me. Does that happen? If it has. Say amen. All right. Look here. Look here. If you would. He shows me his power. His greatness.

His love for me. He reminds me that I can't. He reminds me that I can't. But that he can. In and through me. Would you look at the verse four. Abide in me.

And I in you as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself. Except it abide in the vine. No more can you except you abide in me. You're not going to be able to do anything. You're not going to be able to do anything. You need him.

He reminds you that you can't. But he can. My main job. Is to abide in him. I need to maintain a close walk. And a close love.

[18:15] I need to love him. And let him work in me. I need to stay close. I need to hear his word. I need to feel his heart. I want to please him. I want you to look.

If you would. At this saying again. This verse again. Now you are clean through the word. Which I've spoken unto you. Abide in me. And I in you. And the branch cannot bear fruit of itself. Except it abide in the vine.

No more can you except you abide in me. There's a saying in Spanish. That goes like this. In English. If I translate it. Tell me who you run around with. And I'll tell you who you are.

Tell me who you run around with. And I'll tell you who you are. Do you realize that the conversations you listen to. And the activities you participate in. Begin to form your character.

How many of you know that same man? The Bible says. How can two walk together. Except they be agreed. The Americans say. Birds of a feather flock together. Well let me tell you what he's saying in this passage.

[19:10] Hang around me. Abide in me. Listen to my word. Talk about my word. Meditate on my word. Think about my word. And as I go through my day. And in my mind. I'm like.

Man Lord. I want to thank you for what you said in the Bible. I remember what you said Sunday school yesterday. And as in my mind. I continue to think about Jesus. And I'm walking around him. Guess what? The more I walk with him. The more he'll transform me.

Amen. Whoever you hang around has a big effect on you. Hang around with Jesus. He said. Abide in me. The more I walk with God. The more I'll be like him. First thing was.

I can be happy about the work. Apostles. You can work. You don't have to worry about what's going to happen. I may be leaving. But I'm still in charge. The second thing. I may be leaving. But I'm going to clean you up.

So you can be used of me. Did you know God's at work in your life? Did you know you. When he saved you. He has a plan. And a purpose for your life. And he is going to use you for his honor and glory.

[20 : 05] And he's at work in you right now. Did you know that? And he is preparing you for all these great things he's going to do. You aren't set on a shelf. You aren't a nobody. You're important in his economy.

And he's at work in you. Third thing. The third thing. Go with me to verse 5. My joy can be full because I am one with Christ. Write it down. I am one with Christ.

Look if you would. Chapter 15 and verse 5. I am the vine. You are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him. The same bringeth forth much fruit. For without me you can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me. He is cast forth as a branch and is withered. And men gather them and cast them into the fire. And they are burned. Look at this if you would. Underline in verse 5.

He that abideth in me and I in him. He that abideth in me and I in him. The same bringeth forth much fruit. The vine is the important part.

[21 : 02] It's the vine that supplies all that the branches need. It's the vine that supports the branches. The vine is necessary. The branches are of minor importance.

It can even be replaced. I want you to get in your mind. I want you to picture. I want you to picture a vineyard.

And a grape plant. And this grape vine is coming up. And it's being run across the trellis. And you know what's important? It's that part that hooks in the ground. It's that part that brings all the life in.

It is that vine. And Jesus said I am that vine. And he said no branch can do anything if it's not hooked up to me. You take a branch off the vine. Lay it on the ground. It will soon be dead.

You remove the branch from the vine. It will soon be dead. If the branch tries to bring forth fruit on its own. It will be impossible. Maybe you can't imagine that. Imagine an apple tree. Imagine an apple tree.

[21 : 58] An apple tree can't bring forth fruit. If you cut it. If you cut the limb off the tree. It will not bring forth fruit. It will die. And that's what he's saying. The vine is what's important.

And there's a great promise given here. Great promise given here. If I will simply abide in him. And he and me. I'll bring forth much fruit. Look if you would in verse 5. And put a circle around much fruit.

I think every one of us want to be used of God. We want God to do something with our lives. We got people in this room. They go to nursing homes. And preach and teach. We got people who do Sunday school classes.

