**Love One Another**

**The Word**

Read together John 15: 9-17

**The Big Idea**

Jesus calls us to a love for one another that is sacrificial, and he invites us into life with one another that is truly joyful and makes a spiritual impact on the watching world.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider the connection between love and joy. What do you think of that connection, and what would you add to that connection based on your observations and experiences?

2. As you consider your life right now, what is one specific way you hope to grow in loving well?

3. Looking back over this summer series, what stands out to you most that you hope to take with you into the coming months?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

A. This summer we are exploring the “one anothers” in Scripture as a way of considering what the church is. Today’s one another is found in v. 12: “love one another.”

B. Defining Love

1. The love that Jesus invites us into is “agape” love, which is far more than sentiment or feeling, or even niceness and politeness. Agape is sacrificial commitment on behalf of another person’s good.

2. Jesus clarifies this love with the phrases “as I have loved you” (v. 12) and “to lay down one’s life for one’s friends (v. 13)

C. The connection between love and obedience (v. 9-12)

1. We remain in Jesus’ love by obeying his commands, and the heart of his commands is the command to love one another

2. Oftentimes we separate love and obedience, but Jesus keeps them connected

a. If you were asked “have you been obedient to God lately?” where would your mind naturally go (avoiding certain temptations, pursuing certain spiritual disciplines, etc.)

b. For Jesus, the question “have you been obedient” can be answered by asking the question “have you loved well?”

D. The connection between love and joy (v. 11)

1. Jesus calls us to a life of loving each other because that is how we experience joy

2. Jesus says “my joy will be in you”

a. Do you think of Jesus as a very joyful person?

b. Jesus exuded a joy that was compelling to others and desirable to his disciples

c. We can experience his joy as we live the kind of loving life he lived

3. Oftentimes we separate love and joy, thinking that we’ll find joy by pursuing our own agendas (success, wealth, comfort, etc.), but Jesus says true joy is actually found in giving our lives away in love to others

E. The connection between love and lasting fruit (v. 16-17)

1. The lasting fruit Jesus is talking about in the disciples’ case is the fruit of making a spiritual impact on the world.

2. Jesus intimately connects our impact and witness in the world with our loving one another (read John 13:34-35 and John 17:22-23)

3. Oftentimes we think of our witness in individualistic terms (our ability to answer people’s questions or share the gospel), but Jesus also reminds us of the bigger picture that our community with one another is one of the most powerful expressions of our witness

4. In this cultural moment, how can the church love one another in a way that stands out from the rest of the world and bears witness to Jesus Christ?