

Perks of Friendship With God

John 15:12-17¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ 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. 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 abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

❖ Recap

➤ John 14

- **Remedy For a Troubled Heart**
- **Jesus will supply our Every need in glorifying Him**
 - Believers will do His Work
 - Greater Works
- **The Love of God and His Spirit**
 - Gives the Spirit to those He loves
 - Will not leave us as orphans
 - Send us a Helper
 - He Will Come to Us
- ***Simply awesome that God lives in Us...***

➤ John 15:1-11

- If You Do Not Bear Fruit, You go Into the Fire
- If You do Bear Fruit, You Will Be Pruned... or strengthened through God's hand
- Must live in Christ to bear fruit
- We can do nothing apart from Christ
- God is glorified when we bear fruit and get what we need to bear more
- **He spoke about abiding in Him and obeying His commands so that:**
 - We will have His Joy
 - You struggle with joy...
 - Look at your walk with Jesus...
 - ◆ I am not talking about just a little prayer here and there...
 - ◆ I am not talking about just coming to church...
 - ◆ I am talking about truly getting to know Him in HIS word...
 - ◆ Meditating on it
 - ◆ Praying through it
 - ◆ And then living it out...
 - That is how you will find joy...
 - Following Jesus is Purposeful... It gives your life a purpose...
 - And a life without purpose is a life without joy...
 - But a life with purpose is filled with joy... even when there may be sorrow all around
- **Sobering Verse:**
 - John 15:6⁶ **If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.**
 - ◆ This verse should really cause us to look at ourselves...
 - ◆ Ask the question... Am I bearing godly fruit...

- ◆ Are people coming to know Jesus because of Me...
- ◆ Are they growing in their walk with Him because of me...
 - It is as simple question...

❖ Introduction

- **Title: Perks of Friendship With God...**
 - My first title was: What kind of Friend are You?
 - I Really want us to ask that question...
 - But the majority of what we see here is:
 - Great and awesome things that are true for those who are friends of Jesus...
 - So, we see 4 things true for the friends of God
 - And they are sandwiched between Jesus telling us to love one another...
- **1st thing we see is: Jesus Has Proven His Friendship toward us...**
- **4 Perks of Being Friends With Jesus**
 - 1) Given Divine Knowledge
 - 2) Chosen Specifically by God
 - 3) Given a Purpose
 - 4) Get Our Prayers Answered
- **Finally we See:**
 - His Friends Will Love One Another
- **As You Hear These Points today:**
 - Make it a point to write them down
 - Meditate on them...
 - These Perks should cause you to have true rejoicing in your hearts...
 - These biblically true things should lift your spirits today...
 - I should cause you to thank god for His goodness to you...
- **Also...**
 - The First and last points should cause you to examine your hearts this morning
 - **First... Consider the fact that Jesus gave up His life for you**
 - Think on what that means...
 - **Finally Ask yourself if you are a good friend...** Are you loving others the way He called you to?
 - Do you care about other people and where they stand with God?

❖ Jesus Has Proven His Friendship Toward Us

- ¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.
- **Jesus gives up His Life for His Friends...**
 - No Greater Love can be Expressed
- **John Reminds us of this in:**
 - ¹ John 3:16 ¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.
- **A Greater Life for the Lesser**
 - It is not just that Jesus gave up His life that was equal to ours...
 - His life was worth much more than all the lives that have ever lived...
 - And His was without sin... it was perfect...
- **In Our Culture**
 - People give up their lives at times for others... and it is to be commended...
 - I can remember seeing replays of the assassination attempt on Ronald Regan

- And those Secret Service guys were putting themselves between the president and the shooter...
- Kings have people to protect them.
- We are usually putting the lesser in the way to protect who we think is the greater..
- **Jesus the King...**
 - Laid down His own life, for the life of His servants... Whom He calls His friends...
 - The King Died for His friends...
- **Praise God for Jesus this Morning!**
 - **Romans 5:6-8** ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

