

## Who's Your Best Friend?

We all want good friends. Friends help us overcome loneliness. Friends help us deal with stress. Friends help us talk through our troubles. Friends open doors for us. It is because of friends that we sometimes say, "It's not what you know; it's who you know." No doubt, our friends matter. Relying on the wrong friends can really cost us. **I Corinthians 15:33** explains, "Do not be deceived; 'Bad company ruins good morals'" (ESV). On the other side, we see the great example of what good friends can do for us in **Acts 4:23-24**. Peter and John had been threatened to quit preaching about Jesus. They knew who to turn to, their good friends who would pray with them and encourage them. Our friends matter.

But even more than that, our best friend matters. Who is your best friend?

We sing the song, "I have found a friend in Jesus." Do we really mean it? Do we really want Jesus to be our friend? He needs to be our best friend. I want Jesus to be my friend because I want Him to be my advocate with the Father (**I John 2:1-2**). I want Him not just to be a friend, but to be my best friend because of what Paul says in **Philippians 3:7-8**. He was willing to give up everything in order to know Jesus. That is making Him my best friend.

What does it look like when we want someone to be our best friend? Being best friends means going where the one we want to be friends with goes. It means talking about what the one we want to be friends with talks about. It means enjoying what the one we want to be friends with enjoys. It means avoiding what the one we want to be friends with avoids. Good friends seek the interests of their friends (cf. **Philippians 2:3-4**). Jesus did that for us when He came to the earth to be with us. He did that for us when He saw our greatest need and sacrificed Himself for it. There is no doubt Jesus wants to be our friend and has gone to great lengths to accomplish that. The question is whether we are willing to be friends with Him.

Today, we need to pursue our friendship with Jesus. Where will Jesus go today? Go there to spend time with Him. What will Jesus avoid? Avoid that or you'll just be leaving Him behind to do your own thing. Get into the Word where Jesus reveals His mind to us. Spend time in prayer, one of Jesus' favorite activities. Jesus always comes alongside us in prayer (cf. **Romans 8:34**). Spend time with Jesus' other friends.

Think about how you conduct yourself. Will Jesus hang out with people who use the words you use, tell the jokes you tell, talk about others the way you talk about them? Would Jesus participate in a book club to discuss the book you are reading? Would He sing along with you to that song you like so much? Would He go to the movies with you to watch what you are watching? Would you constantly feel the embarrassing need to explain how you don't approve of it, you just like some of the message? Would Jesus go to that party you are attending? Would Jesus feel comfortable hanging out in public with someone wearing what you are wearing? Would He laugh at the message on your shirt? Would He constantly have to avert His eyes from your cleavage? Would He be asking you to pull down your skirt, pull up your pants, pull down the shirt to cover your flesh?

Jesus is not like us. Sometimes we are so codependent we will follow the people we want to be friends with even into places and activities we don't like or even think are wrong. Sometimes we are so enmeshed with others that we put up with and tolerate behavior and activities that are actually offensive to us. I remember once as a teenager hurling out a string of curse words because I thought it would impress a girl. Jesus isn't like that. He loves us dearly, but He also has healthy boundaries. That is, as **Psalms 5:4** says, "For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you" (ESV). **Habakkuk 1:13** says, "You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong..." (ESV). Jesus, as God, does not have fellowship with sin. He loves us, but when we pursue sin, He does not follow. He is not codependent and enmeshed. He won't follow us into our sins. He won't participate with us in order to get us to like Him. Nor will He hang out with us tolerating our abuse of Him. He will simply hang back, with tear-filled eyes, watching us choose our sin over Him, longing for us to come back to Him (see the father of the prodigal in **Luke 15:11-24**). He will beckon us. He will long for us. He will embrace us if we return. But He won't go with us. And, sadly, if we go into eternity away from His friendship, He will not advocate for us. Rather, He will let us go into eternity receiving what we asked for, for Him to leave us alone.

Today, I need to ask myself how I'm relating to Jesus. Am I making Him my best friend or am I asking Him to hang back at arm's length? Am I walking hand in hand with Him, or am I asking Him to hide in the background while I hang out with those who I deem better friends?

Who is your best friend?

-Edwin L. Crozier