

FRIENDS!

Today we talk about friends. When you have true friends you are rich. When you have true friends you are not a failure.

Let's talk this morning about some of the positive aspects of friendship. As we do, we want to remind you of the best friend of all, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We also want to show you what qualities you need to have in order to be a good friend. And you can use these same qualities to decide if a person really is your friend. If he or she shows these qualities he or she is a true friend. If he or she does not show these qualities, the chances are that the person is not a true friend.

FRIENDS ARE SELECTED

It has been said that you can choose your friends but you can't choose your family.

It makes sense to choose your closest friends well.

- **They will have the greatest influence on you.**
- **They will either build you or pull you down.**
- **They will either encourage or discourage you.**
- **They will either help you or hurt you.**

I have seen many a person go down hill because they have hung with the wrong kinds of friends.

I have seen many a person experience God's best because they have chosen the right kind of friends.

It makes sense to choose the very best friend available who is willing to be my true friend.

That person is the very Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It boggles my mind to think that the God who made the universe wants to be my friend.

It boggles my mind to think that the God who holds all things together wants to live inside of me and be my friend.

It boggles my mind to think that Jesus would call me, "friend".

How do I select Jesus as my friend?

John 15:14 - *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

The most important commands Jesus gave concerned eternal life. If we do not follow His commands concerning eternal life, we can't possibly be Jesus' friend. John 10:9, 14:6, 3:16-18

- **Jesus says that He is the only way to Heaven.**
- **Jesus says that when a person places their faith in Him they have everlasting life.**
- **Jesus says that if a person does not place their faith in Him they are condemned because of their lack of belief.**

To have faith in Christ is to admit that you are a sinner who can't save himself. Isaiah 64:6

To have faith in Christ is to believe that he paid for all of your sins when He died on the cross.

Romans 5:6-8

To have faith in Christ is to trust Christ alone for forgiveness and eternal life. Ephesians 2:8-9

To have faith in Christ is to have your life changed by Him. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Are you Jesus' friend because you have trusted Him as your Savior?

If you have chosen Him as friend, He has chosen you as friend, and has great plans for you. John 15:16

If you are wise you will select your friends carefully.

You will not select friends who will bring you down, but those that will build you up and that you can build up.

If you wise, you will also select the best friend of all, the Lord Jesus Christ.

FRIENDS SACRIFICE

My friends have made sacrifices for me.

I have made sacrifices for my friends.

A friendship that costs nothing is no friendship at all. John 15:13

This is exactly what the Lord Jesus did for us. He laid down His life for His friends, you and I who have trusted Him as our Savior. Isaiah 53:3-

To be Jesus friend will also mean sacrifice. Luke 14:26-27

To be Jesus' friend will require sacrifice.

- **The sacrifice of time**
- **The sacrifice of talent (used for Him).**
- **The sacrifice of thought (that pleases Him)**
- **The sacrifice of treasure**
- **The sacrifice of tasks done for Him**

It will cost everything to be Jesus' friend.

It cost the Lord Jesus everything to be your friend.

If you will not sacrifice for a friend, you are not much of a friend.

If your friend will not sacrifice for you, he is not much of a friend.

We are not suggesting that we can always do what our friends ask. If a friend asks me to do what is illegal, immoral, or in any way contrary to the will of God, I should not make that sacrifice.

If a friend asks me to lie or to cheat for him or her I should not make that sacrifice.

If a friend asks me to do something that will hurt him or her, I should not make that sacrifice.

FRIENDS STICK

True friends stick with you. You stick with them.

When things are going well, your friend is there to enjoy it with you.

When things are going poorly, your friend is there to suffer with you.

Proverbs 18:24 - A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

The ultimate friend who sticks closer than a brother is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:20, Hebrews 13:5-6

The Lord Jesus never leaves.

The Lord Jesus never forsakes.

The Lord Jesus will stick with you to the end.

That encourages me to be faithful to Him.

I am to stick with Him as a loyal friend.

I am to do what He wants me to do.

I am to serve Him all of my days. John 14:21

**You can tell a person is a good friend when he sticks with you.
You can tell that you are a good friend when you stick with them.**

**Who is the good friend that you need to get in contact with this week?
Maybe one of your friends has unintentionally “fell through the cracks.” Go! Find your friend! Let him know that you are sticking with him or her.**

FRIENDS SHARE

True friends do more than talking about hunting, sports, the weather, girl things, guy things, movies or food.

True friends communicate what is on their hearts.

True friends talk about things of substance and importance.

True friends share the joys and the sorrows, the ups and the downs of life.

**Jesus is the friend of those who have trusted Him as their Savior.
Jesus, because He is a friend, shares. John 15:15, John 16:13-14**

Through His Holy Spirit Jesus is still sharing with you.

He wants it to be a reciprocal sharing.

Jesus is your friend. He shares with you.

Are you are Jesus' friend? Share with Him!

There isn't anything that you can't share with Him! John 15:7, 1 Peter 5:7

Remember, a good friend shares. Let your friends share their burdens and joys with you, even when it hurts.

And don't you let things get so bottled up inside that you can't share with a friend.

Sometimes God places that friend in the right place at the right time so you can share your burden!

FRIENDS SPEAK UP

A friend will speak up for a friend.

He will defend him. He will plead in his behalf.

He will say “a good word” for his friend.

If Jesus is your friend He speaks in your behalf in Heaven. 1 John 2:1-2, Hebrews 7:24-25

Jesus speaks up for you.

**If you are Jesus' friend, you need to speak up for Him! Psalm 107:2, 1
Peter 3:15**

If Jesus is your friend, speak up! Others need His friendship too!

If you have a friend, don't be afraid to speak up in his or her behalf.

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How good a friend are you?