

## “Following the God Who Calls Us Friends” John 15:13-15 How to Be A Friend to All

Good morning brothers. Hope we all are having, and will continue to have a great time throughout the conference. It's my privilege and to talk about God - May the Holy Spirit be with me as I share about our Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions:

- Do we need a friend in our life?
- Do we all have at least one best friend?

### Some interesting facts

- More than 1.6 billion people are active on Facebook. Eight years - 100 millions to 1.6 B now.
- More than 100 million people use Instagram every month.
- People who commit suicide and go through depression are the one who does not have someone to whom they can pour out their real emotion.

### John 15: 13- 15

13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

Imagine, Jesus who never sinned, died for the forgiveness of our sins and was resurrected by God who will judge the whole world extends his hands of friendship to you - WOW - who can reject that friendship. We will be fool even if we thought to do so.

V - 15 I no longer calls you servants, instead I have called you friends. I grew up in a Muslim family. This is a month of Ramadan, and I used to fast, pray and read Quran (in fact I used to finish entire Quran in the same month). I understood God as someone so above and high that I would never have an access. He was for me a master and I was his servant. During 1992, where India faced the worst communal riots - we lost many things, I was forced to leave my home and lived in refugee camps, saw many people dying travelled in curfew with many people just wanting to kill us. We almost escaped death. I did not know whether my family members were living or dead. My mind and heart refused to believe in God, I completely stopped going to mosque. I was confused why people were fighting in the name of religion. I said to myself if God is like this then I don't want to worship him. After 5 years my best friend invited me to Church. We committed all possible sins together. He introduced me to the God who calls us friends. With whom we have father and son relationship. God who loves us and always forgives. I had to face intense community and family persecution - where I was threatened to be killed and in fact many people came to Church to harm me. I look back and see where did I get the courage to face all these things, and now I realize that Jesus was my friend and who was by my side.

Entire John 15 focuses on two themes - “Remain in me” and “Pruning”

**True Friend will always be my side - no matter what situation I am in**

God stayed with Israelites all days and nights. Jesus walked and lived among people. And now Holy Spirit is in and with us as Christians. Going never left us when we were going through the challenges of life or when we were buried in our sins. Core needs of any human being is to feel loved. But we ask why I should be loved - what value I bring in. In everything we look for value before subscribing to it.

In India mothers get their worth by cooking food, Woman - beauty, young people - education and victories, men - providing to family etc.

[Luke 23: 39-43](#)

[39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. " 43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."](#)

What value this thief brought to Jesus - did he lead churches, baptized many etc..? He had no value but Christ loved him. Whether you bring any value - Christ loves us. For Jesus the real value was lost soul. Even while dying on the cross he cared for people. A true friend is the one who will go any miles to remain with you. Jesus an ultimate example who died when we were still buried in our sins.

My best friend who invited me and my other friend to the Church now left the church. We were really burden and tried to reach out to him but nothing was working out. Last month we organized a holiday with him so that we can bring him back. Though he is still not there but we know for sure as long as we make an effort and trust in God everything can be made possible.

Think about our life brothers:

- Do we see value in others before being their friends?
- Do we go an extra mile to save a soul? Or do we go a mile?
- Do we give our best, like Jesus who cared for a soul even while dying on the cross?
- Or do we give up when people are tough?

The conference calls us to follow the path of Jesus. We can be true friends and willing to do anything for our friends.

**True Friend will ask me questions for my eternal security**

Lawyers and auditors ask most of the questions, but disciples asks questions for eternal security.

We have many questions for Jesus but have we ever thought that Jesus have some questions for us? These questions are not soft - they are rather confrontational, challenging, humbling, personal, and breathtaking. But all are crucial to our Christian spiritual growth.

[Matthew 16:13-17](#)

[13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah;](#)

and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.

When Jesus asked what other says - everyone responded that you are ..... But when Jesus who do you say I Am - only Peter said you are the Christ. Jesus asks that question to us today - who am I for you? Think and then we can answer - Is Jesus the Christ and Lord for us or something else. In fact our life will speak for itself and will say who Jesus is for us.

What must I do inherit eternal life? Two people at different occasions asked this question to Jesus. In Luke 10:26 an expert of the law and in Luke 18:18 a rich young ruler. But Jesus asked the first one to start loving others and to the second one he asked to stop loving money. We all want an eternal life - isn't it - but what will be our answer when Jesus asked us to do something. Will we go whome with our face down as we have put our faith in treasures or we will put our faith in Jesus?

We can have 1000's of friends on face book, linkedin or any other social life that we have... but do we have friends who will ask us questions for our eternal security. Mostly when people ask us how are you? We always say I am fine. But whenever my discipler asked this question - I could never say I am fine. And that was the best answer as it helped me to be right with God.

- Do you have friends who asks you some deeper questions? Or do you even allow them to ask?
- Are you the one who asks some deeper questions?

We will meet many types of people - Angry, depressed, happy, rejected, proud etc... Jesus also met many types of people with similar category. But he was a friend of all. We need to learn from Christ and his example on how we can be a friend of all.

Love attracts people - if we love like Christ we will be able to bring many more to Christ and above all we will remain with Christ and be with him in heaven.

We got to hold the hand of Jesus and learn from him....

We got to hold the hand of our brothers who need a friend.....