

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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June 25, 2023

“Being A Friend Of God Pt. 2”

By Brian Meade

We looked a couple of weeks ago at the life of Abraham, and how he was called, “the friend of God” (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23). We see from the Scriptures, that God desires all men to have a relationship with Him based on some of the qualities of friendship.

We may never be friends to those who are the elite, the famous people, or the dignitaries of this world, but we can be a friend Of God! And that is worth more than any earthly friendship could ever hope to benefit us.

As we continue to examine how friendship with God, let us note how friendship with Him is like friendship we have now. As we see how...



III. Friends Do Things For Each Other.

When a very close friend asks you to do something for them, that carries a lot more weight to it than when someone else may ask the same thing. It is because of the mutual care and concern that our friend has for us that can make the difficult or big requests seem small to us. It is because of the love of our friend that we will go out of our way to do what they want.

We apply this theme of friendship to the words of Jesus in John 15:12-14, *“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. “You are My friends if you do what I command you.”* Obviously, this has reference to to our motivation in serving Christ, with love for Him foremost.

Jesus demonstrated His great love for us in going to the cross and laying His life down for us. That’s why in Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, *“For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”*

We are compelled to do the things we do in keeping the commandments of our Lord Jesus, just as He said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”* (John 14:15).

As we know from the Scriptures, Jesus is our King (John 18:37; Revelation 17:14), He is our Master (John 15:20; 2 Timothy 2:21), But Jesus is also our friend. Jesus tells us how this friendship/servant relationship works in John 15:15, *“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.”*

Those words of Jesus do not mean that the Disciples did not have to obey Him anymore, but that He regarded them as more than just impersonal servants who were not related to Him. Jesus regarded them as loyal friends who do His will! John 15:15 does not cancel out Jesus’ statement in John 14:21. But it gives us the knowledge that when we follow Jesus’ instructions and commandments, we are His friends.

And when our Master and Friend asks us, *“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”* (Luke 9:23), we can do this because our friend Jesus asks us. And many other like things that we do, such as worship Him regularly (John 4:23-24), seeking His kingdom as our priority in life (Matthew 6:33), studying the Scriptures to know His will (John 8:31-32), and even putting all sin out of our lives (Mark 9:43-48).

IV. Friends Have Concern For Us.

This is one of the great blessings of our friendships with others around us. We are blessed to have those who love us and are concerned about our wellbeing. There are those who will call and check on us when we need a friend. They will spend time with us when we need someone to talk to about our troubles in life. And they will be a shoulder to cry on when we need emotional support. These friends do all of these things because they care deeply for us!

Notice the great contrast Of Jesus, and what He calls the hirelings, *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.”* (John 10:11-14). Jesus is the one who cares about us and our spiritual wellbeing. He is invested in us and wants us to be saved.

In Hebrews 4:15, we see the concern Jesus has for us, *“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.”* Jesus is said here to sympathize with us in our temptations to sin. It is also shown in the level of his concern by passages such as Hebrews 7:25, *“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”* Jesus really cares about our sin problem!

Jesus is so concerned about our lives, that He will not allow us to hurt ourselves by staying in unrepentant sin. He expressed that concern to the church at Laodicea, in Revelation 3:19, *“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.”*

The Laodicean church was “lukewarm” and needed to change. Just like a father who cares for children when they go astray, Jesus will rebuke us for our good always (Hebrews 12:5-12). We serve God who truly cares!

V. Friends Are Loyal To Each Other.

The last likeness of friendship we want to examine is the loyalty that true friends show to one another. Unlike the false and fair-weather friends one can have that will let us down or even betray us, a true friend is loyal for faithful to us no matter what it takes!

In Proverbs 18:24, the wise man tells us, *“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*

The Bible pictures several friendships that were very close and loyal, such as the friendship of Jonathan and David in 1 Samuel 18:1-4, that of Naomi and Ruth in Ruth 1:16-18. Both examples were extremely loyal to their friendships.

