

## God's Calling Requirements Part 24

### Friendship with God Part 3

**"13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:13-15 KJV)**

Friendship with Christ is true friendship, **"16 His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." (Song of Songs 5:16 KJV)** From this friendship with Christ we receive from Christ word, wisdom and direction in life. Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords and He want from those who are following Him, holiness, pure heart and clean lips. Those who are having such criteria they are the friends of Jesus as the Word of God tells us, **"He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend." (Proverbs 22:11 KJV) And with such kinds of people who are the friends of Jesus we need to be in relation and work and serve God. They are indeed our brethren in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Friends of Christ are honest and righteous people who work for justice and holiness. They will live, correct, rebuke and teach people in accordance with the Word of God. The following below are example of true friends and true friendship with Jesus:-

**1. True friends of Jesus are diligent to reach the lost:** Christ made closeness with sinners to speak to them the Word of God and to win them for God; He was criticized for that but he continued to do that with a noble purpose, **"The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children." (Matthew 11:19 KJV) "The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" (Luke 7:34 KJV)** Christ made friends with people in order to show them God's presence and God's power, and in order for Him to give them the Word of God. Those who have the same mind of Jesus who do their best to go and look for the lost sheep they are the friends of us and we need to be in friendship with such kind of people who have the same mind of Christ. In the parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin, when the person find what he is looking for he went and celebrate with his friends: **"6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." (Luke 15:6 KJV) "9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost." (Luke 15:9 KJV) When you have the same mind of Jesus in looking for the lost sheep then you are a friend of Jesus, and you will find around you people who have the same mind in looking for the lost sheep and you will rejoice with them of what God is achieving through your life.**

When your lives move away from focusing on the lost and when your joy is not in finding the lost sheep, then you are no more friend of Jesus, and you will find yourselves enjoying fellowship and celebrating events that are away from that noble purpose of Jesus. Such attitude which is similar to the attitude of the elder son is not acceptable to Christ, "And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my

friends:" (Luke 15:29 KJV) Christ wants you to invest your joy in looking for the lost and not in side way events, programs and activities. Christ taught more about that target of reaching the lost, **"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee." (Luke 14:12 KJV) Christ intention is to reach the lost and those who are unreached, and He wants His friends to invest their money and efforts into the same direction, "13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: 14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke 14:13-14 KJV)**

**2. True friends of Jesus are keen to correct you for your wrongs:** In the parable of the wedding banquet, the person who attended without the wedding garment was rebuked, **"1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, 2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. 4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. 5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. 7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 Then saith he to his servants\*, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. 10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 22:1-13 KJV)** The one who rebuked that person called him, **"Friend."** True friends of Jesus and are fit to be your friend, would correct you and show you your wrong doing because they love you and care for you in the correct way. **"6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." (Proverbs 27:6 KJV)** Rebukes of a friend of Jesus are true and authentic things you receive.

**3. True friends of Jesus are humble people and they are not after position, recognition or prestige:** **"8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; 9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. 10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. 11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14:8-10 KJV) When you are humble and willing to sit in low position then you are a friend to Jesus, and He will be the one to honor you and to promote you in His perfect time.**

4. **True friends of Jesus would not act based on relationship or based on emotion, but they would act based on the principles of God's Word:** “5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? 7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. 8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.” (Luke 11:5-8 KJV) This man in this parable went to his friend to ask him some bread for a friend who came to him. **Those who are friend of Jesus would help those who are in need and that what this man did when he went to find out bread from other friend.** The other friend did not get up and gave him bread based on friendship, but based on his persistent of knocking. What you can learn from this, that those who are friends of Jesus would not act based on worldly friendship or based on emotion, but they would act based on the principle of God's Word.

5. **True friends of Jesus are people whom you can take from them a true advice and a hearty counsel:** “9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.” (Proverbs 27:9) The friends of Jesus are people whom you can take from them a true advice and a hearty counsel. That is why, “10 **Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.**” (Proverbs 27:10 KJV) The friends of Jesus are keen people and they are like Jesus who is near to His people who love Him. They can do you good things even as your own brother.

The friends of Jesus are true and exact. They will neither flatter you nor spoil you but they will give you the right counsel, “14 **He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.**” (Proverbs 27:14 KJV) Friends in the world they will flatter you and boastfully mislead you and that will be like a curse because they are linking you with something not real.