❖ 1) Given Divine Knowledge

- ¹⁵ **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.**
- **What an Awesome Thought...**
 - Let me tell you why...
 - Most of us in here would not be considered to have the world's most elite minds...
 - As a matter of fact, none of us would...
 - Do not get me wrong... I am not saying anything negative about any of us...
 - We just would not be considered smart... Compared to some folks in this world...
 - There are some extremely smart people in this world that have forgotten more stuff
 - Than I currently know...
 - Sure... We know a few things... And maybe we are pretty good at a few things...
 - But compared to some braniacs we have little knowledge...
 - But look at what Jesus says here....
- **He has Made Known to Us All That He heard from the Father...**
 - Jesus was given important things from God the Father
 - To deliver to His friends on this earth...
 - And He gave it to them...
 - Divine Stuff... Get excited about that...
- **He says... I do not call you servants anymore...**
 - They do not know what the master is doing...
 - They are not privy to His plans...
 - But you are my friends... not just servants...
- **Friends with Jesus:**
 - Matthew Henry wrote this:
 - *We may in some particular instance befriend a stranger; but we espouse all the interests of a friend, and concern ourselves in all his cares: thus Christ takes believers to be his friends. He visits them and converses with them as his friends, bears with them and makes the best of them, is afflicted in their afflictions, and takes pleasure in their prosperity; he pleads for them in heaven and takes care of all their interests there. Have friends but one soul? He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, 1 Co. 6:17. Though they often show themselves unfriendly, he is a friend that loves at all times.*
- **Jesus says: I have given you Divine Knowledge...**
 - He has Revealed the Father to us.
 - He has told us of our sinful state

- He has given us the way into His kingdom... We know the Way
- He has shown us what His death would mean
- How His death would bring us life
- How He would atone for our sins...
- And HE has shown us how to lead others to this same God we know.

➤ **Application: What a Privilege to have Divine Wisdom**

- How thankful are you for what you have been given
- How are you using it.
- Are you growing in it more and more
- Do you thank Him for it...
- Do you use it...
- We should be compelled to thank Him by sharing it with others...
- We have been given the Way to God Himself...

❖ **2) Chosen Specifically By God**

- ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you

➤ **Look Closely at this verse:**

- Jesus is very clear when He says this:
- He specifically says: You did not choose me... But I chose you...

➤ **Privilege to be Chosen**

- Maybe He wanted to make sure they understood what a privilege it is to be chosen...
- I believe we struggle with this truth so much in the church today...
- We want to think better of ourselves than we should...
- **They did not choose Jesus...**
 - Matthew chose Tax Collecting
 - Peter chose fishing
 - I chose sports and money
 - What did you choose?

➤ **Left to ourselves we would never choose God...**

- We would choose self... Our own self

➤ **The Scriptures teach us how blessed we are that He came and sought after us...**

- Ephesians 1:4-5 ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

➤ **He Chose Us:**

- Wow...
- Shouldn't that make your heart leap...
- **To the person that struggles with self worth and considers themselves no good..**
 - You think you can do nothing good in this world
 - Or at least not much
 - You have been told you can't by so many people you believe it...
 - Jesus says... I chose YOU...
- **To the person who struggles with thinking too highly of themselves**
 - Jesus is quick to point out to you...
 - You did not come to me on your own doing
 - By your own smarts...
 - I chose you... Remember that...
 - I came to you first...

- Without me you can do nothing...
- **Jesus is glorified in His choosing of Us...**
 - Jesus is exalted in His choosing
 - We have no claim to boast in this...

❖ 3) Given a Purpose

- **and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide,**
- **Appointed you to go and bear fruit**
 - So He chooses us, and then gives us a purpose... A job to do...
 - Ordains us... sets us apart for a great work...
 - This work is to bear fruit...
 - The fruit is going to be many things...
 - But the ultimate purpose of all our fruit bearing:
 - ◆ Is to bring sinners to repentance.
 - ◆ To bring people to Jesus Christ
 - ◆ We love for this purpose
 - ◆ We give for this purpose
 - ◆ We live for this purpose
 - ◆ We speak for this purpose
 - Throughout the Bible we see this mandate placed on us.
- **To go...**
 - Now I will not say I know exactly how and when God calls us to get going...
 - But I would assume it happens very soon after our Salvation...
 - He says, I chose you and appointed you...
- **To go...**
 - That means He saved us and is giving us a mission...
 - And this mission is going to require that we go from where we are
 - to a place where we can bear fruit...
- **This place may be:**
 - Hard and difficult
 - There may be many sorrows in our journey
 - And who is to know what it will entail.
- **For Me:**
 - It was not long after He chose me
 - That he made my mission clear...
 - It was simply to work for Him...
 - Nothing fancy... I just knew He wanted me to devote my life to making sure others knew Him...
 - **That may be as a preacher, or SS Teacher, or Home Bible Study teacher**
 - May be as a laborer
 - A Doctor or Nurse
 - But it is clear... We have been called to go and bear fruit..
- **For the first Christians:**
 - It was around Jerusalem where they would be persecuted
 - In Rome where they would be thrown into arenas
 - It was in India and around Greece and Africa
 - It was to the uttermost parts of the world
- **Fruit that Abides**

