

Love One Another: the Friend Above all Others

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[0:00] Thank you, Ron. Appreciate that this morning. Go ahead and take your Bible, turn to John 15 this morning. John 15 as we continue with our series here going through John 15. Here the first part anyways is we look at abiding. You know, abiding in the Lord and as John reveals that the true vine and the husbandman are key in abiding.

And we need to remember that the husbandman is the one responsible for the care of the branches. He's the one that prunes. He's the one that cleans. That they might do what? Bring forth much fruit. You know, to bring forth the fruit that God has designed for every believer to produce. You know, the day that you called upon the Savior to save you, it changed everything. It changed who you are fundamentally. It says we're a new creature in Christ and we've been put in the vine and we're attached to it.

And yet we understand the importance of abiding in the vine because that fruit is what is the result of abiding. You know, I believe there's a lot of Christians today that don't have very good fruit in their life because they're not abiding in the vine.

They talk about the vine. They talk about the vine. They talk about the vine. They talk about the vine and we're going to talk about that today. They might know about the vine, but they're not abiding in the vine because there's a difference and Jesus is going to bring that forth here today as he is encouraging his men to understand this principle because Jesus moves from the focus upon himself, the vine, to the vineyard, to the others standing in it.

[1:58] He commands them to abide. He now tells them what abiding looks like among people who can sometimes be difficult to love. You know, one of the problems is, is that sometimes we can talk about loving the Savior, but when he commands us to love others, to love other believers, that gets a lot tougher.

That becomes a difficulty for us because, you know, we know that some people are easier to love than others. You know, some people are just prickly, you know, and some people are just mushy, you know.

You got both ends of the spectrum that might cause difficulty to love, you know, and to do what you ought to do because love is not an emotion. We need to understand when Jesus tells him to love one another, he's not talking about emotion the way we address love today.

When we hear the word love today, almost every time it attracts with an emotion. Love, biblically, that Jesus is talking about here, has emotion attached to it, but emotion is secondary to the responsibility.

Because love is a course and choice of action towards another. Love is a dynamic that's different. And I want you to understand this morning as we look at this, this was, Jesus was worried about his disciples, his apostles, the 11 that were there with them.

[3:29] If you know anything and have studied your Bible, you find out that they were quite a different group of people. I imagine that some of their conversations got a bit prickly sometimes.

Because they came from a lot of different backgrounds. Jesus drew them in, everything from fishermen to tax collectors. Ends of the political spectrum. But yet they were no longer what they were, they're now a new creature in Christ.

And we need to keep that in focus even here today. Because when we understand who we are in Christ, unites us more than the things of this world divides us.

To understand the importance of this and the great uniter is the message of redemption and service to the Savior. You know, we've been looking through here of this series, talking about this thought where the branch stays, the branch bears.

You know, if you stay abiding in Christ, it makes a difference on what the fruit that's produced. When we understand that concept that Jesus is driving home to his disciples, and the result of this fruit is love for others, love for the branches beside you.

[4:45] So before we read the text this morning, I want you to settle one question with you. Which are you in Christ? Are you an acquaintance of Christ or a friend of Christ?

I want you to think about that for a moment. Because we're going to talk about the difference between an acquaintance and a friend a little later on. And when we understand that, but an acquaintance knows about him, a friend is known by him.

So think for a moment as we read these verses. If you found John chapter 15, if you would stand and honor the reading of the Word of God, we'll pick up here in verse 12. And then we'll read through verse 15.

And then we will pray. But I want you to think about what Jesus is saying and how it applies to you. Think about this. In verse 12 it says, This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth.

[5:56] But I have called you friends for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. Let's pray. Heavenly Fathers, we just come before you this morning, Lord.

We just thank you that you are a friend to us. But Lord, help us to understand the importance that it's more than us just knowing about you, but it's been known by you that makes a difference.

To really be a friend, to know and to understand those things that you would want for us, the things you've revealed to us. Lord, I pray just encourage us today.

Each one, Lord, you know the need. Lord, we know that oftentimes it's hard to really love the brethren the way you commanded us, instruct us, Lord.

Oftentimes we treat it as secondary. But Lord, help us to see today that it's not a secondary choice that we make, but a primary dynamic of obeying you.

