

Embrace
Holy
Living

RE- FLECTING GOD

12/25/14 - Servants, Now Friends

RG AUDIO 122514

John 15:1-17

"Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden" (Genesis 2:8a). Jesus continues with the metaphor, "My Father is the gardener" (John 15:1). The beautiful image of the kingdom of God as a garden allows us to contemplate the true nature of God's work and the role we play in that work.

For God's garden to flourish two things are necessary: healthy vines and faithful servants. God has already provided us with the most healthy and wondrous vine? Jesus himself. True faithful servants of God are branches of this most wondrous of vines. They experience the joy of bearing His fruit which only grows and ripens in the sunshine and soil of love. Bearing the fruit of God's love is the joyful beauty and essence of God's garden.

Those who love God's garden and are willing to nurture it to glorious maturity, no matter the cost, He does not call *servants*: These chosen gardeners, Jesus calls *friends*. Complete joy, as defined by Jesus, is to be God's friend.

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