



# FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS

Preaching and Teaching Resources

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# Friendship With Jesus

**SERMON REFERENCE:** John 15:12-21

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1904

It is a privilege to call Jesus our friend—to know Him intimately as a close companion. John 15:12-25 highlights five things about our friendship with Jesus: what it means, and what it makes of us.

**First, friendship with Jesus elevates us:** “No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15). Simply being His servant would be an honor. But friendship with Jesus lifts us to a level we could not reach without Him. We didn’t choose Him; He chose us (see John 15:16).

Adrian Rogers says, “A man is known by his friends; if you’re a friend of Jesus, you’re somebody.”

Friendship with Jesus also enlarges the company we keep: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12). Friends of Jesus become friends with each other; He is our common bond. Because we love Him, we love one another, and the circle grows.

**But we must also remember the cost of friendship with Jesus:** “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13). Real friendships are expensive, but they are worth it. The highest service is when we serve because we want to, not because we have to. Serving and obeying Jesus does not earn us His friendship; it proves our friendship.

**However, friendship with Jesus still enriches us.** Healthy friendships with good people sharpen us and make us better. On the contrary, unhealthy friendships make us dull and drag us down. Friendship with Jesus, who is the Vine, makes us fruitful.

**Finally, friendship with Jesus means entering inevitable conflict with the world:** “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you” (John 15:18). Just as His friends become our friends, so do Christ’s enemies become our enemies. But it is an honor to be counted worthy of suffering as Jesus suffered.

Our deepest need is to have someone who understands us, and Jesus does; He is all we need.

## Life Application

Are you friends with Jesus? Have you made friends with His friends and seen His enemies rise against you? Consider your relationship with Jesus today.



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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The best friend anyone ever had and ever will have is the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) John 15:12-21
  - i) We are to love one another with the same love that Jesus has given to us.
- c) What a privilege it is to have the Lord Jesus Christ as our friend.
- d) Jesus does not have favorites.
  - i) With Him, there is no respecter of persons.
    - (1) Acts 10:34
  - ii) But Jesus does have intimates.
- e) You can become a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- f) In today's message, we will think about friendship with Jesus as we learn what a privilege it is to be able to say, "I am a friend of Jesus, and Jesus is a friend of mine."

## 2) THE ELEVATING CONSEQUENCE OF FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS (JOHN 15:15-16)

- a) Friendship with Jesus lifts us to a level we could not be lifted to without it.
  - i) It ennobles us.
  - ii) It elevates us.
  - iii) It lifts us up to be called a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) If we could just simply be called servants of the Lord Jesus, then that would be an honor.
  - i) Just to serve Him would lift us.
  - ii) But to think that Jesus wants us as His friends, how that lifts us!
    - (1) That does not bring Him down; that brings us up.
- c) We did not choose Him; He chose us.
  - i) John 15:16
  - ii) He said, "I want you to be My friend."
    - (1) It is an elevating, ennobling thing to be called a friend of Jesus.
- d) A person is known by his friends.
  - i) If you are a friend of Jesus, then you are somebody.
- e) It is a privilege to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, but it is quite another thing for Him to invite us as His friend.
  - i) John 15:15-16
- f) Abraham was called a friend of God.
  - i) James 2:23
  - ii) All of the disciples to whom Jesus was speaking in John 15:14 knew that Abraham was a friend of God.
    - (1) Imagine what must have gone through their hearts when Jesus said, "Now, you are My friend."



- (a) Imagine the honor that was theirs to be a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- g) Jesus seeks us out; He takes the initiative.
  - i) He loved us before we knew Him.