- **What does He mean here? He could mean that our fruit is good fruit...**
 - It could be that after testing it proves to have been done in a godly way
 - And this would be a true sense...
- **Likely He is referring to the effects of our fruit...**
 - The word abide means remain
 - He means that our work would remain and would continue
 - This is exactly what happened with the disciples...
 - ◆ When we look at their work...
 - ◆ It is marked with others coming to know Jesus...
 - ◆ And then those folks let other people know...

➤ **Application:**

- **What does your fruit tree look like?**
 - Are you like the family tree that has no limbs?
 - Or, do you see your purpose...
 - ◆ And have you sought out people so you can bear fruit?
- **Ephesians 2:10¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

❖ **4) Get Our Prayers Answered**

- **so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.**
- **Ask Anything in the Name of Jesus**
 - According to His wants...
 - According to what will glorify Him...
 - He will give it to you
- **Prayer is a mystery for sure...**
 - You may ask... Well... if it is in His name... and it will glorify Him...
 - then He was going to do it anyway...
 - So why pray
- **When We Pray, God moves, and God is glorified...**
 - It may be that we will not get that good thing unless we pray...
 - Just because it will glorify Jesus, doesn't meant He will do it...
 - Apart from our prayers..
- **I believe we miss out on so many Blessings to see God glorified**
 - Because we do not pray...
 - We do not pray, and we do not get...
- **When we pray, Jesus hears and responds...**
 - As we grow in Him, we learn His ways... and pray for things that are
 - According to His ways and name...
- **Right Now...**
 - I am praying that God will give us what we need to add on to the side of the church
 - I am asking in the name of Jesus
 - I believe it will glorify Him to have kids and adults from this community
 - To have a place to come and be taught... to have some rooms where they can learn..
 - **Do I know His Will:**
 - I think some, but I am not Him... So I do not fully know
 - I Can see how This would be a good thing...
 - But maybe He wants us to wait...
 - Maybe He wants us more faithful in our giving...

- Maybe He is going to do something I do not see...
- **But for now... I will pray for this...**
- And I will wait for His answer...
- In the same way that I am waiting to see Him save many I am praying for...

➤ **PRAY: God Hears our Prayers...**

- James 4:2... you do not have because you do not ask...

❖ **His Friends Will Love One Another**

- ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.
- Look back at vs 12¹² **“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.**
- He starts out by telling them that His command is that they love one another...
- Then He tells them some details about what is true for the friends of Jesus...
- And He says He gives them these commands...
 - So that they will love one another...

➤ **Jesus is Being Extremely Thorough...**

- In one sense He lets them know that if they are His friends, they will do what He commands...
- In the next breath He says He is telling them these things to help keep them doing His commands...
- **In Actuality:**
 - The Words of Jesus Help us to Love each other...
 - They get planted in our hearts through the help of the Holy Spirit...
 - They become a part of who we are as a person...
 - They become a part of our new nature...
 - And it would go against our new nature not to love one another...

➤ **What a Great Litmus Test...**

- Maybe this is one of the greatest litmus tests ever...
- You want to know where you are in your walk with Jesus...
- How well are you doing at loving others
- **Want to know if you are a true believer...**
 - How much do you long to give yourself to other brothers and sisters in the faith...
 - To make sure they have their needs met...
 - ◆ Physically, emotionally, mentally, materially...
- **Believers ought to bear each others burdens...**

➤ **Jesus bore our burden on the tree...**

- He did not just die to die...
- He died to bear our sins...
- When He gave up his life for ours...
- He saw our great need and wanted to do what He could to relieve us... to help us...
- So He gave up His life and bore our sins...

❖ **Invitation:**

➤ **Are you ready to love like this?**

- Some of you will be honest and say no...
- You will say... I am so far from it, but I long for it

➤ **Some will say nope, and I do not want to...**

- And hopefully your lack of love will convict you of your lack of salvation

➤ **Some of us in here may be self righteous...**

- We may say... yep... I can give up my life for others...

- But maybe you should ask yourself what are you giving up for others right now?
- **Lord Let it Start With Me!**