

The Gospel According To John

Who is a Friend of God?

John 15:9-17

No longer Servants

A radical distinction between the type of people produced by the O.C. and the N. C.

- Servants (Old Covenant relationship) – were under guardians and stewards and in bondage. Even the heirs did not differ from slaves. *Gal. 3:23-25; 4:1-3*
- Friends (New Covenant relationship) – are brought into the fullness of God’s revelation, receiving the adoption as sons. *Gal. 4:4-7*

Slaves are simply told what to do, while friends are informed of their master’s heart. Jesus informs his friends of his motives, plans, and purposes. In times past, God’s covenant people were not informed of God’s saving plan in full measure, as is true of His New Covenant people.

Old Covenant Era = Slaves

- Unbelieving picture of the people of God. *Hebrews 8:7-8; Gal. 4:21-31*
- Inferior status of the people of God in the Old Covenant era.
- The slave description seems to describe the O.C. people of God as not the real people of God.
- To be under slavery is to be under bondage. The Old Covenant is a legal or works covenant that can only produce people who are under the wrath of God.

New Covenant Era = Friends

- Only the New Covenant produces true believers who are eternally loved by God, have their sins forgiven, and have a new heart. *Hebrews 10:14-18*

Are you a Friend of Christ?

The Privileged Place of His Friends

- The love of God. Jesus laid down His life for His friends and only His friends. The love and relationship of Father and Son is the only adequate analogy to describe His love for us (v. 9).
- Fullness of joy. Jesus’ obedience to the Father is the ground of His joy (and ours!). He promises that those who abide in Him in obedient love will share the same joy. All other joys are incomplete.

Identifying His Friends:

- Apart from willing and loving obedience you have no biblical grounds for claiming to be a friend of God (v. 10, 14). This obedience is not what **makes** us friends, it is what characterizes His friends.
- People are either friends of Jesus Christ or friends of the world. Friendship with the world is hostility toward God. Friendship with Jesus Christ is intimacy with God. *James 4:4; 1 Jn. 1:3-4*
- His friends keep the law of Christ – (v. 10, 12, 14, 17). If you deliberately keep sinning against Jesus, you are His enemy, not His friend.

The Model and Motive Provided by Jesus for His Friends:

- Jesus is the model – “*as I have loved you,*” “*as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.*” Jesus laid down His life for His friends. *1 John 3:16*

Chosen to be His Friends:

- The fact of the previously mentioned privileged place and greater revelation of His friends is not because they are wiser or better, but because Jesus chose them (v. 16).