**3) THE ENLARGING COMPANY OF FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS (JOHN 15:12)**

- a) We gain many other friends when Jesus becomes our friend.
- b) When you make a new friend, you meet his or her friends.
  - i) When you make a new friend, then your friend's friends become your friends.
  - ii) There is an ever-enlarging circle of friends when we receive a new friend.
    - (1) Any friend of your friend becomes your friend.
    - (2) This is what Jesus was talking about.
      - (a) He was saying, "You are My friends; therefore, My other friends must be your friends."
- c) John 15:12
  - i) Since Jesus loves us, then we should love one another.
    - (1) Jesus' friends are our friends.
      - (a) Because we have Jesus as a friend, think of all the other friends we will get to have.
- d) Friendship with Jesus gives us many other friends.
  - i) There are people we would not know apart from Jesus.
    - (1) It is the love that they have for Jesus and the love that we have for Jesus that brings us together.
    - (2) Jesus' friends become our friends.
- e) As believers, we are one in the family of God.
  - i) There is one name that brings us all together.
    - (1) We may not know everyone's name, but there is one name we all know.
      - (a) It is the name of Jesus.
  - ii) Because we love Jesus, we love one another.
  - iii) We should love the church because Jesus loves the church.
    - (1) There is someone who loves us, and His name is Jesus.
    - (2) Don't ever criticize the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (3) John 15:12
- f) We have a circle of friends because we have the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord.
- g) We are to love others as Jesus loves us.
  - i) That is what friendship means.

**4) THE ENDURING COST OF FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS (JOHN 15:12-15)**

- a) It costs to be a friend of Jesus.
  - i) There are no cheap friendships, not if they are real friendships.
  - ii) True friendship costs, but it is worth it.
- b) Friendship with Jesus is not earned by obedience, but it is shown by obedience.
- c) We are to love one another because we love the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - i) Sometimes it costs to love one another.
- d) There is no cheap way and no easy way to be a good friend to anyone.



- i) Friendships are expensive, but they are well worth it.
- e) John 15:15
  - i) The word “servants” here is literally the word “slaves”.
    - (1) There are three reasons why someone might serve another:
      - (a) If you are a slave, then you serve another because he is your master, and you have to.
      - (b) If you are employed, then you serve your employer because you need to.
        - (i) You need the pay.
      - (c) If a person is a friend, then you serve him, not because you have to or need to, but because you want to.
        - (i) That is the highest kind of service.
  - f) Some people say that we do not have to go to church to love God or to be a good Christian, but that just isn’t so.
    - i) Anyone who would willfully and deliberately stay away from the worship service is most likely not a Christian.
      - (1) He is not saved because he comes to church.
        - (a) Anyone who is saved is saved by the grace of God.
      - (2) If you have no desire to be with the saints down here, then you have little hope of being with the saints up there.
    - ii) When we go to church on Sunday morning, we are saying two things:
      - (1) God is important to us.
      - (2) Other people are important to us.
        - (a) John 15:12

## 5) THE ENRICHING COMPENSATION OF FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS (JOHN 15:15-16)

- a) It will make us spiritually perceptive.
  - i) To be a friend of the Lord Jesus is to be brought into the inner circle.
  - ii) To be a friend of the Lord Jesus is to be given insights that other people do not know.
    - (1) Have you ever wondered why some people seem to know so much more about the Word of God than others?
    - (2) Have you ever wondered why some seem to be able to pray and get their prayers answered?
      - (a) They have learned the secret of fellowship and friendship with the Lord Jesus.
  - iii) John 15:15
    - (1) The word “slaves” in this passage means “servants”.
    - (2) In this day, there were many slaves, and they were rarely friends.
      - (a) The slave was told what to do.
        - (i) He was not told why to do it.
          - 1. It was none of his business.
      - (b) The slave did not know his master’s plans.
      - (c) He did not know his master’s heart.
      - (d) He did not know his master’s feelings.



- (3) Jesus did not call us slaves but friends.
  - (a) He has made known to us everything that the Father has made known to Him.
- iv) John 17:6-7
  - (1) Jesus revealed sacred secrets to His friends.
- v) Matthew 13:10-11
  - (1) The disciples could not understand why Jesus spoke in parables.
    - (a) "Because it was given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but unto them it was not given."
      - (i) It is good to be on the inside and in the inner circle.
- vi) It is good to be a friend of the Lord Jesus.
  - (1) Friendship has its privileges.
  - (2) There are some sacred secrets that the child of God knows and the friend of Jesus knows that other people do not know.
- vii) Luke 10:23-24
  - (1) If you are a friend of Jesus, then you know things that prophets and kings did not know.
    - (a) You have an insight that Isaiah did not have.
    - (b) You have an insight that Solomon did not have.
    - (c) You know things that scientists and philosophers cannot know.
- viii) Jesus whispers into your ear sacred secrets because you are His confidante.
  - (1) "I have made all these things known unto you."
    - (a) John 15:15
- ix) Jesus makes known to us sacred secrets because we are His.
- b) It makes us spiritually productive.
  - i) John 15:16
  - ii) The Lord is the one who makes us spiritually productive.
    - (1) The productivity comes along with being perceptive.
      - (a) When we are perceptive, then we become productive.
        - (i) We become fruitful.
  - iii) Real friendship with someone who is a good person will make you a better person.
    - (1) You will become enriched and enlarged by that friendship.
    - (2) Proverbs 27:17
      - (a) Friendship with a good person will put a keen edge on your life.
    - (3) If you have friends who are unworthy friends, then they will blot your influence.
      - (a) They will dull you and drag you down.
  - iv) Friends lift us and enrich us.
    - (1) Friends cause our lives to be productive.
    - (2) If you want to be successful, then get successful friends.
    - (3) If you want to be godly, then get godly friends.
    - (4) If you want to be wise, then get wise friends.
      - (a) This is truth in the normal or Earthly plane.
        - (i) How much more true it is when we become friends of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - v) When we have friends who are friends of Jesus, they talk about the things of God.