And discipleship classes. And people who go knock on doors. And people who work with children. And people who do children's clubs in other parts. We got a ton of people doing a lot of stuff. We got mamas raising children.

We got mamas raising children. Husbands loving wives. And taking care of children. And raising children. We just got tons of things going on. And every one of us want to be used of God. We got a promise.

[22 : 53] It'll happen. He's going to use us. All he's asking. All he's saying is. Stick to me. Hang in there. Wait on me. I'll do the work. Look.

It's not the producing the fruit that he calls us to do in chapter 15. Notice this. Word fruit. She was like six times. But it's not the fruit producing he's called you to do. It's the abiding he called you to do.

It's not producing fruit. But it's abiding. Abiding is simply staying. Accepting. Remaining. Resting. Trusting. The vine. The branch is powerless without the vine. It's easy to think that God's work suffers without me.

We can think that God can't without us. But Jesus says we can't without him. I often like to look at my little branch. It comes off the big vine.

And here I am. Just a little old twig sticking out through here. A little old branch coming out here. That's going to have some grapes growing on it. And some leaves growing on it. And I often begin to think of how important my branch is.

[23 : 49] But that is a human. Selfish. Earthly thought. Because the truth is. That vine is absolutely nothing. Of that branch is absolutely nothing. It is the vine that is everything.

Can you say amen right there? And the husbandman who's at work. Saying hey you're just a stick. Hooked into the right place. And I'll do the work through you. It's not you. It's me doing the work.

You're powerless without me. Men take care of the vine. They remove branches. Branches that fail to stay connected to the vine. They do not allow the vine to do the work in them.

They remove them. Come to Jesus right now. Love him. Trust him. Tell him you'll never leave. Think about him. Who he is and what he's done. Praise him.

Thank him. Magnify him. Make much of Jesus. And I'm excited and joyful. Because the father is the one doing the work. The father is the one doing the work.

[24 : 45] Jesus didn't leave and say. Hey disciples here it is. Y'all figure out what to do with it. He left and said I'll still be running the show. The father will still be in charge. He left saying and I will clean you guys up so you can be more used.

And then he said hey. If you'll just stay up. If you'll just abide in me and think about me and love me and serve me. I'll take care of all the work. Just abide in me. The fourth thing he said.

Is my joy can be full because I have the promise of answered prayers. Write down promise of answered prayers. Chapter 15 verse 7. The Bible says if you abide in me and my words abide in you.

You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Here it is my father glorified that you bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciples. When I simply love Jesus and stay where I'm supposed to stay.

He will cause me to bear fruit. Then he says to me hey. You can you can ask. You can ask. You can say vine. I need strength.

[25 : 46] I need sustenance. I need power. I need you to work in me. Ask the father. And the father will help you. You say I'm kind of drooping off the vine. And I'm not doing my job.

I'm not getting enough sunlight. I'm not doing right. Ask the father. He'll lift you up. Ask the father. He'll trim things off of you that shouldn't be there. Ask the father. He'll do a work in you. God will work in you.

It's a beautiful promise. It's a beautiful promise. The father's working. The father's working. I'm just abiding in Christ. I'm praying and getting my prayers answered. God's doing a great work in me.

What a wonderful thing. He says he'll answer my prayers. And my prayers are that I could please him. And bear fruit. It'll be part of magnifying him. And growing his kingdom.

Can I just stop and say. I think somewhere along the way. We twisted prayer into something else. We twisted prayer. Into building my kingdom. And not his kingdom.

[26 : 43] We twisted prayer into meeting my desires. And not his desires. And in this passage. Here's the whole goal. You're bearing fruit. You're honoring the kingdom. You're going to have a lot of grapes.

The husbandman's going to be very happy. The vine dresser's going to be happy. The farmer's going to be happy. Because you got a lot of grapes. You're going to be used. It's going to be wonderful. But we've changed it. I don't really care about the grapes.

And I don't really care about anything else. But I do want to have the prettiest branch. I do want to have the prettiest branch. I do want to have the most comfortable place for my branch. To lay on the trellis. I do want great things for me.

And he's like. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Ask the father. Ask the father. For great things for me. I will answer your prayer. God is not seeking to keep me from being used of him.

