Jesus Is Our Friend

Intro: One wrote, “He who findeth a friend findeth a great treasure.” This is so very true. Yet, another has said, “A true friend is hard to find.” This is true as well. It shows us how important and how hard it is to find a true friend. But, when we find one it is priceless. It is a person with whom we feel comfortable, and with whom we can reveal our innermost thoughts. Friends in this life do not always live up to our expectations. Jesus wants to be our friend. Jesus will always live up to our expectations, for He is dependable (we can rely on Him).

I. OUR FRIEND ACCEPTS US.
   A. We seek for a place where we can be accepted.
      1. The home should be this type of place, but often it is not.
      2. We often have trouble accepting others. We are too critical, judgmental, and fault finding.
      3. If God accepted us on the basis of how we accept others, would He accept us?
   B. The example of Jesus
      1. When Nicodemus came to Him by night, John 3:
         a. We do not know why he came to Jesus by night, but Jesus accepted him and taught him.
         b. Yet, Jesus had condemned the Sanhedrin, of which Nicodemus was a part.
         c. It did not matter to Jesus what his position, politics, or circumstances in coming were, He was ready to teach him.
         d. Jesus could tolerate differences in people as long as they were not sinful in themselves.
      2. Often Jesus was condemned for eating with publicans and sinners.
         a. Mat. 9:10-11 “And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. 11And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?”
         b. Mat. 11:19 “The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.”
         c. Luke 15:2 “And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”
         d. Jesus knew they were sinners.
         e. He would tell the religious leaders (chief priest and elders); Mat. 21:31 “Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”
         f. Jesus did not confuse the sin with the sinner; He hated the sin but loved the sinner.
         g. Jesus instructed them to stop sinning; John 8:11 “She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”
   C. Pro. 17:17 “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”
      1. He does not approve of our sins, but He loved us anyway.
      2. He stands ready to forgive our sins if we will repent and ask forgiveness; 1 John 1:7-9 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 9If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 10If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
II. OUR FRIEND BELIEVES IN US.

A. Christ and the apostles.
1. When Christ was crucified all the apostles forsook Him and fled and hid in fear.
2. Yet, He displayed trust in them.
   a. Acts 1:
      (1) They were still confused, even about the nature of the kingdom; Acts 1:6 “When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”
      (2) He spoke of the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit coming upon them; Acts 1:4-5 “And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”
      (3) They would then be His witnesses to the world; Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
   b. Jesus presented them with a task, gave them the means to carry out the task; and then trust them that they would not fail Him.

B. Christ and us.
1. He has the same trust in us.
2. When we hear the Gospel that we will accept it; John 20:30-31 “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”
3. That we will carry out His great commission; Mat. 28:18-20 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

C. Story of Jesus’ return to heaven:
1. The angels greet Him and talked to Him about His mission to earth.
2. They asked Him about the carrying out of His mission now that He had returned to heaven.
3. He told them that He had given the job to the apostles.
4. They asked what would happen when they died, for then it would fail.
5. Jesus said No!, for they will train others who would take up where they left off.
6. They reminded about man and said what if they don’t then what.
7. Jesus said, “I have no other plans.”

III. OUR FRIEND IS THERE WHEN WE NEED HIM.

A. Jesus came to this world when we needed Him.
1. His coming meant certain death for Him.
2. But, Jesus came; even when we were not His friends.
   a. John 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”
   b. Rom. 5:6-10 “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to
die. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 
9Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10For 
if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being 
reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

B. Jesus is still there when we need Him.
   1. Pro. 18:24 “A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer 
      than a brother.”
   2. Heb. 13:5, 8 “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: 
      for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.... 9Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and 
      for ever.”
   3. Jesus is at the right hand of God as our advocate 
      a. 1 John 2:1 “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we 
         have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”
      b. Heb. 7:25 “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, 
         seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”
   4. Jesus is our mediator (1 Tim. 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, 
      the man Christ Jesus;’); so that we can cast our burden at God’s feet. 
      a. 1 Pet. 5:7 “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”
      b. He will always be there to comfort, console, and care.
      c. 2 Cor. 1:3-4 “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and 
         the God of all comfort; “Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort 
         them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

IV. Our Friend Expects Loyalty.
   A. When we have such a friend as Jesus how could we think of being disloyal or disobedient.
      1. John 15:8-10, 14-15 “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. 
         9As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10If ye keep my commandments, 
         ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.... 11Ye are 
         my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 17Henceforth 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.”
      2. Jesus believed that when we saw His love for us, we would love him enough to do what 
         He said.
         a. 2 Cor. 5:14 “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, 
            then were all dead:”
         b. 1 John 4:19 “We love him, because he first loved us.”
   B. Yet, many profess to be the friend of Christ, but will not do what He says.
      1. Mat. 7:21-23 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but 
         he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have 
         we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many 
         wonderful works? 23And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work 
         iniquity.”
      2. Jam. 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? 
         whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
      3. 1 John 2:15-17 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, 
         the love of the Father is not in him. 16For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes,
and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

Conclusion: God has removed all barriers to Him. Will you not come to Him; Mat. 11:28-30 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”