- (1) They tell us new things that they have learned and new insights into the Word of God.
- (2) Just to be in their presence lifts us.
- vi) We should be able to say of our friends that we love them not only for who they are, but for who we are when we are with them.
- vii) John 15:16
  - (1) Jesus was talking to friends in this passage.
    - (a) He was talking to intimates.
    - (b) He was talking to those into whose ears He had whispered sacred secrets.
  - (2) Because they knew the mind and the will of God, they could pray in Jesus' name.
    - (a) They could sign Jesus' name to their prayers.
    - (b) To pray in the name of Jesus does not mean to ask for a pink Cadillac, and then, say, "In Jesus' name, Amen."
    - (c) To pray in Jesus' name means with His authority, with His approval, and for His glory.
    - (d) How are you going to know His will unless He has been whispering into your ear those sacred secrets?

## 6) THE INEVITABLE CONFLICTS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS (JOHN 15:17-21)

- a) When you become a friend of Jesus, you enter into conflict with this world.
  - i) The world is not a friend of Jesus.
  - ii) His friends become our friends, and it is just as true that His enemies become our enemies.
- b) We cannot be a friend of Jesus without having enemies.
  - i) If we say we have no enemies, then we do not have Jesus as our friend.
    - (1) There is no way that you can have no enemies and have Jesus for a friend.
  - ii) The Bible says that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
    - (1) 2 Timothy 3:12
  - iii) We are not better than the Lord Jesus Christ, and His enemies will be our enemies.
    - (1) Someone once said that a man is poor indeed who does not have any enemies.
    - (2) A person is known by his friends, and he is also known by his enemies.
- c) When we stand up for the Lord Jesus Christ, it will cost us.
  - i) But we will just simply be closer to Jesus because we have suffered with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d) Why did they crucify the Lord Jesus?
  - i) He was a friend of sinners.
    - (1) Matthew 11:19
    - (2) Where would you be if Jesus were not a friend of sinners?
      - (a) Matthew 9:13
      - (b) He does not love us because we are good; He loves us by His grace.
        - (i) He does not make us good so He can love us.
        - (ii) He loves us so He can make us good.
- e) Romans 5:8
  - i) Have you received that love today?





## 7) CONCLUSION

- a) The deepest need of every heart is intimacy.
  - i) It is not for physical intimacy, but for emotional and spiritual intimacy.
  - ii) The deepest need is to have someone who understands us.
    - (1) Someone who understands our fears, hurts, aspirations, and disappointments.
    - (2) The human heart yearns for such a friend.
  - (a) His name is Jesus.
    - (i) It is Jesus you need.
    - (ii) What a friend we have in Jesus!
- a) We are sinners by nature, by birth, and by choice.
- b) Our sins deserve judgment.
  - i) But Jesus carried our sins to the cross.
    - (1) With His blood, He paid the sin debt.
- c) The Bible says that if we believe Him and trust Him, then He will forgive our sins and save us.
  - i) When we do that, we should make it public.
    - (1) "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."
      - (a) Psalm 107:2
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



