

Kingdom Life Ministry Presents:

Keys to Kingdom Living

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Dear Friend,

If you want to have a friend you must be a friend!

Lois once said to me, “If you want to have a friend you must be a friend!” Through the years I have come to find the wisdom in those words. Nothing reveals a man’s heart more than the depth of his friendships. In fact, the kind of friend he is tells much about the kind of man he is. We all have many people who are acquaintances, those who we may converse with on a regular basis either at work or church, even our neighbor’s and relatives may be just acquaintances to us. But friends are those whom we have a close intimate trust relationship with. They are people that we truly share our lives with, want to talk to and miss them if we don’t speak or see them on a regular basis.

There have been times in my life where my friends have seemingly disappeared either by our moving to another locale or just that life gets us so busy that we just drift apart and rarely speak to each other. When I have pursued a friend who was drifting away from me, I have found that it usually is because of circumstances that have nothing to do with me. Rather they were usually just overwhelmed by all that was transpiring in their lives.

I guess the bottom line is that if you really want to have a friend you must become a friend. And that means pursuing a friend even when it looks like they don’t care. Casting aside your own feelings of being neglected by them to become more concerned about their lives than you own feelings of abandonment.

There is one friend that I have had for close to 58 years who has pursued me even when I have become so distracted with the challenges of life that I couldn’t hear him talking to me even when he was standing right in front of me. Of course I am speaking of Jesus but if we really want to learn about what it takes to be a friend what better example for us to learn from.

Does Jesus desire friends?

The problem most of us have in considering Jesus as a friend is our ability to think of Jesus as being different from us as it relates to our humanity. It is as if we have placed his divinity at such a high place that it would be almost sacrilege to dare think that he could have been like you and I in regard to his humanity. It is almost like his life could not have meant the same to him as it does to us therefore why would he even need a friend.

It is even difficult for us to think that his childhood could be anything like our own. That he had to learn how to read and write or even how to speak properly. Somehow his growing up in Bethlehem was nothing short of being a divine experience. With that in mind it is not so far fetched for us to think that his temptations were far different from anything we have experienced and therefore really no temptation at all making us have little in common.

We really do not think that the human life of Jesus was anything like our own life. We do not think of him as having the same struggles that we have all come to experience in our learning the lessons in life. We think that in some mysterious way his human life was supported and sustained by the Godliness that dwelt within him, and that he was exempt from all the ordinary conditions that each one of us must go through.

But we find the story of Jesus as told to us in the Gospel’s to represent him as ordinary in all regard except to the human condition of sin. As an infant he was helpless and in need of someone to give him the necessities of life just like we were. He learned as every child must learn. His studies were not easy nor did he learn them except by studying hard. He played as other children played and he played with other children and like us he to wasn’t always picked right away and suffered the humiliation of wondering if he was going to be picked at all.

A great artist by the name of Millai, as a young man painted an unusual picture of Jesus. He presented Jesus as a little boy in his hometown of Nazareth. He had just cut his finger on some sharp carpenter’s tool he had found in his father’s workshop and had come to his mother to have it bandaged. As Jesus stood quietly peering up into his mother’s eyes she was carefully bent over looking at his cut getting ready to bandage it. This picture is really one of the truest of all the many pictures of Jesus, because it depicts Jesus in all his humanity. A little boy who had hurt himself and had gone to his mother to be taken care of.

It is quite evident that there was nothing in his life that drew the attention of his companions and neighbors to him in any way. He did no miracles until after he entered public ministry and we have read that he lived a life full of kindness and unselfishness. There was not any sin or guilt to be found within him and even though he lived a life of devotion to God there was no halo to be found hovering over his head nor was there an audible voice from heaven to be heard by his classmates that spoke of his divinity.

We do know that he grew in favor with men and with God as well. His religion made his life beautiful and winning, but always so simple and natural that it drew no unusual attention to itself. It was a life that was altogether fully human and being altogether fully human means he knew what it was like to need a friend.

Genuine friendship requires time, trust, and vulnerability.

So we find that throughout his life that even when his words burned with divine revelation, Jesus continued to live a natural human life. He ate and drank; he grew tired and he was tempted in all areas just like we are and suffered through those temptations. He knew what it was like to be hungry and thirsty but never ministered with his divine power to satisfy any of his own needs.

But before time began he was with his Father and enjoyed the companionship of the highest of the angels. What could he possibly find on this sinful world that would come anywhere close to what he had come to enjoy that would be worthy of his friendship and in any real sense be a close personal friend.

His heart yearned for the divine and what heart found here on earth could give Jesus what he had known throughout eternity. Yet we find that Jesus did desire human love, human love that could only be found in the friendships which he had made while here with us. Yet we know that as much as Jesus loved us many of his sufferings and deep hurts were caused by the failures of those who should have been his closest of friends.

I must take time to distinguish between the love of Christ for all men and his desire to see all men come to a saving grace in the knowledge of God the Father and his friendship for particular individuals. He had come to be the Savior of all who would believe and follow him, and in that there was no human soul that was so lost as he did not love them. **“Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends.”** John 15:13

But in the midst of all this he had his personal human friendships. He craved companionship, and was sorely hurt when men shut their doors in his face. There are no words that speak as powerfully of this hurt than found in the New Testament in which it says, **“He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”** John 1:11 Even in the garden the night before he was to die shows us his desire to have his friends close by him. **“Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.”** John 16:32 And each time he returned to them they had fallen asleep.

The longing heart of Jesus is one who loves deeply and sought to be loved. He welcomed love wherever it came to him, the love of the poor, the gratitude of those whom he had helped, the trusting affection of little children even the three who were the closest to him.

We become like those with whom we live in close intimate relationship with. That which alone makes one a Christian is being a friend of Jesus. We have little to give Jesus but it is a comfort to know that our friendship really is precious to him. “I call you friend,” No other gift he gives to us can equal in value the love and friendship of his heart.

If Christ is our friend, all life is made rich and beautiful to us.

I don't know where you are today in your relationship with Jesus but this I know. Jesus is a friend who will never stop calling out to you nor will he ever stop pursuing you. Why don't you set aside a few minutes right now to be with your friend, for if you want to have a friend you must be a friend.

Much love,



Rex and Lois

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Just go to our contribution page on our web-site or call us at 717-502-0343.

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