He wants to see me productive. Blessed. Bringing forth more spiritual fruit. Let me just say here. I spent a lot of my life wondering. God, do you not want my kids to turn out right? God, do you not want me to be able to lead people to you?

[27 : 43] God, do you not want me to be able to build a church? God, do you not want me to disciple people? God, why won't you show me somebody I can disciple? And it was almost like I thought. I'm really trying to do something for you.

And you are not doing your part. You ever thought like that? You ever thought, God, where are you? Why don't you step in and do something? I mean, I'm busting my rock down here. And the God of heaven looks down and says. Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

We got things backwards there, don't we? I am the vine and you are the branches. My father's doing the work. And you're a stick. Hang in there. I'm going to do something with you. Hang in there.

I'm going to do something with you. You abide and ask. Number five. Great joy. Number five. Great joy is mine because I'm loved by the father. Just like Jesus is. Before I read this passage of scripture to you.

Do you know something? There is something in me that thinks that God doesn't really love me. Like me. All the way. There's something inside of me that makes me think.

[28 : 42] I don't quite measure up. And maybe he doesn't love me quite as much as he ought to. There's something inside of me that wants to think. If I get just good enough. If I quit this one more bad thing in my life. And if I start this one more good thing in my life.

He'll love me. I need to measure up. And here's what Jesus said to him. You guys ought to get happy. Because just like my daddy loves me. I love you. The same kind of love my father has for me.

Is the same kind of love I have for you. Well that's a pretty strong love. Can you say amen? Look at what the Bible says. If you would. In John chapter 15 and verse 9. John 15 verse 9. As the father hath loved me.

So have I loved you. Continue you in my love. Guys. Just like God the father loves me. Just like he's always loved me. The same kind of love.

Not a different kind of love. I love you. Continue in my love. If you keep my commandments. You shall abide in my love. As I've kept my father's commandments. And abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you.

[29 : 42] That my joy may remain in you. And that your joy may be full. Jesus loves me. Just like the father loves Jesus. Now let's think about some things about Jesus real quickly.

Jesus didn't seek his own name. Jesus didn't seek his own glory. But he wanted to do what God wanted him to do. He was God in human flesh. And yet he wasn't self-seeking. And selfish. And oftentimes we live our lives. In a completely different way. So Jesus says here guys. Hey look. Understand I love you.

And the father loves me. The same way I love you. But you guys need to kind of line up. And realize what this is all about. As I obey the Lord Jesus.

Just like Jesus obeyed the father. I show him that I love him. Obedience is my desire to please him. I want to know what he likes. I want to know.

[30 : 37] I want to do what pleases him. My loving him and obeying him. Gives him joy. And it gives me joy. Before I move on from that. Let me just give you a little illustration.

And I don't see them in here. But I was preaching not long ago. Where is Micah Rostelli? Is he not in here? There he is. Backslid away from his wife. Right? You know I had Micah and Catherine.

And I stood them up in front of a church down in Atlanta not long ago. And I stood them up. You know and they got this sweet tender young kid love. You ever. You ever. They sat in Sunday school class this morning. Holding hands the whole time.

How many of y'all held hands the whole time in Sunday school? Hold your hand up. Well Micah and Catherine did. And I watched them. And you know what. If I were to call Catherine up here. And I did this in front of that church. If I were to call Catherine up here and say.

Catherine. Now if you're going to be married to him. You need to love him. And she'd go. I do. Except she'd go. Because she wouldn't say it loud. And if I were to say Catherine. Catherine. Catherine you need to. You need to want to please him.

[31 : 35] And do what pleases him. She'd go. She wouldn't say it out loud. Because that's not the way she is. But she just. I mean. And in front of that whole church. She was so. The place was smiling.

And laughing. And enjoying their love. Because it's something super special. To that little girl. To be in love with her husband. Can you say amen right there? Here's what Jesus said.

He said. I love you. I love you. The way the father loves me. Now won't you step out. And act like it's true. You know. It would insult Catherine.

If I called up here. And I said. You start loving your husband. She'd be like. I do. I'll try to do better. See. There's a different sweetness here. Here's what the father said.

Your joy can be full. Because you're loved. Like the father loves Jesus. You're loved. And you know what. When I obey him. That gives him joy. When I please him. That gives him joy.