6. **True friends of Jesus are good instrument for you to sharpen you and help you to be more skillful and effective in your ministry to serve the Lord:** “17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” (Proverbs 27:17 KJV) True friends of Jesus are good instruments of God to build you up in your service and ministry unto the Lord. **God will move you and bring you near to His friends who will make you grow and help you to build your ministry to be more effective and more fruitful.**

7. **True friends of God are true people who stand beside you as you stand for God:** King David were around him true friends of God and they were the people who helped him to overcome the struggle that he got with his own son Absalom. Hushai was one of them as you can read here: “So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.” (2 Samuel 15:37) “And Absalom said to Hushai, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with thy friend?” (2 Samuel 16:17) **Friends of God are true people who stand beside you as you stand for God, and they can be even better than your own family.** Large number of army who are friends of God supported David in his struggle with Absalom, and that helped David to win the battle in which Absalom was killed. When David knew that Absalom was dead he wept and cried and did not receive properly the army that came back from victory. For this action and attitude of David, Joab rebuked him and reminded

him to be faithful to God and to stand with the faithful friends who supported him in his battle against the evil one, “1 And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. 2 And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. 3 And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. 4 But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son! 5 And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; 6 **In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends.** For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. 7 Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now. 8 Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.” (2 Samuel 19:1-8 KJV) You need to guard your emotion very well. Your emotion should not drag you to sympathies with those whom God had judged, because in such attitude of yours you are putting to shame the friends of God. Be aware of such and do your best to overcome your emotions.

8. **True friends of Jesus will not give trouble to the Lord nor add a further burden to His friends:** “Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof.” (Luke 7:6) The centurion was trying to spare Jesus trouble and unnecessary trip and spend time and effort to come to his home. True friends of Jesus will not trouble you or add to you burdens unnecessarily. True friends of Jesus will not demand you to do things to please them. There are many who are holding to the traditional practices and they will oblige you to invite them, to bring them gifts, to go to them, and the rest of other things, demanding from you, out of their selfish motive. The friends of Jesus are light to you and will not add to you troubles and burden you with unnecessary things.

9. **True friends of Jesus are people whom their joy is to hear the voice of Jesus, and that Jesus will increase, and they will decrease:** “26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.” (John 3:26-31) John the Baptist was a friend to Jesus. He was not after being famous or desiring to receive honor. His joy was to hear the voice of Jesus and his desire that he ought to decrease and for Jesus to increase. **Friends of Jesus are people who are not having jealousy in their hearts when they hear others are doing well, neither are they looking to be famous nor to have a honor. But their joy and delight is to hear the voice of Jesus and to be in continuous fellowship, communication and communion with Him.**

**My dear and beloved:** Learn from the various examples and the Scriptures that are enlisted in the message. Meditate and see how the message can be a practical one in your life. God calls you to be His friend, therefore you need to be transformed by the renewing of your mind and no more to be confirm to the pattern of this world. The followings are what we had read and expound in the Word of God about the true of friends of Jesus, and you need to check yourselves and see what you lack of these points so you can work with the Lord and with the help of the Holy Spirit to be changed:

1. **True friends of Jesus are diligent to reach the lost.**
2. **True friends of Jesus are keen to correct you for your wrongs.**
3. **True friends of Jesus are humble people and they are not after position, recognition or prestige.**
4. **True friends of Jesus would not act based on relationship or based on emotion, but they would act based on the principles of God's Word.**
5. **True friends of Jesus are people whom you can take from them a true advice and a hearty counsel.**
6. **True friends of Jesus are good instrument for you to sharpen you and help you to be more skillful and effective in your ministry to serve the Lord.**
7. **True friends of God are true people who stand beside you as you stand for God.**
8. **True friends of Jesus will not give trouble to the Lord nor add a further burden to His friends.**
9. **True friends of Jesus are people whom their joy is to hear the voice of Jesus, and that He will increase, and they will decrease.**

Now let us come to the lord in prayer:

**My Prayer:**

*Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death to give me eternal life.*

*Let us repent and renounce our sins. Confess your sins now to the Lord. Lord I repent of the following sins \_\_\_\_\_*

*Renounce the sin of being selfish, seeking your own benefits, the sin of being stubborn and not easily corrected, the sin of having friends who are not friends of Jesus, the sin of following your emotions and taking decision based on your feelings, the sin of non willingness to reach the lost, the sin of being too much demanding, and the sin of following the traditional practices.*

*Lord thank you for your clear Word to me. Lord I am coming back to you and I want you to be renewed by Your Word and to live my life according to your will in holiness and purity. Cleanse me Lord, and build me according to your Word and your will. Lord I pray that you will provide all my needs.*

*Lord I pray for my brothers and Sisters who commit themselves to live and to do your Word, Lord give them more faith and trust in you. Lord Jesus give them more fruit of the Holy Spirit to be similar to you in character and attitude and that people will see you through their lives. Lord I pray that you will raise up more people among us who are friends of yours.*

*Lord we pray for us as a church, Lord fill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go and evangelize and make new disciples. Lord we pray that you will enable us to plant more Bible studies and more congregations for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.*

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