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Would you take God's precious Word and be finding John chapter 15, if you would please. John chapter 15. In a moment I'm going to begin reading in verse 12. Some years ago when Joyce and I were quite young, we had a little baby boy to die and Joyce and I had never faced death before. That afternoon as we drove to our hometown to make preparation for the funeral, we had to drive about 65 miles, and as we drove that 65 miles, we sang and prayed. One of the songs that we sang over and over again that 65 miles from Fort Pierce to West Palm Beach was, "What a friend we have in Jesus! All our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to Him in prayer." It was true then. It is true now. It was true for me. It'll be true for you. The best friend anyone ever had and ever has is the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to talk to you today about friendship with Jesus. Begin reading with me here in John chapter 15 verse 12 through verse 25. Jesus says, "This is My commandment, that ye love one another." But now wait a moment, not just love one another. There's a special kind of love. "That ye love one another, as I have loved you." That is, you love one another with the same love that I have given to you. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, and whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, 'The servant is not greater than his Lord.' If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My Name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me." Again, what a privilege to have the Lord Jesus Christ as our friend.

Does Jesus have favorites? No, with Him there's no respecter of persons, but He does have intimates. You can become a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now there's several things I want you to think about today as we think about friendship with Jesus, and I pray God the Holy Spirit will write these upon your heart. I pray that you will learn what a privilege, yes, a privilege, to be able to say that, "I am a friend of Jesus and Jesus is a friend of mine."

There are basically five things that I see as I look in this passage of Scripture, and I pray God will write them upon your heart, and the first is **the elevating consequence of friendship with Jesus**. Friendship with Jesus lifts you to a level that you could not be lifted to without that. It ennobles you. It elevates you. It lifts you up to be called a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now folks, all of us, if we could just simply be called a servant of the Lord Jesus, that would be an honor. I mean, if Jesus just simply said, "You're My servants," what an honor that would be. How that would lift us, just to serve Him. But to think that He wants us as His friend, how that lifts us. That doesn't bring Him down. That brings us up, because, you see, we didn't choose Him, He chose us. He said, "I want you to be My friend." That is an elevating, ennobling thing, that we're lifted. To be called a friend of Jesus. You know, a man is known by his friends. If you're a friend of Jesus, you're somebody.



I remember years and years ago when I was in seminary, Dr. Robert G. Lee, the former pastor of this church, who in his day was a legend, a great man, a dear man, one of the greatest men in my estimation who has ever walked planet Earth, came to speak to us at the seminary. I wanted to be there. I wanted to be near the front to hear the great Dr. Robert G. Lee preach the Word of God. I was all ears. I listened to him. He said many wonderful things. I remember one of the things that Dr. Lee said when he preached to us there at New Orleans Seminary, he said, "Young men, when you preach, preach to men's hearts, not to their heads." He said, "Everybody has a heart. Not everybody has a head." I thought that was pretty good. "Preach to their hearts, not to the heads." And then they needed somebody to take Dr. Lee to the train station, and I got chosen. I was going to drive Dr. Lee to the train station. I had a raggedy old car; I hoped he wouldn't mind. But what a privilege it was for me to be a servant to that man, to drive Dr. Robert G. Lee to the train station. Oh, I looked forward to it. I treated him with such deference, got him in the car, tried to mind my P's and Q's, to ask just the right questions, to bring this man to the train station. God gave me the privilege to serve him. That was a great privilege.

But later on I became the pastor of this church. Dr. Lee was a member of this church, and he and I got to be friends. One day he called me up, and he said, "Pastor, would you be my guest at dinner? I'd love to have some fellowship with you and some friendship with you." Now, folks, I want to tell you it was one thing for somebody else to appoint me as his servant, but it was quite another thing for him to invite me as his friend.

Now if all we could be is just servants of Jesus, that would be wonderful. What a privilege! What a privilege just to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, if that were all! But can you imagine, Jesus said, "I'm not calling you servants. I'm not calling you slaves. I'm calling you friends. You didn't choose Me. I chose you." Folks, we're somebody if we're a friend of Jesus. A man is known by his friends. In the Old Testament, Abraham was called what? The friend of God. Remember that? He was known as the friend of God. All of the disciples to whom Jesus was speaking right now, they knew that Abraham was a friend of God. Can you imagine what it must have gone through their heart when Jesus said, "Now you are My friend." Can you imagine the honor that was theirs and the honor, my friend, the elevating honor to be a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ? And He sought us out. He took the initiative. We sing it, "I've found a friend, oh, such a friend! He loved me e'er I knew Him. He drew me with the cords of love, and thus He bound me to Him." Now that's the first thing, the elevating consequence of this love, of this friendship.

