

Friends of God

by David Valderrama

This sermon emphasizes the deep relationship between being a friend of God and being a disciple of Jesus, highlighting the need for obedience, discipline, and commitment. It explores the concept of true friendship with God, the importance of sanctification, and the willingness to be corrected and judged by the Lord. The speaker delves into biblical examples like Moses, Job, and John the Apostle to illustrate the challenges and responsibilities of being a faithful friend of God.

Scripture: John 15:14, John 15:13, Luke 6:40, Luke 9:23, Hebrews 12:6, 1 John 3:16, Romans 5:5, 2 Corinthians 6:14, Hebrews 12:14, Job 13:15

Topics: "Friendship with God", "Discipleship and Obedience"

Description

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Transcript

Jesus said in John chapter 15, you are my friends if you do whatsoever things I command you. No greater love has any man than this than that a man lay down his life for his friends. Whenever I first turned to the Lord in 2001, there was this song we used to sing at the church and we used to jump up and down and run circles around everybody and it was, I am a friend of God.

I am a friend of God. I am a friend of God. He calls me friend.

And that's true. Like if Jesus laid down his life for us and for his disciples. He laid down his life for all, but friendship belongs to those that are his disciples.

He said, if you continue in my word, then are you my disciples. Indeed, and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. He said in Luke chapter six, verse 40, he said, every disciple that is perfectly trained shall be as his teacher.

The word disciple literally means a disciplined learner and committed follower, a disciplined learner and committed follower. Jesus said, if any man would be my disciple, if any man would come after me, if any man would follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. If any man does not forsake

all that he has, he cannot be my disciple, my disciplined learner and committed follower.

The word discipline is kind of like this loose term, but it's well defined by Jesus. He says, if a man does not forsake all that he has, he cannot, cannot, is unable, it's impossible to be my disciple. Now this whole thing about friendship, like the friends of God, you know, we read about Moses was a friend of God.

Abraham was a friend of God. King David and Job and many more people were friends of God. Daniel.

But if we are truly a friend of God, we can by no means think that we can participate or partake of the holy things of God, of the ministry, of witnessing, of evangelizing, of instructing others, of leading others to Christ, of leading our families, of leading our children. We cannot think of it. We cannot approach these serious labors lightly.

When you think about Moses, it says the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, even as a man speaks to his friend. Now, I am not that close. I don't have that close of a relationship with God.

I don't believe I do. I've never spoke to the Lord face to face as a man speaks to his friends. But Moses was the friend of God.

And if you think about it, like he was, it seemed like he was faithful and all. It says that Moses was faithful in all of his house. The reception is bad here.

In Hebrews, the book of Hebrews, he was faithful. The anointing of the Holy Spirit was upon the writer of Hebrews to write and to describe Moses that he had this testimony that he was faithful in all his house. Now, Moses was called friend, and he's also called faithful by the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Yet God's faithful friend was not above discipline, was not above rebuke, was not above even being judged by God. God enters into judgment with his people Moses was commanded to speak to the rock. And that rock would be claving to or like out of that rock, water would come forth to to provide for like a multitude of people, a whole possibly over a million people.

But Moses was and angry, and he was surrounded daily by all these murmurs and complainers and fault finders and competitors that he had surrounding him every day. And he was weary and well doing. And in his anger, he struck the rock.

Water still came forth. But he didn't hallow or sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the people. The people knew he was supposed to speak to it.

But in his anger, he struck it. And guess what? This faithful friend of God did not get to enter the promised land, this place that he'd been working with this people for 40 years, and he wasn't able to bring him into the promised land for one sin. For one fault, for one failure.

It says in Ephesians chapter five, that sexual immorality is not to be even once named among us as is fitting for saints as it becometh saints. You know, I believe the closer of a friend you are to God. And the more faithful you are to God in his sight, the stricter account you will give.

There were all kinds of there was all kinds of sin and rebellion in the camp. And yeah, God did judge them. Just like Miriam and Aaron, they rose up against Moses and slighted the Lord by doing that.

Does the Lord speak through Moses only? And they were jealous and envious, and the Lord struck them with leprosy. But Moses was a faithful friend of God. He could not enter the promised land because he got angry and struck the rock and did not sanctify the Lord God in the midst of the people.

See, the Lord has to be faithful to his own character, his own ways. He's impartial, even with his friends. We can't have this casual, loose, lighthearted, familiar relationship with the Almighty, the creator of all things, whose eyes are like a flame of fire.

We can't approach them casually and just loosely. We need to approach him with reverence that says God is to be greatly feared in the assembly of the saints and to be held in reverence by all those that are near him. Now, at the same time we see this, I mean, like even Abraham, he was the faithful friend of God, but he didn't inherit the promised Isaac for decades.

God was just leading them through this wilderness and through Egypt and all these different places. Little by little, Job was a faithful friend, yet he was smitten with boils. His whole family was slaughtered and he lost all that he had, all of his wealth, and all he had were these friends to tell him, it's all your fault, it's because of your sin.

