

MESSAGE NOTES

Soul Friends Commitment

John 15:9–17 (NIV)

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.
¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

NOTES:

Setting: The Upper Room and the Farewell Discourse

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

Remain: abide, dwell, live, stay (greek: meno/(μένω)

⁵ I no longer call you servants... Instead, I have called you friends”

“We regard falling from God’s friendship as the only thing dreadful, and we consider becoming God’s friend the only thing truly worthwhile.”

Gregory of Nyssa

¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

¹⁷ “But remember the root command: Love one another.”

Finding Ourselves at Home: “I’ve loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you’ll remain intimately at home in my love. That’s what I’ve done—kept my Father’s commands and made myself at home in his love. (The Message)

“You hardly knew how hungry you were
to be gathered in,
to receive the welcome that invited you to enter entirely...
The time will come when this blessing will ask you to leave, not because it
has tired of you
but because it desires for you
to become the sanctuary that you have found.”

An excerpt from *A Blessing Called Sanctuary* by Jan Richardson

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

October 11, 2026

Soul Friends

Commitment

John 15:9-17 (NIV)

As needed, refer to the Order of Worship and Resources at solanabeach.church for sermon video, message notes, resources and small group questions print version.

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Before beginning your time in the passage this week, consider the following prompt as a conversation starter: Do you have a favorite movie about friendship? What is it? What makes it special to you?

CONNECT WITH GOD

Setting Hooks into Facts: “A Simple Regimen of Private Prayer” from George Buttrick. This week, we continue the focus on the practice of confession. Read the section on “rooted in life beyond life” from the link below. This is a time for specific acknowledgment of personal or communal brokenness and sin. It is a time to acknowledge where we have fallen short and to lay it all down before our merciful God.

“Confession, like thanksgiving, should be specific. It should not be ruthless, but it should not excuse: it should set hooks into the facts. “I confess this sharp judgment, this jealousy, this cowardice, this bondage of dark habit, this part in the world’s evil.”

solanabeach.church/101126

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

- **Together:** Pray in expectation of the passage being read. Read together John 15:9-17.
- **Alone:** Read the passage once more, in The Message version.
 - Reflect/journal on one of the following prompts:
 - Where do I need to receive the friendship of God in my life?
 - Where do you experience a sense of belonging right now?
Where do you struggle to feel that you belong?
- **Together:** Share your reflections in pairs or as a whole group.

CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE

If needed, read John 15:9-17 again. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group.

- Review the [sermon notes](#).
- Which themes within the message most resonated with you this week?

- What is the background and setting of this passage? Is there anything that feels important to lift out about the setting?
- Consider the first words of John 15:9. What does the “as” or “just as” refer to here?
- What does Jesus describe as the highest form of love?
- What does “remaining in Jesus” look like practically in our lives?
- What does Jesus say just after these verses? How does that help to shape how you read it?
- What words or images provide a contrast to the image of *home*?
- What stands out to me about the kind of relationship Jesus wants to have with his followers?

ENGAGE AND EXPLORE

This section is a launching point for deeper conversation, allowing for flexibility in conversation and diversity of perspective while exploring what it means to be faithful in our lives today. **Together:** Read the question and quote below. Consider the way Jesus is creating a new framework for chosenness, covenant and faithfulness in John 15. How does this challenge your own assumptions of what it means to be friends with God and with one another?

“...is there a part of you that believes love has to be earned?”

“...love isn’t something you earn, but something you receive, like a balm, a benediction, even when you’re at your worst.”

Savor by Shauna Niequist

PRAYER

Pray together for one another and for the world. Then, close your time by proclaiming the words of Psalm 84 together.