But here's the second thing I want you to notice. Not only does it elevate us or does it lift us, but I want you to see **the enlarging company of this friendship**, because we're lifted by friendship with the Lord Jesus and we gain so many other friends when Jesus becomes our friend. The enlarging company of this friendship. You see, listen, when you make a new friend, do you know what you do? You get to meet his friends or her friends, and the strange thing is that when you make a new friend, then your friend's friends become your friends, and there's an ever-enlarging circle of friends when you receive a new friend. Any friend of your friend becomes your friend. Now that's what Jesus is talking about here; that's the theme of all of this. He is saying, "You're My friends, and therefore My other friends must be your friends."

Go back and look at it again in John 15 verse 12, "This is My commandment, 'That ye love one another, as I have loved you.'" If I love you, then you have to love one another. My friends are your friends, and because you have me as a friend, think of all of the other friends you're going to get to have. You see, friendship with Jesus lifts us, and then friendship with Jesus gives us so many other friends. Very frankly, most of us in this building would not have known one another apart from Jesus. Now we might have known our mates; surely we would have known our children. But think of the friends. You see, His friends become our friends. Isn't that a wonderful thing? The ever-enlarging circle.



"I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God." There's one name that has brought us all together. Now, folks, there's a big crowd here this morning, five or six thousand people in this building right now. How many of you know everybody's name? You don't. You say, "That's a joke." But I tell you, there's one name we all know, Jesus. Jesus. His name. And because we love Him, we love one another, and we know so many people. The enlarging circle of our friends. That's why I love the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why do I love the church? I love it because Jesus loves it.

I told you a long time ago a story that has stuck in my heart since I've heard it over forty years ago, I believe. A pastor in Georgia went to visit a couple, and they were new in the church, and he was visiting in the home, and a very fine home, a lovely home, and he noticed that they had a little dog, and they just made over the little dog almost as if the dog were a member of the family, almost a child. Nothing seemed to be too good for that little dog. And the pastor, it was a young couple, they looked like they had so much, the pastor said in the conversation, "Pardon me, but do you have any children?" They dropped their head and said, "No, Pastor, we don't have any children." He said, "Well," he said, "I see you. You treat this little dog with such love and fondness. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you had a child that you could pour that love out on?" When the pastor said that, he knew he'd made a big mistake, because the woman began to cry and walked out of the room. He said to the husband who was there, "I'm sorry, I don't know what I said, but surely I said something. It was a social error. I am so sorry. What did I say?" He said, "Pastor, it wasn't your fault, but you don't understand. We did have a son. It was the only son that we could have, and the doctor said we could never have any more children, and our son has died and is in Heaven. And this little dog that you think we make too much of, that was his dog. He loved this dog so much, and, Pastor, very frankly, we can't have any more children, and the love that we're pouring on this little animal is really just our way of saying we love our son. You may think we love this dog too much, but I tell you we love him so much because our son loved him so much."

Now, friend, when I heard that story, I said you know, that's so like the church of the Lord Jesus. You know, we're not much, folks. Look around. We're not much, but I tell you there's somebody who loves us. There's somebody who loves us, and His name is Jesus. He loves us. Why do I love the church? Because Jesus loves the church, and don't you ever criticize the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ loves the church, and He said in John 15:12, "This is My commandment, 'That you love one another, even as I have loved you.'" What a circle of friends we have because we have the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord. We are to love others as Jesus loved us. That's what friendship means.

Now here's a third thing I want you to see. I want you to see not only the elevating consequences of friendship with Jesus, and I want you to see not only the enlarging company of friendship with Jesus, but thirdly I want you to see as we look at this, **the enduring cost of friendship with Jesus**. Did you know that it costs to be a friend of Jesus? Look if you will in John 15 verses 13 and 14. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends." There are no cheap friendships, not real friendships. True friendship costs, but it's worth it. "You are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." No bargain friendships.

Now friendship with Jesus is not earned by obedience, but it is shown by obedience. Now we're to love one another because we love the Lord Jesus Christ, and sometimes it costs to love one another. There's no cheap way; again, there's no easy way to be a good friend to anyone. Friendships are expensive, but they're well worth it. Now Jesus said in John 15:15, "I don't call you servants," and the word there is literally slaves, but He said, "I call you friends."