[32 : 30] When I'm like. Man. I love you. Father. And I just want to do what you want me to do. That gives him joy. And guess what. It gives me joy. That he gets joy. Because I'm in love. With the father. I'm in love. With the son.

Number six. Verse 12. My joy can be full. Because of our personal. Close relationship. With the Lord Jesus. Write down. Personal. Close relationship.

I'm one with him. I'm in him. And he's in me. And the father loves me. Jesus loves me. Just like the father loved him. But he. He just keeps telling me over and over. Hey Austin. I love you.

Hey apostles. I love you. Hey apostles. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. And some of you are sitting here this morning. The devil's been telling you. He doesn't love you. He loves you. He loves you.

He loves you. He loves you. He loves you. Farther than you could ever understand. He loves you. You're his child. He died on the cross to save you. He loves you. In chapter 15. Verse 3. He said.

[33 : 24] This is my commandment. That you love one another. As I've loved you. Greater love had no man than this. That a man lay down his life for his friends. By the way. That's what Jesus will do in just a few hours.

He said. Guys. Nobody could ever show you they love you any more than a guy who would die for you. I'm about to. You are my friends. If you do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth. I call you not servants. For the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth. But I have called you friends. For all things that I have heard of my father I have made known to you.

Listen to this. Jesus wants his disciples to love each other. Man. There ought to be a special love in this room where he is. He saved us. And we're something special here. And real love is shown by giving up your life for another.

Real love is not selfish. It doesn't look out for itself. It loses itself in another person. I want to do what he wants me to do. I want to give up my life and my desires.

[34 : 23] And I want to please him. He's my friend. You know. He has every right to say I'm the Lord and master. But he said. I'd like to call you guys friends. Not servants. I love this one.

You know. When you're really, really, really, really, really, really, really, really, really, really close. You don't have any secrets. When you're really, really, really, really close. You just let it all out.

You just tell everything. Look what he said to him there if you would. In verse 15. I call you not servants. For the servant knows not what his Lord does. But I call you friends. And all things I heard of my father I've made known unto you.

I don't keep anything back. He said. Hey. Hey 12. Hey listen to me apostles. I'm leaving. I'm leaving. And just let me remind you. We're getting to the best one of all here in just a second.

But just let me remind you what he said. He said. Hey. I'm leaving. But I'm not quitting. The father who's been doing the work. Will keep doing the work. By the way. You're not clean.

[35 : 20] But I'll clean you up. Through my word. The Holy Spirit's coming. The father's working. We're going to get you where you ought to be. We're going to get you. You're like sitting there going. I've got to get me where I've got to be.

No. He's like. No. I'll get you where you got to be. And then he says. And then he says. I'm one with Jesus. He said. I'm in you. And you're in me. And we're going to accomplish great things. And I'll answer your prayers.

And then he said. Hey. I love you like the father loves me. And we got this extremely close relationship. But I don't hold things back. And now you get down to the seventh thing you ought to write down.

My joy can be full because I was picked to be successful. Well I like this verse. I was picked to be successful. And in the context.

I don't know how you could take this verse any other way. Verse 16. You have not chosen me. But I've chosen you. And I ordained you. That you should go forth and bring forth fruit.

[36 : 15] And that your fruit should remain. And that whatsoever you shall ask of the father in my name. That he may give it you. Watch this. Maybe old Peter is sitting over here thinking.

Man. And I made a mistake today. I picked Jesus. And decided to follow him. And here's what. And here's what Jesus said. Hold it a minute. I picked you. You didn't pick me.

And I picked you. And appointed you. And set you on a road. To have fruit. And to have it grow in you. And have fruit that remains. I picked you to use you. You're not some idle thing out of the way.

I picked you. This is special stuff. I picked you. That ought to thrill you. That ought to excite you to know. He chose you to be fruitful. Every one of you are chosen to be fruitful.

The apostles had to be sitting around there thinking. If he leaves. I don't know what we're going to do. The churches won't grow. People won't get saved. I mean it's all over. And Jesus is looking down and said. Oh it is just getting started. I already know what the book Acts says.

