

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS JOHN 15

Text: John 15:15

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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.*

Introduction:

Webster's defines "***friend***" as "***a favored companion.***"

Thank God for our true friends! I am grateful to the friends that I have made. The Lord has allowed me to enjoy the friendship of some very special people. Some of them sit in this very room this morning!

However, there is a Friend Who is more special than any other I have ever met in this life. His name is Jesus and I do not call Him my Friend, but He calls me His. Think about that for a minute. If the President were to call me his friend, he has raised me to his level. However, if I presume to call him my friend, I have not elevated him at all, but I have brought him down somewhat.

It is one thing for me to sing “**What A Friend I have In Jesus.**” It is quite another when Jesus says that He has a friend in me! There is a vast difference between the two!

As we read the Bible, we can find several places where God and Jesus referred to certain ones as their friends. For instance, in the Old Testament, God spoke to Moses as a man speaks to his friend, **Ex. 33:11.**

Exodus 33:11

¹¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

Abraham is called the friend of God, **2 Chr. 20:7, James 2:23.**

2 Chronicles 20:7

⁷ Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?

James 2:23

²³ And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

In the New Testament a man named Lazarus is called a friend by Jesus, **John 11:11**.

In our text, the disciples are called Christ's friends.

Even more amazing is the fact that one of the charges His enemies made against Jesus was that He was a "**friend of publicans and sinners**", **Matt. 11:19**.

Matthew 11:19

¹⁹ The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Even Judas the betrayer who led the army to arrest Jesus is referred to as a "**friend**".

Matthew 26:50

⁵⁰ And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

This morning I want to talk about this man Jesus, Who is The Friend who laid down His life.

Let's take a look at these ways that we can know that Jesus is our Friend.

1. HIS FRIENDSHIP IS SEEN IN HIS SACRIFICE (vs 13)

John 15:13

¹³ *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

A. It was voluntary – “Lay down His life”

He voluntarily gave up His life on the cross. He made this clear by several statements that He made during His life.

John 10:18

¹⁸ *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

John 18:37

³⁷ *Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

Matthew 27:50

⁵⁰ *Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.*

B. It was vicarious

The word ***vicarious*** means “***performed or suffered by one as a substitute for another or to the benefit or advantage of another.***” Jesus tells us in this verse that His life was being given up “***for his friends***”.

In other words, His death was not for Himself, but it was for others.

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

When Jesus went to the cross, He was doing so on the behalf of others. It was for those people that He called His friends.

1 Peter 2:24

²⁴ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Galatians 3:13

¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,

being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Hebrews 9:28

²⁸ So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

1 Peter 3:18

¹⁸ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1 John 2:2

² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1. Betrayed by Judas and deserted by the disciples - Matt. 26:47-56
2. Beaten by the Temple guards - Luke 22:63-64
3. Rejected by the very people He came to save - Matt. 27:17-25; John 1:11
4. Scourged - Matt. 27:26 (Ill. Furrows - Psa. 129:3)
5. Mocked by the soldiers and crowned with thorns - Matt. 27:26-29

6. Beard plucked from His face - Isa. 50:6

7. Stripped Naked - Matt. 27:35

8. Crucified - Nailed to a cross and hung up to die - Matt. 27:35

9. Absolutely marred beyond belief - Isa. 50:14

C. It was victorious

There are those who look at the death of Jesus on the cross and cry “**What a tragedy!**” Yet, His death was not tragic! His death ranks as one of the most glorious days in the history of this world! When He was nearing the end of His time on the cross, Jesus uttered a cry that proclaimed His death as a time of great victory.

John 19:30

³⁰ When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

2. HIS FRIENDSHIP IS SEEN IN HIS SHARING (VS 14-15)

John 15:14-15

¹⁴ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 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.

A. He shares His love

Jeremiah 31:3

³ The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

B. He shares His life

These verses tell us that Jesus not only gave His life **FOR** us on the cross, but that He also **IMPARTS** His life to us day by day.

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

3. HIS FRIENDSHIP IS SEEN IN HIS SALVATION (VS 16)

John 15:16

¹⁶ 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: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

A. We are chosen by Him

We call that calling conviction. It's an inner awareness that we are a sinner and that Jesus is the only hope.

B. We are called by Him

He calls us into His service.

Ephesians 2:10

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

C. We are comforted by Him

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 4:16

¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.