You know, there are three reasons why someone might serve one another. If you're a slave, you serve another because he's your master and you have to. Or if you are employed, you serve your employer because you need to. I mean, you need the pay. But if the person is a friend, you serve him not because you have to



or you need to but because you want to. Now that's the highest kind of service where we serve because we want to.

You know why I love to come to church on Sunday morning? There are people who say, "Well, you don't have to go to church to love God. You don't have to go to church to be a good Christian." Well, there's one thing wrong with that. It's just not so, just not so. Now obviously there are people who're sick and cannot come; God knows their heart. But any man who willfully, deliberately stays away from the worship service, that man is most likely not a Christian. Now he's not saved because he comes to church. Anybody who's saved is saved by the grace of God, but you listen to me, friend. If you have no desire to be with the saints down here, you have little hope of being with the saints up there. Do you know what you say when you come to church on Sunday morning? When you get up, and there are other people out doing other things, and you come here to worship in the assembly on Sunday morning, you're saying two things. By being in this building today you're saying two things. You're saying, number one, God is important to me, and, number two, these other people are important to me. I mean, my brothers and sisters are important. Not only is God important to me, but we are important one to another. That's what the Scripture says in John 15:12, "This is my commandment, 'That ye love one another, as I have loved you.'" There is the enduring cost of this friendship.

Now let me move on. I've talked to you about the fact that friendship lifts us. He chose us to be called a friend of Jesus. What an ennobling thing that is. And then we've talked about the fact that friendship with Jesus enlarges us. We meet so many other friends, and there's the ever-increasing circle of friends that we meet, and I have friends around the world because of that one friend whose name is the Lord Jesus Christ. And then we have talked about the cost of this friendship. We've talked about the enduring cost that you can't have any bargain friendships.

But now let me talk to you about the compensation. If you think that the cost is bad, think if you will about **the enriching compensation of friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ**. Look if you will in verse 15. What are some of the compensations? John 15 verse 15, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." Now folks, that is a great verse that you might want to underline in your Bible.

What is the first compensation of being a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ, well that we've not already mentioned? Well, it'll make you **spiritually perceptive**. It'll make you spiritually perceptive when you become a friend of the Lord Jesus. To be a friend of the Lord Jesus is to be brought into the inner circle. To be a friend of the Lord Jesus is to be given insights that other people don't know. Have you ever wondered why some people seem to know so much more about the Word of God than others? Have you ever wondered why some seem to be able to pray and get their prayers answered? It's right here. They have learned the secret of fellowship and friendship with the Lord Jesus. Now Jesus said, "I haven't called you slaves." That's what the word servant means. "But I've called you friends." Now in this day there were many slaves, and they were rarely friends. The slave was told what to do. He wasn't told why to do it. It was none of his business. He didn't know his master's plans necessarily. He didn't know his master's heart. He didn't know his master's feelings. He just said, "Do this," and he was told to do this, and he would do it, or go here, or come, or do whatever. But Jesus said in John 15:15, "Now I'm not calling you slaves. I am calling you friends, because the servant doesn't know what his master is doing." But He said, "I've made known unto you everything that the Father has made known unto Me."

Now put these verses in your margin, because they're wonderful verses that impinge upon this verse. In John chapter 17, just a few verses later, verses 6 and 7, He says to His disciples, "I have manifested My Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world, Thine they were. Thou gavest them Me, and they



have kept Thy word. Now they have known all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee.” What is that saying? Jesus is saying in these verses in John 17 verses 6 and 7, “Father, I am revealing sacred secrets to My friends.” Or again in Matthew chapter 13, when Jesus began to speak in parables, His disciples couldn’t understand why Jesus was speaking in parables. And in Matthew chapter 13 verses 10 and 11, this is what it says, “And the disciples came and said unto Him, ‘Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?’” Now listen to the answer as Jesus talked to His friends. “And He answered and said unto them, ‘Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but unto them it is not given.’” Folks, it’s good to be on the inside. It’s good to be an insider; it’s good to be in the inner circle. It’s good to be a friend of the Lord Jesus. Friendship has its privileges. There are some sacred secrets. There are some things that the child of God knows and the friend of Jesus knows that other people don’t know.