[6:54] And Lord, we just ask these things here in your precious name. Amen. You may be seated. You know, I want you to see here. Notice the commandment. You know, a commandment is not an option.

You know, today we look at some of the things God commands us to do, and we say, well, if that's convenient, I'll do it. But a commandment is not an optional thing.

When you understand that the moment you were saved, if you love the Savior, you're going to keep his commandments. That's an underlying theme Jesus is driving to his disciples here, to understand that the apostles needed to hear and to understand the need to love one another.

Because you say, preacher, why was that such an important? You know what? Jesus knew they were going to go under a lot of stress here very shortly. They were going to be put under a lot of pressure. When he died and was buried, there was a lot of pressure.

Look who you believed in. Look at what you thought. Look at where the one you thought was the Savior ended up. And the third day he rose again. Then it changes everything else again.

[8:08] But it doesn't change the commandment to love one another because, you know, it's easy to do something short-term. You know what's hard to do? Something long-term. Faithfulness is more difficult than just being fickle in the moment.

Because we can feign excitement for a while. But faithfulness is something that endures even when it's not comfortable.

That's the hard part, I think, for all of us, isn't it? We like to be comfortable. Don't push me outside my envelope. But if we're going to follow Jesus' commands, you know what's going to happen?

You're going to be outside your comfort zone. It's going to take you places that you never understood that God would take you. And notice what he says here.

That you love one another as I have loved you. You know, think about that moment. Consider what that pictures.

[9:14] Consider the picture that is there. The picture that Jesus is saying, I want you to love others as I have loved you. We've heard it many times.

But have you really thought about it? Have you really taken time to process what does that look like? What did he do for us?

Because when Jesus says to love others as I have loved you, he's talking about a sacrificial, committed love. You know, look over to 1 John. 1 John chapter 3, it says this, Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.

We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. We perceive the love of Christ. Why? Because of what he was willing to give for us.

Think about Ephesians chapter 5. It says, To walk in love as Christ also loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

[10:18] You know why it's a sweet-smelling savor? Because we're being obedient to God. We're showing that we love him. You know, Romans, Paul commands the church at Rome to do this.

He says, Be kindly, affectionate one to another, with brotherly love, in honor, preferring one another. To love one another is shown when you love those that can be hard to love.

This instruction is not towards the lost, but towards other believers. I want you to understand, when you read the Bible, it has to be in context. A lot of times people will take this verse, Oh, you're supposed to love everybody.

That's not who Jesus, the group Jesus is talking about specifically here. When you are supposed to love those in the world, that the primary responsibility of love is to tell them who Jesus is and the responsibility that they're going to stand in judgment before him.

That's loving somebody when you tell them how to get out of danger. But what he's talking about here is different. He's talking about a love one for another, a bond that binds together.

[11:24] You say, Well, preacher, what are you talking about? Even the little things. Have you ever considered what the room must have been like when Thomas came back after Jesus resurrected? You know, when Thomas comes back into the room after Jesus had visited, and Thomas looks at everybody and says, I think you're lying.

That's really the summation of what Thomas told all the other apostles. I don't believe you. Think that'd be a tense moment? To understand, Hey, love one another.

Even when things aren't the way you perceive they ought to be. When he questioned their report, how about later when Peter was corrected by Paul? That functioning throughout. You think about when John Mark was taken along by Barnabas because Paul wouldn't let him go.

And later on, you find that Paul, I think God got a hold of Paul's heart and he said, Love one another. And he said, Bring Mark. Because Mark had made some changes in his life.

And he said, Forget those things. You've got to forgive. You've got to forbear. You've got to do the things you are supposed to do when somebody, even they might mess up, to be able to repent and to turn back to him and to get things right.

[12:36] To understand the importance. And this love wears many faces amongst believers because it bears the burden of one in trouble. You know, Galatians tells us, Bear you one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

It opens the hands to those in real need. Whosoever had this world's goods and sees his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him. Now dwelleth the, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

That's what 1 John 3 tells us. It bears patiently with difficulty. You know, Ephesians 4, 2 tells us of forbearing one another in love.

Have you ever thought the word forbearing involves somebody else being prickly to you? It doesn't mean that your buddy that's just all, yeah, we love hanging out is somebody that might be even a little prickly that's a believer to understand how do you love them?