But the God allowed this to happen to his faithful friend. Now, here's the thing, is that John the Apostle, throughout his gospel, he says whom Jesus loves. We're building a house here, so there's a lot of sawing and stuff going on, but John the Apostle, he describes himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Now, the interesting thing is that John was a disciple of Jesus. He was a friend of Christ. He was a lover of Christ.

He was a disciple of Christ. And yet he was found laying his head on Christ's bosom at the last Passover. Now, was that casual and loose and lighthearted? No.

John was resting his head on the bosom, on the chest, listening to the heartbeat of his creator, his faithful friend, his high priest, who was about to sacrifice himself at the cross for his sins. That he might be with him where he is in the glory of God forever. So, it's really interesting because, you know, we sing these songs, you know, I am a friend of God.

We talk about how we're friends of God. But Jesus said, you are my friend. You are acting as my friend.

You are literally my friend. You're befriending me. You are showing me your friendship.

You're expressing friendship towards me. By doing whatsoever things I command you. And we know that the Apostle John did whatsoever things the Lord commanded him.

It was by grace, but it was also by being a friend, that John could truly rest his head on the bosom of Christ. If you're living in rebellion to Jesus, if you're not, like, according to the grace that you received, through the forgiveness of your sins, if you're not laboring to be a faithful disciple, a disciplined learner, a committed follower, if you're getting all you can and getting all you, if you're getting all you can and canning all you can get, instead of forsaking all that you have, to be the disciple of Christ, you're not acting as his friend. You're not, that's not the way to express your friendship to Christ.

Jesus says, no greater love has any man than this, and that he laid down his life for his friends. And that's what Jesus did for us. But it also says in 1 John chapter 3, it says, hereby we know the love of God

because he laid down his life for us.

And we also have to lay down our lives for the brethren. We love him because he first loved us. We give what we have received.

Now the question is, have we really received the love of God? Has the love of Jesus Christ, the same love you see working affectionately in our hearts and through his ministry, while he walked the face of this earth, that same love that you see in Pentecost, the same love you see throughout the book of Acts. You know, the word love wasn't mentioned one time in the book of Acts, but you see it all over the pages. Has that love truly been shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit? As it says in Romans chapter 5, it says that the love of God has been shed abroad into our hearts so that our hearts have had the love of God poured into them by the Holy Spirit.

And the fruit of that love inside of us looks like Jesus Christ and the way that he lived, the way that he selflessly gave himself, sacrificed himself, turned the other cheek, gave expecting nothing in return. The same meekness you see in him on the cross as he forgives. Father, forgive them for they know not what they're doing when they're railing on him, scoffing him, mocking him, accusing him falsely with the most violent hatred.

And he offers forgiveness. Has that love been poured into your heart by the Holy Spirit? It says whoever is born of God loves he who does not love, does not know God, for God is love. Are you a friend of God? Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? Are you a disciplined learner and committed follower? Are you truly, is it truly your mind to forsake all that you have for the sake of Christ, for his glory? Are you still living for yourself? Be honest.

Are you truly a friend of God? Do you approach the things of God, the ministry, evangelism, prayer, Bible studies? Do you go to church? All of your relationships, do you take these things lightly, loosely, casually? Or is the fear of God in your heart? I need to be a friend of God. I need to be a faithful friend of God. And even though I may be a faithful friend of God, I am not above correction, rebuke, the Lord's discipline, chastening, or even his judgment.

Moses, again, was not able to enter the promised land, even though he was a faithful friend, because he got angry. He was that close to Jesus Christ. He was that close to the Lord.

He had that much of an intimate relationship with his creator, that he slipped up by getting angry in front of the people. One time, and God had to deal with him on that intensive level. After 40 years, the Lord allowed him to look at the promised land, but he couldn't lead the people into it.

That's serious. Do you really want to have a close and intimate relationship with God? Are you ready for God to deal with you? Are you ready for God to chasten you? Are you ready for Him to judge you like He did Moses? Like He did David? Are you ready to be put to the test like Job? And we know why Job was put to the test. Satan brought a reeling accusation against the Creator, against the Lord Almighty.

He said, does Job serve you for nothing? You've hedged him about. You've blessed him abundantly. He has lots of children.

He has lots of cattle, lots of land, lots of power. But take all that away and he'll curse you to your face because you, the Almighty, are not really worthy of being served for nothing. Job only serves you because of what you did for him.

That's the reeling accusation that Satan brought to the Lord Almighty. But God knew that Job was His friend and that Job would not grow bitter in the Lord's discipline or by being put to the test. Job remained faithful in his faith and his love for God.

He said, though He slay me yet will I trust Him. Though He take away my family. Though He take away my health.

Though I lose all that I have. I will yet trust Him. I will trust in His faithfulness, His goodness, His kindness.

It's not about what He's done for me. It's about what I can do for Him. Because I know He's good.

His love's not on trial. Mine is. And that's the heart cry of a true friend of Jesus Christ, of a true friend of God.

They know that the Lord's love is not on trial, but ours is. Theirs is. Are you willing to be put to the test? Are you willing to put to shame and silence the accuser of the brethren, even against the Almighty Himself? Does David? Do you? Do they serve you, Lord, for nothing? You've blessed them.

