

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

34 Re-Think of Gospel

INTRODUCTION | The Friendship of Jesus

Today's passage talks about how our relationship with God can be deepened. Firstly, our relationship with God is represented by a vine that bears fruit. Secondly, we can have a personal relationship with God, based on trust and affection. What is more, through our friendship with Jesus, we can experiment love, and build a new life style and community.

SCRIPTURE | John 15:1-17

15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have 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 abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. 17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

QUESTIONS |

- 1: (verse 1) Jesus compares his relation with his disciples with a vine. What kind of relationship do Jesus and his disciples have? Currently, what kind of relationship do you have with Jesus? (reference Isaiah 27:2-4)
- 2: (verses 2-7) What does it mean to abide in Jesus? Jesus talks about the branches that do not bear fruit. In term of relationship with Jesus, in what situation are these branches?
- 3: (verses 12-14) Jesus uses another metaphor to talk about his friendship with his disciples. What recommendation does Jesus give us for our relationships?
- 4: In the Bible, Jesus is not the only one to compare his relationship with his disciples to a friendship; Abraham and Moses were also called friends of God. How does Jesus build and maintain this friendship? Why? (reference: James 2:23, Exodus 33:11)
- 5: (verses 9-11) What should we do to abide in Jesus? What can keep us from doing this?
- 6: (verses 15-16) Jesus chose disciples, but he no longer calls them servants. What is emphasized here? What should I do to receive Jesus' friendship?

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REFERENCES |

Isaiah 27: 2-4

2 In that day, “A pleasant vineyard, sing of it! 3 I, the Lord, am its keeper; every moment I water it. Lest anyone punish it, I keep it night and day; 4 I have no wrath. Would that I had thorns and briers to battle! I would march against them, I would burn them up together.

James 2: 23

And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God.

Exodus 33: 11

Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

PRAYER |

- Jesus showed his love for us by sacrificing his life and becoming one with us. Let's be thankful because he is a friend for those who repent and believe in him. Our relationship with God is abundant, eternal and personal. We can rejoice for all the blessings we have access to through Jesus.
- In order to receive Jesus' friendship, we have humble ourselves and repent for our sins. We can do this while rejoicing in the blessings of the Gospel of Christ, and be thankful for been chosen as Jesus' friends. He becomes the strength of our lives.

UPCOMING EVENTS | This Week & Next Week

Volunteer trip in the flooded area in Joso city (21-23), lunch time meeting (Otemachi 24, Marunouchi 30), worship @ Nihonbashi Hamacho F Tower (27), Grace City Gospel (28), obento project (10/3), worship @ KDDI Hall (4)