Because I want you to understand God's working on them as much as he's working on you. Now maybe you say, well, I don't know anybody prickly. Well, maybe you're prickly. When we understand that it takes a lot to love and serve one another as Galatians tells us, every one of these is what the commandment looks like on an ordinary daily and weekly and monthly and yearly level.

[14:03] To understand this picture, he's given us the commandment. He shows us its measure. If we are to love as I have loved you, we need to ask how far that love was willing to go.

Think about the measure of his love. The measure of his love. He says, greater love hath no man than this, than lay down his life for his friends. Think about it.

That's a measurement of love. You know, I want you to understand a friend is willing to put another's need above his own. Go ahead and turn over to 1 Samuel chapter 18. 1 Samuel chapter 18 quick this morning as we get there.

But I want you to understand, I want you to see in Philippians, I'm going to set the stage here. In Philippians chapter 2, it talks about Christ and his humility and how he came and he was willingly went to the cross for us.

How he humbled himself and put on a form of a servant. Now you find here in 1 Samuel chapter 18, we're going to find two men here, Jonathan and David.

[15:14] I want you to understand, David was a shepherd, the boy who had just killed Goliath, a nobody from Bethlehem with no throne and no claim to it and Jonathan was the king's son.

He was heir to the throne of Israel. Their friendship, Jonathan, had everything to lose and David had everything to gain. But yet, they were still friends.

Notice what it tells us here in verse 1. It came to pass when he made an end of speaking unto Saul that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. In other words, I want you to understand, he says, hey, he is my friend. It took a lot when we look at what happens next for what Jonathan did. He displayed what loving my friend looks like.

But I want you to understand the disparity. David was from the lowest of society. Jonathan was from the highest of society. You know what bound these two guys together? You ever ask that question, what bound Jonathan to David?

[16:26] He never actually comes out and just tells us, but the implication is, is they both loved God above all else. They saw that in one another and said, hey, that's somebody I want to be a friend with.

Notice what happens here. It says, and Saul took him that day and would let him go no more home to his father's house and Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul.

I want you to see here, notice what happens in verse four. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David and his garments even to his sword and to his bow and to his girdle.

I want you to understand, Jonathan, the crown prince said, David loves God as I, we're friends, I'm going to honor him by giving him exactly the highest thing he could give him.

To represent that picture, he was willing to give of himself for his friend. He was willing to give for his friend.

[17:33] Sword, the bow, were the marks of a prince and a warrior. He strips off everything that said, I am the heir and hands him to the one man alive that would one day sit on the throne that by birth belonged to him.

He knew it too. It tells us later in 1 Samuel 23, he tells David this, he says, thou shalt be king over Israel and I shall be next unto thee. Jonathan is a picture of what Jesus Christ does for us.

He humbled himself for the benefit of another. He did not have to, it did not require him to, what motivated him was love for his friend.

When you go on and read, you'll find that Jonathan chose his friend over his position. He risked his life to save David's life. That's what Jesus is describing.

A friend puts another's need above his own. You know, Philippians 2, 3 says this, let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

[18:43] You don't think anybody can argue that Jonathan esteemed David better than himself. He lifted up David, his friend, better than himself. Jonathan handed over the very thing that marked him as the king's son and the heir to the throne.

That is a life laid down while a man is yet living. God does not ask you to die for the one beside you. How often would you lay down your time to give him what is your right?

Today I think as Americans we struggle. Well, I have a right. Well, just because you can doesn't mean you should. Just because you can doesn't mean it's the best.

To understand the biblical picture that is involved here, to understand what's happening. You surrender your right, your place, and your advantage to put your good to somebody else.

It's laying down that love for another. Christ went further still. He died for his enemies. How many would do that? You know, Romans 5 tells us this.

[19:47] He says, for when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. for scarcely for a righteous man will one die for a good man.

Some would even dare to die, but God commended his love toward us and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more than being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. That's the reason 1 John tells us, herein is love.

Not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sin. But if God so loved us, we ought also to have love one for another.

It's a big measurement, isn't it? Different measuring stick than we use. Oftentimes, we measure love by what we benefit, but how does it benefit somebody else? Understand that same love that he laid down his life for his enemies now turns and lays a claim upon us.