Jesus is the greatest example of a loyal friend that one can see in the Scriptures. John wrote for our benefit, this marvelous insight into the heart of Jesus in John 13:1, *“Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”*

Jesus was about to be betrayed by Judas, a disciple who showed complete disloyalty to our Savior (13:2; and vs. 18). Judas would fulfill the prophecy of David in Psalm 41:9, *“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.”*

Another tragic example of disloyalty is in the story of Demas, fellow worker with Paul, the apostle. Demas is right along the other disciples, working in God’s kingdom in Colossians 4:14, *“Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.”* Also in the letter Paul writes to Philemon, Paul again says, *“Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers.”* (Philemon 23-24).

But sadly, we see a different story in 2 Timothy 4:9-10, as Paul gives the news to young Timothy, *“Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica...”*

Friends sometimes leave us alone, but when it comes to our Lord Jesus, He is friend that will always be loyal to us. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus is reminding His disciples that will always be there for them, as He said, *“....and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.* Paul ends his letter to the Philippians by saying, *“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”* (Philippians 4:23).

And finally, the Colossians proved themselves to be true friends to Jesus, as he wrote to them, *“For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.”* (Colossians 2:5). Let us also be Jesus’ friend by being loyal to Him.

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Janet Boren, Fred Johnson, and Todd Bryan.

The Johnson Family.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: “*The Church As A Family*”

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Jerry Kennemur
Author: Colossians
Starting Page & Question: Donnie V. Rader
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Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Adam Harris
Scripture Reading: *Psalm 8:1-9*
Song Leader: Dan Cottrell
Lord’s Supper: Jerry Kennemur
Assisting: — —
Singing Service: *Men Of The Congregation Lead Singing*
Invitation: Brian Meade
Closing Prayer: Fred Johnson

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

June 28, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
Workbook: Ezekiel
Author: Dan King
Starting Page & Question: *Page #39, Question #1*
Invitation: Paul Busby
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Paul Johnson



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For sermon videos, articles, and announcements.

“The Church As A Family”

Lesson Text: **1 Timothy 3:15.** The Church As A “Household.”

I. Families Are Related To One Another.

- Families Are Related Because Of Our Birth.
- We Are Born Into God’s Family- **John 3:3-5; Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Peter 1:23.**
- Sonship Has Privileges & Responsibilities- **Romans 8:14-16; 2 Cor. 6:17-18.**
- We Are Strongly Connected To One Another As Brothers And Sisters In Christ.
 - Among The Jewish Brethren: **Acts 9:17; 23:6.**
 - Among The Christian Brethren: **1 Timothy 5:1-2; 3 John 3-5.**
- Families Are Where We Belong, Are Wanted, And Needed- **Romans 15:7.**

II. Families Love One Another.

- Family Love Is The Tie That Binds Families Together Closely.
- **1 Peter 1:22; 3:8; 4:8; 5:14-** A Common Theme Of Peter.
- Jesus Taught Us To Love One Another- **John 13:34-35.**
- **1 Corinthians 13:4-8,**
 - *“Love is patient” ... Proverbs 10:12.*
 - *“Love is kind” ... 2 Peter 1:7, “brotherly kindness.”*
 - *“Love is not jealous” ... Acts 7:9.*

III. Families Have A Unity & Togetherness.

- Families Are Often Closely Knit Together- **Genesis 13:5-8.**
- We Are To Be United In Our Common Salvation- **Philippians 2:1-4.**
- We Should Not Let Satan Destroy Our Family Unity In Christ- **2 Corinthians 2:11.**
 - By Causing In-Fighting By Brethren- **1 Corinthians 3:3; 3 John 9-11.**
 - By Brethren Bringing In False Teaching- **2 Peter 2:1-2; Jude 3-4; Rom. 16:17-18.**
 - By Causing Our Love For One Another Be Turned To Bitterness Or Hate.
 - **1 John 3:13-15.**
 - It’s Sad When Families Have Hatred, But Even Sadder When Brethren Do.
- We Should Seek To Protect God’s Unity For Us- **Ephesians 4:1-3; Matt. 6:33.**
- *“Blest Be The Tie That Binds”*

IV. Families Are There For Each Other.

- Families Will Support One Another In Good And Bad Times.
- **1 Corinthians 12:25-26.**
- When One Member Strays, We Seek To Restore Them Back To Faithfulness.
 - **Luke 15:4-32; James 5:19-20.**
- We Are To Offer Support For Brethren In Times Of Need- **1 Thessalonians 5:14.**
- **James 5:19...** The Family That Prays Together, Stays Together.