

“Jesus’ Dearest Friends”

John 15:9-17

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- It’s not WHAT you know, but rather WHO you know!
 - Acts 4:13-- *“when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.”*
- Christianity is more than a religion; it’s a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!

Jesus’ Dearest Friends

- John 15:9-17-- *“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 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. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”*

A. As Jesus’ dearest friends, we are privy to the full revelation of God!

- 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.”*
1. **Difference between a “servant” and a “friend”**
 - a. We are “servants” or “slaves” of Jesus Christ.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:20-- *“you are not your own for you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s”*
 - b. “Slaves” or “servants” usually do not have a close relationship with their master
 2. **“Friends of the king or emperor”** were close confidants.
 3. **We are privy to “inside” information**
 - a. To the “mysteries” of the kingdom
 - Matthew 13:10-- *“Why do you speak to them in parables? He answered and said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.’”*
 - Colossian 1:26-- *“which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.”*
 - Luke 10:23-- *“Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”*
 - b. To the full picture of salvation
 - 1 Peter 1:10-12-- *“Of this salvation, the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things which angels desire to look into.”*

4. **We have the ability to understand spiritual truth**

- 1 Corinthians 2:12-14-- *"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

B. As Jesus' friends, we experience close, personal, intimate fellowship with Him.

1. **The love the Father has for His Son is the pattern for the Son's love for you and I.**

- John 15:9-- *"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love."*
- John 17:24-- *"for You (that is, the Father) loved Me (that is, Jesus Christ) before the foundation of the world."*
- Matthew 3:17-- *"This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
- John 3:35-- *"has given all things into His hands."*
- John 5:20-- *"shows Him all things that He Himself does."*
- John 10:17-18-- *"because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have the power to lay it down and the power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

2. **For us to enjoy the sense of intimacy with Christ, we must "abide in His love"**

a. **We abide in His love by keeping His commands**

- John 15:10-- *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."*
- John 8:29-- *"He who sent me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."*
- John 6:38-- *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."*
- John 14:15-- *"If you love me, keep My commandments"*
- John 14:21-- *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love Him and manifest Myself to Him."*
- 1 John 4:19-- *"We love", John says, "because He first loved us."*

b. **Failure to keep God's commands does not result in a withdrawal of His love.**

- Romans 8:38-39-- *"neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth nor other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

c. **The two commands of Christ for us to keep!**

- John 15:12-13-- *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."*
- John 15:17-- *"These things I command you, that you love one another."*
- Matthew 23:37-40-- *"'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind'. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets!"*

1) **Love God with our entire being—by extension, believing in Jesus**

- 1 John 3:23-- *"And this is His commandment that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ and love one another as He gave us commandment."*

2) **Love our neighbors, and by extension, loving one another. A friend of Jesus loves Jesus' friends!**

- John 13:34-- *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another."*

d. **Extent of our love -- "as I have loved you"**

- John 15:13-- *"Greater love has no one than this, than one lay down one's life for his friends."*
- 1) **Jesus' sacrificial death on our behalf**
 - Romans 5:6-10-- *"For when we were still without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when 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."*
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21-- *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."*
 - 1 Peter 3:18-- *"For Christ also suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit."*
 - 2) **Our sacrificial giving of ourselves to help needy brother**
 - 1 John 3:16-18-- *"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."*

C. As Jesus' friends, we are chosen to serve Him.

- John 15:16-- *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."*
1. **Jesus chooses his own friends**
 - John 6:65-- *"Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."*
 - Ephesian 1:4-- *"chosen in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."*
 - 1 Corinthians 1:26-- *"For you see your calling brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called."*
 2. **Jesus appoints and commissions us for service.**
 - Matthew 28:19-20-- *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*
 3. **The "Fruit that remains" are people who come to Christ through our ministry of sowing and reaping—**
 - John 4:35-36-- *"Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest?' Behold I say to you, 'Lift up your eyes and look at the fields for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.'"*

Applications for Today?

1. **When Jesus sent you a friend's request, did you accept it?**
 - John 1:11-13-- *"He came unto His own, but His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*

2. **If you are Jesus' friend, then certain privileges that characterize the friends of Jesus also carry with them certain responsibilities.**
- 2 Timothy 2:15-- *"diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."*
 - 1 Peter 1:22-- *"fervently love one another from the heart."*
 - Ephesians 4:1-- *"walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which they have been called."*