

## GOD'S FRIEND

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John 15:12-17

1. Have you ever thought about what it must have been like in the Garden of Eden prior to Adam and Eve's choice to believe the Devil rather than God?
2. You could say that Adam and Eve had a friendship with God.
3. God initiated the friendship by:
  - a. Creating Adam and Eve in His image.
  - b. Putting them in a perfect environment.
  - c. Providing them with companionship (each other), provisions and purpose.
  - d. Giving them total freedom with one exception.
  - e. Interacting with them on a personal basis as He walked with them in the cool of the day. Genesis 3:8

NOTE: I am not sure what it meant to walk with God in the cool of the day, but Adam and Eve were able to do so without being ashamed or uncomfortable in any way.
4. We find the idea of being God's friend in several other places in the Bible.
  - a. Ex 33:9-11  
10 When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent. 11 **Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.** When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.
  - b. James 2:22-23  
22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and **he was called the friend of God.**
5. Perhaps you are thinking that being God's friend is possible for people like Moses and Abraham but beyond the realm of possibility for ordinary believers.
6. It is my conviction that Jesus Christ died, rose again, ascended, and sits enthroned in Glory in order to restore what was lost through the Fall. Col 3:9-11  
9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and **have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him** — 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.
7. We may not reside in the Garden of Eden, but through Jesus Christ we can relate to God as Friend to friend, enjoy fellowship with Him, and be unashamed in His presence.
8. Our friendship with God is not a friendship between equals, but that fact makes the friendship even more amazing and precious.
9. Jesus' words recorded in John 15 give us some insights into our friendship with God.
10. We are God's:
  - a. Chosen friends.
  - b. Confidential friends.
  - c. Cooperating friends.
  - d. Consistent friends.

## **I. God's chosen friends,**

- A. Jesus said, "You did not choose Me but I chose you."
- B. It would never occur to a natural man that he could be God's friend.
- C. Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."
- D. Jesus laid down His life for His enemies that His enemies might become His friends. Rom 5:6-11

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 **For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,** much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

- E. Jesus wants to be our friend, and He proved it on Calvary's cross.

## **II. God's confidential friends.**

- A. Not all human friends can be confidential friends because human friendship can be experienced on different levels.
- B. Notice what Jesus said in verse 16, "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all the things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."
- C. Our Savior and Lord is also our Friend, and He takes us into His confidence.
- D. If we value and nurture our friendship with Jesus He will draw near and reveal and make clear the things of God.

## **III. God's cooperating friends.**

- A. Many human friendships are one-way friendships-one person is a taker and the other is a giver.
- B. Our friendship with God is a meaningful and purposeful two-way relationship.
- C. Jesus said, "I chose you and appointed you:
  - 1. that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain."
  - 2. so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."
- D. As Jesus' chosen and obedient friends, we can live a life that has eternal significance and through our prayers see God do many marvelous things.
- E. We must not miss the fact that our friendship with Jesus Christ does not in any way diminish His lordship and authority for He is our Exalted Friend. He said, "You are My friends if you do what I command you." Philippians 2:9-13

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

#### **IV. God's consistent friends.**

- A. We sometimes say, "He or she is a fair-weather friend."
- B. God is not a fair-weather friend and we should not be either.
- C. Our relationship with Him must be the ultimate priority in our lives.
- D. No one or nothing can be allowed to come between us and our Heavenly Friend.
- E. As God's friend we must:
  - 1. Love His other friends with the same love with which He loves us (12, 17) and that involves laying down our lives for them. 1 John 3:16  
We know love by this, that He (Jesus) laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
  - 2. Love Him exclusively. James 4:4  
You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

#### **APPLICATION**

- 1. We confidently sing, "What a friend we have in Jesus," but can Jesus say, "What a friend I have in (your name)?"
- 2. We can count on Jesus, but can He count on us?
- 3. Jesus is constantly reaching out to us but are we constantly reaching out to Him?
- 4. A question we might ask ourselves is, "Do I value and put more time and effort into human friendships and relationships than I do my friendship and relationship with Jesus Christ?"
- 5. Let us not be Jesus' friends in name only, but let us be His friends indeed.