Here’s one of the greatest, this Scripture, when I looked at it preparing this message, deeply moved my heart. Luke chapter 10 verses 23 and 24, “And He turned Him unto His disciples and said privately, ‘Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see, for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see these things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.’” Did you know that if you’re a friend of Jesus, you know things that prophets and kings didn’t know? That’s what this verse says. You know things that prophets and, and kings did not know. You have an insight that Isaiah did not have. You have an insight that Solomon didn’t have. You know things that scientists and philosophers cannot know. Jesus whispers into your ear sacred secrets because you’re His confidante. You are the friend of the Lord Jesus Christ. That’s an amazing thing. He says now, “I don’t call you servants. I call you friends! The slave doesn’t know.” But He said, “I’ve made all these things known unto you.”

I think Bill Gothard tells the story of a student who was in a university class, and it was a class on philosophy or something like that, and the professor was an agnostic or an infidel, and he did not believe the Bible to be the Word of God. And he thought he would take these young students who claimed to be Christians and intimidate them, and so he said, “How many of you believe that the Bible is the Word of God? Would you lift your hand?” All of the students, even those who were professing Christians, were so intimidated they kept their hand down, except for one courageous student, and he lifted his hand. The professor looked at that student and said, “Young man, you believe that the Bible is the Word of God?” He said, “Let me tell you. I have read the Bible.” And he said, “The Bible is full of contradictions. The Bible is full of misstatements, inaccuracies. The Bible is a nonsensical book. How can you say that you believe the Bible is the Word of God?” You know what this student said to that professor? He said, “Professor, the Bible is God’s love letter to His friends. If you read it and didn’t understand it, it’s because you’ve been reading somebody else’s mail.” Amen? What Jesus is saying is that, “That I make known to you certain sacred secrets because you are Mine.” There are the privileges of friendship with the Lord Jesus.

It makes you spiritually perceptive, and it makes you **spiritually productive**. Continue to read, look, if you will, in this passage of Scripture. Verse 15, it makes you spiritually perceptive. John 15 verse 16, it makes you spiritually productive. “Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, and whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you.” Now did you know that many of us who have friends in high places, and we have friends in high places, folks, I’m talking about Heaven. Those that have friends in high places, they just get a head start.

One man was very successful and he was giving a lecture, and somebody asked him, “What is the secret of your success?” He said, “I had a friend.” Now he was talking about an earthly plain. “I had a friend.” You see, our Lord, our Lord is the One who makes us not only spiritually perceptive, but He makes us spiritually



productive, and the productivity comes along with being perceptive, because when we're perceptive, then we become productive and we become fruitful. Real friendship with anybody who is a good person will make you a better person. You will become enriched; you will become enlarged by that friendship. That's true on an earthly plain. The Bible says in Proverbs chapter 27 and verse 17, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Now what does that mean? It means friendship with a good person will put a keen edge on your life. "As iron sharpens iron, a man's countenance will sharpen the countenance of his friend." Conversely, if you have friends that are unworthy friends, they will blot your influence. They will dull you. They will drag you down.

Now on an earthly plain, the best friend I have is my wife. That's a good arrangement, if you can arrange that, to have your best friend as your wife. My best friend is my wife, Joyce, and I say this without stutter, stammer, equivocation. I don't have to think about it. Joyce has had an ennobling, elevating, enriching, enlarging influence on my life. I am a better person because of my association with her, because friends lift you. Friends enrich you. Friends cause your life to be productive. If you want to be successful, get successful friends. If you want to be godly, get godly friends. If you want to be wise, get wise friends. Now that's just truth, folks, in the normal plain. How much more true it is when you become a friend of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have earthly friends on this plain who are friends of Jesus, very dear friends, very close to me, and I can tell you when I get with those friends, we're not together three or four minutes before they begin to talk about the things of God, new things they've learned, new insights into the Word of God, and we could be in the car, or we can be in a hotel room. We can be in a restaurant; we can be in the living room, but just to be in their presence lifts you. Do you have friends like that? You ought to have friends like that. These friends, you just take up where you left off the last time, because a friend who is a true friend will enrich you, enable you, enlarge you, lift you up. As one person wrote to his friend, "I love you, not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you. I love you, not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me." Do you know if there's any; oh, bless God, if there's anything good about the man who's talking, it's because he's got a friend. His name is Jesus.