[20 : 59] You know, the measure of his love has been displayed in the norm. Next, the Lord names the condition of being called his friend. You know, look here at verse 14 back in our text there in John chapter 15.

It says this, ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. the condition of friendship with Christ.

Friendship with God involves obedience to the things of God. To be a friend of God, you must first love him and abide in him.

That connection is to the vine. You know, that belief requires action based upon what you believe.

You know, oftentimes, we forget the fact that if you believe Christ to be your Savior, the one who paid the price and took the penalty of your sin upon himself for your sake to whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, also take upon yourself the responsibility of it.

Because if you're a new creature means you're heading a new direction from who you were.

There's been a change, there's been a dynamic in your life that's different.

[22 : 16] Understand, if you don't see fruit, there's a problem. Fruit you see is not what it ought to be. It tells you something.

When we're connected with him, when we understand who he is, and that faith will be seen in what follows. I want you to understand, obedience does not save you, faith does, but true faith will lead to action.

obedience to the Savior. Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandment. Notice what he says, how the friendship is kept if you do whatsoever I command you.

This is not the cringing obedience of a slave that fears the outcome. It's the glad obedience of a friend who loves. Remember, if you love me, keep my commandments.

If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love. That's just up in verse 10. John, the apostle John was there that day when all this was said.

[23 : 18] And towards the end of his life, he says this. He says, this is the love of God that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not grievous. That's what 1 John 5, 3 says.

Don't miss the commandment that he's given you here. It's a primary commandment that he tells them. It's the one that bases everything else. to love one another as I have loved you.

To do whatsoever he commands begins right here with the brother and sister in Christ beside you.

As a church, we need to understand the importance of a love one for another.

You know, I think the world gets a lot of things confused. I was reading an article this week on, you know, visitors to church. It's always interesting to read these different things that are said, you know, and it's like, well, you have to put on the right presentation.

And you don't want to feel exclusive to other people. You know what? If somebody comes in and they're not saved, they ought to feel excluded a little bit. Because they're missing something that everybody else has.

[24 : 22] You know, it's like being a guest in a stranger's home. You don't quite feel like you belong for a reason. Have you ever stayed with somebody you don't know and you just feel a bit antsy about it? Why is that?

Because there's a lack of connection. You know what? When you're good friends with somebody and you go over to visit a man, it's just like, it's almost like a second home. For a believer gathering together as a church, as an assembly together with God, a local church ought to feel like a second home.

Because you're amongst others that are family. And when somebody visits, you want them to be comfortable, you want them to be able to understand, you don't want to be anything. But I want you

to understand, there's still going to be that connection if they don't know Christ as their Savior. There's going to be a disconnect. If you don't know Christ, there's going to be a disconnect. Because you're lost in your sin instead of under the blood of Jesus Christ. Because that makes all the difference.

It changes everything. Obedience does not purchase his friendship, it proves it. If you love God, you're going to do those things that God has directed us to do.

[25 : 36] You know, when people choose to do things counter to what God said, you know what? It says, God, I really don't love you. I'm going to do my own thing. I'm going to have my own standard. I'm going to go my own direction.

I'm going to hold on to things that I think instead of what does your word say? James chapter 2 tells us this, the scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God and was imputed unto him for righteousness and he was called the friend of God.

Now I want you to think for a moment, in Abraham's household there was two guys mentioned in scripture that are very blatantly contrasted. We see Abraham who obeyed God and walked with God, he was called the friend of God, and you have another man by the name of Lot.

I want you to understand Lot, the Bible tells us, was a redeemed individual. Now this is important. Because Peter calls him just Lot, that righteous man whose soul was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.

When Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom, he made a choice of whether he's going to love the world or love God. Abraham said, I'm going to love God.

[26 : 54] Lot said, Lord, I love you kind of, but this is the direction I want to go. You know what? There's the same dynamic of believers today. There's Abraham's and there's Lot's.

He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom and then dwelt in it, and God's dealing with Lot were never dealings of a friend.

Only one was the friend of God. Disobedient never costs a believer your relationship, your sonship, but it will cost him the walk, the nearness, and the confidence as a friend.

