**I’ll be a Friend to Jesus**

*John 15:12-15*

**Introduction**

1. There are many valid reasons – scriptural reasons – to serve God, obey the Lord Jesus, and follow the Spirit’s direction:
   1. We acknowledge we were created to do so – **cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13**
   2. We acknowledge there will be judgement – **cf. Ecclesiastes 12:14**
      1. The fear of hell – **cf. Matthew 10:28**
      2. The desire for heaven – **cf. Matthew 19:17** (Jesus to rich young ruler)
2. While all those reasons, and more, are valid and will be constant motivators for obedience before God, Jesus makes it clear that He desires more intimacy from us.
3. Jesus identifies Himself as our friend, and desires the reciprocity of such friendship – **John 15:12-15**
4. We know Jesus has been, and continues to be a friend to us, but are we a friend to Him? (Few things are more bitter than being a friend to one who does not have the same love and appreciation to be a friend in return.)
5. To be a Friend
6. Friend
   1. *philos*; properly, dear, i.e. a friend; actively, fond, i.e. friendly (still as a noun, an associate, neighbor, etc.): — friend. (Strong)
      1. “he who associates familiarly with one, a companion” (ibid.)
   2. “beloved, dear…loving, kindly disposed, devoted” (Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich; 868)
      1. “in the latter sense (devoted) with dative of the person, Acts 19:31” (ibid.)
      2. ***Acts 19:13 – “And certain also of the Asiarchs, being his friends, sent unto him and besought him not to adventure himself into the theatre.” (ASV)***
      3. Their concern for him (Paul), and their pleading for him not to go to the theater, was motivated by their devotion to him as his friends. (Showed a devotion in protecting/caring for him.)
      4. “A remarkable circumstance is the fact that some of these men were friends of Paul and so concerned about him as hastily to send a message on this occasion lest he throw his life away…To be sure, they wanted to avoid bloodshed in the theater. But they acted from motives of friendship toward Paul.” (Lenski; Acts 19:31)
7. Characteristics of Friends
   1. We all have an understanding of what a friend should be. We have expectations and speak from experiences of our own. We can also make conclusions concerning friendship from past failures of our friends toward us, or us toward them.
   2. Share mutual interests and values:
      1. **James 4:4** – friendship with world = enmity with God.
      2. Friendship – *philia*; from *philos*; fondness – friendship. (Strong)
      3. Fondness of the world puts oneself in opposition with God since the matters of the world are opposite God’s character.
      4. **James 2:23; Hebrews 11:10, 13, 16** – Abraham is a friend of God, in part, because his greatest desire is for a spiritual place, and such is of God. (He valued, and cared for the things of God.)
   3. Selfless, and genuine care for each other:
      1. **Job 2:11-13** – Job’s friends would eventually question his life, but at the beginning showed their care and support.
         1. **(v. 12)** – they had a deep concern for his well-being, and were moved by his plight. (His experiences of sorrow became their own sorrow.)
         2. **Cf. Romans 12:15** – like-mindedness to the degree of sharing in each other’s life events.
   4. Do not only take, but give:
      1. True friends aren’t in it for themselves, but for the benefit of their friend.
      2. **Acts 20:35** – Lord’s words about giving.
      3. Especially true with friendship – the blessedness of friendship is one of giving.
   5. Stand at each other’s defense:
      1. **Proverbs 18:24; 17:17** – An elevated friendship is like kinship, and such a friend is present during adversity, and active on behalf of his friend.
      2. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** – they are present for each other during times of difficulty, and are a constant aid – don’t leave each other by themselves.
   6. Confide in each other (a showing of trust, and mutual respect; also, specific trust that the information given will be estimated the same by the receiver as by the giver):
      1. Perhaps it’s a personal secret which needs to be kept a secret, or even information that is valuable to the giver which is expected to be appreciated, valued, and respected by the receiver. (telling our friends something that is important to us)
      2. Confide – entrust something to (someone) for safekeeping.
      3. **Colossians 4:7-9** – They wanted to know the matters of Paul, and Paul wanted them to know – **cf. Colossians 4:2-3** (Sharing of information to value, respect, and be concerned with.)
8. I’ll be a Friend to Jesus
9. Jesus has made Himself a friend to us, and wants us to be a friend to Him – **John 15:12-15**
   1. We are still His servants, but we are also His friends.
   2. Our friendship with Jesus does not negate our reverential relationship to Him – **Luke 12:4-5** – calls us friends, but says to fear.
10. Our Relationship with Jesus is Through His Word
    1. He is the Word – **John 1:1**
    2. We know Him through the word – **1 John 1:1-3**
    3. He dwells in us by faith, and such comes from hearing the word – **John 14:23; Galatians 2:20; Romans 10:17**
    4. To ignore/cast away the word is to cast away Jesus – **Colossians 2:6-10**
    5. Our relationship, and responsibility to Jesus as friends is no different. It is expressed through our relationship with the word.
11. Our Friendship Toward Jesus Regards Keeping His Commandments
    1. Jesus’ disciples became His closest friends during His ministry on earth. His departure could have proven difficult for them, but Jesus instructs:
       1. **John 14:1-6** – Don’t be sorrowful at My departure, believe in Me, especially that I go to prepare a place in heaven for you.
       2. **John 14:15** – If you truly love Me, when I depart, you will keep my commandments.
    2. His friendship is shown us by His sacrifice, and revelation of His Father’s will:
       1. **John 15:13-15** – Not just a master, but a friend.
          1. A master may give orders to his servant without explaining the why, or the essence of the command, nor its end goal, for it is not truly the servant’s business.
          2. However, Jesus makes His Father’s will, which is His own will, a matter which includes us on an intimate level:
             1. There is the confidence placed in disciples which only a friend would place in another.
             2. The desire of Jesus is to share what is most important to Him, even more so A PART OF HIM, with us who will likewise take it into our lives as something of such importance.
       2. That friendship expressed by Jesus in the revelation of His will is to be reciprocated with the keeping of His word – **John 15:14**
          1. In keeping Jesus’ commandments we show that those matters which are most important to Him are likewise important to us.
          2. In keeping Jesus’ commandments we show that HE is important to us, because we know Him through His word. (**cf. 1 John 2:3-4**)
          3. “I’ll Be A Friend To Jesus” (John Oatman Jr.):
             1. They tried my Lord and Master, With no one to defend; Within the halls of Pilate He stood without a friend.
             2. The world may turn against Him, I’ll love Him to the end; And while on earth I’m living, My Lord shall have a friend.
             3. I’ll do what He may bid me, I’ll go where He may send; I’ll try each flying moment, To prove that I’m His friend.
             4. I’ll be a friend to Jesus, My life for Him I’ll spend; I’ll be a friend to Jesus, Until my years shall end.
          4. We become that friend to Jesus by faithfulness to Him though obedience to His word.
    3. A friend of Jesus:
       1. Is not ashamed of His word – **Romans 1:16**
          1. **cf. 1 Timothy 1:11** – Paul knew Jesus trusted Him with the valuable word, and wasn’t ashamed of it.
       2. Is not ashamed to live like Christ – **Romans 13:14; 1 Peter 2:11-12**
          1. **cf. Hebrews 10:26, 29** – the opposite. When we choose not to deny sin, we treat Christ this way. Would we treat a friend that way? – one who has done so much for us?
       3. Will defend Christ by defending His word – **1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 3:15**

**Conclusion**

1. You have a friend in Jesus, does Jesus have a friend in you?
2. Do you value the matters of Jesus?
3. Can Jesus count on you?
4. Are you faithful to Jesus because you love Him, treasure Him, and value Him even as the closest of friends?