Think of it. Think of the perceptivity and the productivity that comes when Jesus says, "I'm going to let you in on these things. I'm going to speak to you as a friend to a friend." And then He says in John 15:16, "You didn't choose Me. I chose you. I ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit." And then He makes this wonderful statement, and He says, "And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, I'll do it." Do you see it there? "Whatever you ask the Father in My name, I will do it." Who is He talking to? He's not talking to the hoy-polloi, to everybody in general. He's talking to friends. He's talking to intimates. He is talking to those, into whose ears He has whispered sacred secrets. Now because these people know the mind and the will of God, they can pray in Jesus' name. They can sign Jesus' name to their prayers. To pray in the name of Jesus doesn't mean to ask for a pink Cadillac and then say, "In Jesus' name, Amen." To pray in Jesus' name means with His authority, with His approval, for His glory, in His name. Well, how are you going to know His will, unless He's been whispering into your ear those sacred secrets? So, folks, there is the enrichment, this enriching compensation of friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let me just bring the last thing here, as we look at these five things. There is **the inevitable conflicts of His friendship**, the inevitable conflicts. It's not all honey and no bees. Did you know that when you become a friend of Jesus, you enter into conflict with this world? Did you know that? Well, look, continue to read in John 15 verses 17 through 21, "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." You see, the world is not a friend of Jesus. "If you were of the world, the world would love his own, but because you're not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the



world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, 'The servant is not greater than his Lord.' If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My Name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me."

Now, folks, let me tell you something. I said, had it not been for Jesus, most of us would not have known one another. We would not have met. You see, why do we know one another? Because His friends become our friends. I'm going to tell you something else. It is just as true that His enemies become our enemies. That coin has two sides to it. He said, "We're to love one another." And He says, "If the world hates you, you know that the world will hate you because it hates Me. The servant is not better than his master." Now you cannot be a friend of Jesus without having enemies. If you tell me today, "Pastor Rogers, I don't have any enemies," I'll tell you, "Well, then I know one Friend you don't have, and His name is Jesus." There's no way that you can say I have no enemies and have Jesus for a friend. The Bible says in Second Timothy 3:12 that, "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." It is very clear. It is very plain. You are not better than the Lord Jesus Christ, and His enemies will be your enemies. And that's the reason why Josh Billings said, "A man is poor indeed who doesn't have any enemies." You're a poor man that doesn't have any enemies. A man is known by his friends. He's also known by his enemies.

When you stand up for the Lord Jesus Christ, it's going to cost you. But don't worry about it. Don't worry about it. You will just simply be closer to Jesus because you've suffered with the Lord Jesus Christ. We sing that Gospel song; I quoted a little bit of it just a little while ago. "I've found a friend, oh, such a friend. He loved me e'er I knew Him. He drew me with the bonds of love, the cords of love, and thus He bound me to Him. And around my heart still closely twine those ties which naught can sever, for I'm His, and He is mine forever and ever."

Do you know why they crucified the Lord Jesus? Do you know why? They said, "This man is a friend of sinners." That's why they crucified Him. They said, "He is a friend of sinners." Do you know I'm so glad He is, because where would I be if He were not? Where would you be if Jesus were not a friend of sinners? Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He doesn't love us because we're good; He loves us by His grace. He doesn't make us good so He can love us; He loves us so He can make us good. Isn't that wonderful? Romans 5:8 says, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Have you received that love today? Do you know the deepest need of every heart is intimacy? Did you know that? The deepest need is not for physical intimacy, but for emotional and spiritual intimacy. The deepest need is to have somebody who understands us, who understands our fears, our hurts, our aspirations, our disappointments. The human heart yearns for such a friend. Folks, His name is Jesus. It's Jesus you need. What a friend we have in Jesus.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Would you like to receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior and Lord so He can also be your friend? Would you pray a prayer like this? Pray it from your heart, "Lord Jesus, I need You in my life. I need my sins cleansed and forgiven. I need fellowship with You. I need to have that fruitfulness and that fellowship, that insight and that productivity in my life. Come into my life, Lord Jesus. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me, Lord Jesus." Would you pray that? "Save me, Lord Jesus." Pray it and mean it, and I promise you on the authority of the Word of God, He'll save you. "Save me, Lord Jesus. Save me, Lord Jesus." Pray it and mean it. Lord, I pray that many today will say yes to Christ. In His wonderful Name, Amen.





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