

## Jesus and Community

Liam Clinch

John 15:15–17 (ESV)

*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.*

“... when God’s Son took on flesh, He truly and bodily took on, out of pure grace, our being, our nature, ourselves. This was the eternal counsel of the triune God. Now we are in Him. Where He is, there we are too, in the incarnation, on the Cross, and in His resurrection. We belong to Him because we are in Him. That is why the scriptures call us the Body of Christ.”

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Matthew 4:18–22 (NLT)

*18 One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. 19 Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” 20 And they left their nets at once and followed him. 21 A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. 22 They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.*

Matthew 9:9-13 (NLT)

*9 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector’s booth. “Follow me and be my disciple,” Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him. 10 Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. 11 But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with such scum?” 12 When Jesus heard this, he said, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.” 13 Then he added, “Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: ‘I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.’ For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.”*

“The friendship of Jesus means that one way to summarize the gospel is this: Jesus knows you fully and loves you anyway. Jesus sees through all the hiding. He sees through the fig leaves of your emotional armor and knows your vulnerabilities. He knows all the reasons you think you are a failure, you think you are inadequate, you think you are full of shame – and He looks at you and says, “I’m sticking with you anyway.” What is a friend if not that kind of person!? A true friend, after all, is someone who knows you that well and decides to stick around anyway.”

-Justin Whitmel Earley