You've given them health. You've given them wealth. You've given them popularity, power, whatever it is.

You've given them these things. Take it all away and they'll stop serving you. You'll see how unfaithful they really are.

Because there's really nothing in you that's worthy. That's what Satan thinks. And that's his accusation.

But we have the opportunity during trials, afflictions, losses, struggles, to condemn and silence all of those railing accusations and put the devil to shame. But we have to do like Job and say, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. The Lord has given and He's taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. You know, I don't remember if Moses complaining one time about not being able to enter into the promised land. He was probably more grieved not that he could enter the promised land, but that he didn't sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the people because these people's hearts were often rebellious and inclined to their self-will and idolatry and rebellion.

And he knew that if the Lord did not discipline, if the Lord did not judge him, then it would harden the hearts of the people even more and they would go astray from the Lord. And he knew that the only way that the fear of God could remain in their hearts was for the Lord to judge them. Lest they think, well, if we become a friend of God, we can get away with sinning.

We'll be above correction, rebuke, chastening, and judgment. Friends, we are not above judgment. We're not above correction.

We're not above the Lord's chastening. Whom the Lord loves, He chastens. He said to the church of Revelation, as many as I love, I rebuke and I chasten.

Then in Hebrews chapter 12, it says, no chastening is for the moment joyful, but rather grievous. But afterwards, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto those that are trained or exercised by it, perfected by it. And then it goes on to say, pursue peace and holiness without which you won't see the Lord.

Now, there are some people that have this doctrine, this bad, false, hellish doctrine, that some are just saved and justified, and some are saved, justified, and sanctified. But it says in Hebrews chapter 12, verse 14, it says, pursue peace and holiness. That Greek word has magios.

It means sanctification. That's where it's translated else, where sanctification, where to pursue it, without which we won't see the Lord. It says in 2 Corinthians chapter 6, it says, do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers for what fellowship has light with darkness.

Then the sons of God with the sons of the devil. This has come out from among them. Touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you and I will be a father to you and you shall be my sons and my daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

And then Paul goes on to say, therefore, having these promises, my dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness. Sanctification has magios in the fear of God. All are called to be justified.

All are called to be sanctified. All that are called are called to be glorified. No one that's called out of this world into the marvelous light is called to be a justified sinner.

We're to go from glory to glory, from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and to the fullness of the stature of Christ. And there's nothing more than a friend of God that a friend of God wants to do is to be conformed to the image of him who saved him and ransomed his soul from hell. There's nothing more than a friend of Jesus wants to do than be conformed to the image of Christ, his master, to be perfectly trained, to be like his master, to grow into the fullness of his stature, to bear the image of his master on this earth, to be his hands and his feet, his heart and his voice.

Are you truly a friend of God? Do you really have a sound understanding of what it means to be a friend of God? When you sing that song, where if you sing a song that talks about being a friend of God, are you living in fornication? Are you living in adultery? Are you watching horrible movies, filthy, perverted movies? What are you looking on the internet? What are you watching on Facebook? What are you watching on YouTube? What entertains you? What arouses you? What stirs your heart? When you're singing the song, I'm a friend of God, or you're thinking to yourself, I'm a friend of God. What are your eyes looking at? What are you listening to? What are you pursuing with your career? What are you pursuing with your life? Are you truly a friend of God? Are you truly a disciple of Jesus? No greater love has any man than this, than that a man laid down his life for his friends, and if that love of Jesus who laid down his life is truly on the inside of you, it will produce the same life that he lived. It will compel you from your heart, from the very depths of your being to live like him, to walk even as he walked, to talk as he talked, to devote yourself to what he was devoted to entirely, holding nothing back, not out of begrudgingly, but cheerfully.

Cheerfully. Are you a friend of God? Do you understand what that means? Do you understand that to be a friend of God, you'll give a stricter account of your life? There's a lot of churches today, and I think it's great. They preach on intimacy with God.

I think we need to pursue an intimate relationship with the Creator of all things. I think that's why he gave himself so completely for us, through his sufferings and through the cross, was to win our hearts from the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh and the pride of this life, to win us from this world and deliver us from its grip entirely. But do we know that we really understand the implications of what it means to be a friend of God? Moses was a faithful friend.

He was judged more severely, not because the Lord was like hated him or is angry with him or just anything like that, like an eternal angry, but he was displeased. He was grieved like the Lord had to do it. And if he had to do it to Moses, who was faithful in all his house, we'll have to do the same thing to us, friends.

But if we're truly new creatures created in Christ Jesus unto good works, if we're truly a branch connected to the vine, even Jesus Christ, if we're truly a new man walking in newness of life, the old man has died, been crucified, put to death through the Spirit of God, and we will receive whatever judgment the Lord gives. And we'll take it patiently. We'll receive his discipline and say, though he slay me, yet will I trust him when he puts us to the test, when he allows us to be tested.

We'll say as Job, though he slay me, yet will I trust him. The Lord bless you. Lord, encourage you and strengthen your heart.

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