

SG Q Mark 10.21-22 and John 15.1-17

1. Have you ever felt like this Rich Young Man: that Jesus' loving intentions for you were too hard or not really your view of what his "love" should look like? Have you ever talked with someone who was struggling or complaining about why God would do such and such in their life, if he was really loving? What is the real difference between Jesus "love" in v.21 and what the Rich Young Man's, our friend's, or our own view of his loving intention? How can we grow toward believing that Jesus' loving intention is better than what our plans for that are? Practically, what do we need to do when we are in the place that the Rich Young man was at the end of v.21?
2. In John 15.9,10, Jesus tells us that he loves us (same word: agapa), but he puts "abiding" in his love in volitional terms rather than emotional ones, "keep my commandments." The sermon argued that Jesus' loving intention for us as we see in Mk 10.21 can also be put in terms of the Christian life includes growing in godliness, holiness, and sanctification. John 15.1-17 gives us a three fold summary of how we respond to Jesus call to do this: abide (v.4 and about 8 additional times, but note different translations for this word<sup>1</sup>), bear fruit (v.2 and at least 7x more), and keep my commands (v.10 and 3x more). Discuss these 3 elements. How are they similar? Different? Is one easiest for you? Hardest? What does bearing fruit mean? Where are you bearing fruit? Where do you long to bear fruit but are finding it difficult?
  - a. How can you make these three too *easy* to be progressing in, by watering them down? How do you make them too hard by envisioning them only in perfection?
3. Is v.16 a good summary of the Christian life? How so or how not? Can it help us by communicating both God's work of complete legal rightness in Christ and his call to be progressing in a lived rightness? How does it speak three possible approaches to godliness/holiness/sanctification: a lack of concern for it, a real concern to be progressing in it, and a requirement of perfection in them?
4. Spend time flushing out what Jesus' loving intention looks like in your lives in terms of fruit that remains and pray for each other for the Spirit's power and illumination for this.

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<sup>1</sup> Exegetical Dictionary of NT: "The basic meaning of μένω as an intrans. vb. is *remain, continue, stand firm*; as a trans. vb. it is *wait on, expect* (Frisk, *Wörterbuch* II, 209). In the NT one finds also the derivative meanings *dwell* (John 1:38f.), *remain alive* (21:22f.), *continue to live* (1 Cor 15:6), *be permanent* (3:14), *remain in a situation* (7:8, 11, 20, 24, 40)."