

Friendship with Jesus
John 13:21-30
February 22, 2026

What is a friend? Can we be friends with Jesus?

The Covenant of Grace is a covenant of friendship.

The Invitation of Jesus to Friendship, v. 20

The gospel message is the offer of friendship with God.

If you receive the messenger, you receive the Sender.

Who will you accept as your friends? Jesus is offering friendship, but so is the world.

The Troubles of Jesus for His Friends, v. 21

Jesus was troubled. Why? Troubled for Judas. Troubled for the disciples. Troubled for Himself.

He turned to His friends in His trouble.

The Friends of Jesus, v. 23-24

The Disciple whom Jesus loved

What is your core identity? Jesus loves me. Jesus is my friend!

Our gospel identity fuels solid rest and peace.

What was John doing at this moment?

Does your self-identity survive the scrutiny of truth?

The False Friends of Jesus v. 25-30

Jesus sincerely offered real friendship to Judas.

Who will betray Jesus? This is food for serious self-examination.

One key to growing in grace is knowing where you need to change.

We think we know who the bad guys are. Those guys. Over there.

“Satan entered into him.” What chilling words.

Luther on temptation.

The blinding nature of sin makes idiots of us all.

How do you defend your sin?

“And it was night.”

Judas had cut himself off from the light of the world.

We can be friends of God. The disciples whom Jesus loves.

Meditation

Friendship with Jesus

One of the most amazing statements Jesus ever made to His disciples was that they were graduating from simply being His servants to being considered as His friends. Imagine that—being friends with Jesus. This was amazing for His disciples because of who Jesus was. He was not only their Master but also the Son of God. He made them. He sustained them by His word of power. He was about to offer His life to save them. He was to judge them and allot them their places in eternity. Yet here He was calling them His friends.

This is the relationship that Jesus wants to have with each one of us as Christians. He wants us to have a friendship with Him. However, it is obvious that there are conditions to fulfill in order to have this relationship with Him. We see this in the words He spoke to the disciples. Jesus said to them: “You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you” (John 15:14–15).

It is evident from the words of Jesus that friendship with Him is based on our spontaneous, joyful, and consistent obedience to His commands. He says, “You are My friends if you do what I command you.” This is not referring to obedience in one area of life, but a life of comprehensive, principled obedience. Although at the point of our conversion we are delivered from a life of sin, we are still largely ignorant of how to live out our Christian lives to God’s glory. We do not know the Master’s good, acceptable, and perfect will (Romans 12:2). Hence, we are like servants who must wait for specific instructions before doing the Master’s will. Jesus says that as long as we are in that state we are not yet His friends. Ignorance of His ways prevents us from an intimate friendship.

However, the church is an educational institution, teaching believers to observe everything that Jesus has commanded (Matthew 28:19). Jesus wants each believer to know everything He has heard from the Father, which He makes known to us in His Word. Like the early disciples, therefore, we must commit ourselves to the Apostles’ teachings in order to know the whole counsel of God (Acts 2:42; 20:27). As we experience an informed mind and transformed heart through this regular teaching ministry, the Holy Spirit leads us to spontaneously and joyfully deal with life’s situations as Jesus Himself would handle them. His values become our values. Thus, we live on earth in fellowship with Him as His friends.

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