[37 : 11] I've already read Romans. In 1st and 2nd Corinthians. In Galatians. In Ephesians. In Philippians. In Colossians. I read all of it. All the way in the book of Revelation. Because I wrote it. And I'll just go ahead and tell you. You boys are going to do great. Because I'm at work in you.

I'm cleaning you up. You're abiding in me. I love you like the Father loves me. We're going to do great things. Hang in there boys. Big plans for you. Big plans for you. They didn't start the work.

Jesus did. They were chosen. And appointed to bring forth fruit. From the beginning. They were chosen to make a lasting impact. They walked through and said. Come be my disciple. Come be my disciple. Come be my disciple.

Come be my disciple. He said. I'm going to use you guys. I'm leaving. It's not over. This verse is about being fruitful. This verse is about being used. And he said.

I chose you for that. By the way. This verse applies to all of us. God saved you. And God chose you. For ministry. And he set you on a path. That he's appointed you to be used of him.

[38 : 06] To his honor and glory. None of you are superfluous. None of you are extra. None of you are over on the sideline. None of you are not important to him. Every one of us belong to him.

We're saved by his grace. We're called to serve him. Chosen to be fruitful. God wants to do a work in your life. You ought to be able to sit there and go. Man. I didn't know that.

I thought God had big plans for preachers. No. He's got big plans for all the branches. That gets all of us. Say amen. Boy. He's got big plans for you and your kids. And big plans for you and your family. And big plans for you and your ministry.

He said. I chose you to make a lasting impact. So why don't you live out who you are. You are not a loser. You are not an accident. You're a child of God. You're a new creature. God has great plans for your life.

And he's going to see to it that it happens. So get with the program. Love him. Love him. Trust him. Wait on him. Give him glory.

[39 : 03] Even now for what it's going to do with you. I'll just end it like this. I want you to picture him sitting around. And Jesus sitting there. And I can see him sad, man. I can see some long faces.

He said. I'm leaving. But don't worry. I'll go prepare your place for you. And I'll come back and get you. But by the way. While I'm going. I'm going to make you be able to do greater things than I've ever done myself. Right here on this earth. You guys are going to be doing great things.

God's going to use you. And I can see him going. I don't know how that's going to happen. That don't work. And he said. Hey. Let me explain to you. You see. The father. He is the husbandman. He's the guy that's going to work this program.

He's the guy that's in charge of all this fruit. He's the guy that's in charge of all this harvest. He's the guy that's in charge. He is the husbandman. And by the way. I am the brain. I'm divine. I'm divine.

I'm the guy that's going to provide everything. And do everything through you. I've saved you. And now you're going to be used. By the way. I love you boys. I love you. I love you. I love you.

[39 : 59] And I love you. And guys. Won't you act like you love me. Let's do it. I love you. That's pretty good stuff. I love you. He says. I love you a whole lot more. And he says. Keep my commandments.

By the way. If you love him. You will keep his commandments. Because it's like. I want to. Call Catherine up here right now. And say. How many commandments are there at the Rustelli house? And she'll say. Oh there's none. I don't need commandments.

I'm in love. She didn't mind saying that. Did she Micah? Not the other night. She didn't mind saying that one bit. That's a beautiful thing about it. And then here's what he says. And by the way. Apostles.

Before I leave. I just want you to know. You're going to be successful. Because I chose you. To go and bear forth fruit. I chose you. This isn't a choosing.

So you won't go to hell. This is a choosing. So you will be used. Isn't it beautiful? He chose you. To serve him. Everybody in this room. Don't settle for less than God has for you.

[40 : 57] Live out who you are in Christ today. Father in heaven. I love you. And I praise you. And I thank you for the chance to serve you. God I pray you let joy abound in the hearts of your people.

I pray God that those that are discouraged. And feeling like they don't quite measure up. I pray God. You just help them to come forward. And get on their knees. And say thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus. Thank you that you're doing the work. Thank you that you're the vine.

Thank you that you love me. Thank you that you're cleaning me up. Thank you that we're friends. Thank you that you chose me to be used of you. Thank you for being so good to me. God help your people to go home encouraged today.

And motivated and excited about how great you are. And what a wonderful God you are. And what you're doing. Show your power. You have been listening to Austin Gardner.

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