Obedience does not save you. It's the difference between a man who merely belongs to God and a man who God calls his friend. And if obedience is the condition of his friendship, verse 15 unfolds its privilege, that a master will not tell his servant, but he opens to a friend.

Look at verse 15 back in our text. He says, henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant know 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.

[28 : 06] The privilege of friendship is the servant knoweth not what the Lord doeth. A servant is told his duty, a friend is told the purpose.

A servant is not informed, a friend is. Notice what Jesus says, henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what the Lord doeth.

But I have called you friends for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. The Lord opens his counsel to his friends a servant has handed orders and sent off a friend is brought inside and told the mind and the purpose behind it.

That's the dignity that Christ confers to us. He does not keep his friends in the dark about what he's doing. Think about this for a moment. Abraham was a friend of God.

Genesis 18 tells us this. It says and the Lord said shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation and all the nations of earth shall be blessed in him for I know him that he will command his children and his household after him that they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment and the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which has spoken of him but God didn't hide from Abraham what was going to happen why did he tell Abraham and not Lot the angels weren't even going to Sodom to get Lot till Abraham intervened God had mercy upon Abraham's prayer and Abraham's request as a friend Isaiah 41 tells us this but thou Israel art my servant Jacob whom I have chosen the seed of Abraham my friend you know what God told Abraham what was going to happen he said hey this is how things are going to play out you're going to leave the land the people are going to be taken out you're going to be down into

[30 : 05] Egypt for 400 years before you come out as a mighty group of my people and take the land that I promised to you he told Abraham that 400 years before it happened why because Abraham was his friend why because he loved God Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness Moses spoke with God face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend the

Bible tells us in Exodus 33 11 and what was true for Abraham and Moses is the birthright of every friend of Christ today how does he make known all things through his word I hath not seen nor heard neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God had prepared for him that love his spirit the natural man cannot receive the things receive them but we have the mind of Christ the world reads the same Bible and sees a closed book the friend of God opens it and is let in on the purpose you are not left to guess what God is doing chapter 3 verse 7 says surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets the friend of God holds the counsel of God in his hands I want you to think about a friend versus an acquaintance you know because an acquaintance knows about you friend lets you in on the purpose today our vocabulary today mixes those things the reason the devil loves twisting language I want you to understand something in life you will have very few true friends say well preacher aren't you my friend well we can be I want you to see the picture of what I'm talking about because there's often times we have a lot of acquaintances acquaintances come in all different levels from hey how are you nice to meet you to hey we've hung out quite a few times kind of funny when you hang out with guys often times guys hang out with group reasons you know you know if you have guys that are hunting they know where you hunt and what you hunt or what gun you use you know I hang out with a lot of people that drive jeeps you drive the 18 with the such and such and you give the details and what was your name many other times in other areas of life do we do the same thing we're acquaintances we know about somebody but a friend knows you and you know them put it this way a friend knows the things that you don't want other people to know and still likes you the true friend still loves you even if you're a bit prickly sometimes because they love you difference and Jesus is telling his disciples that dynamic an acquaintance costs you nothing a friend is willing! to lay down his life an acquaintance is circumstantial and passes with the season you often time acquaintances are people who just kind of come and go through your life friend sticks how many people have friends that you can say you've had for 10 years 20 years some of you just age out I was friends since we were in the nursery 40 years acquaintances have come and gone in that time you know that there's nothing really just you know there wasn't that bond of really knowing one another but you know about them Jesus is saying he wants you not just to be for you to know about him he wants you to know him his purpose to know his guidance to know his direction just wants you to understand that he is not there to come and go and be seasonal proverbs tells us there's a friend that sticketh closer than a brother says has no claim upon you a friend does you are my friend if you do whatsoever

I command you most men have many acquaintances and few friends you know the problem is there's a lot of Christians that treat Christ as an acquaintance venient one I know when I need them put it that way acquaintances somebody you may use when it's convenient for you and you just want to hang out doesn't matter whether you get anything back or not back is the love and care of the other has spoken to everyone that has called upon his name today is through his word he has revealed what is expected and what will transpire I want to ask you a question are you his friend doing what he has commanded sometimes there's some difficult things that we have to do if we're going to be God's friend and obey what the Lord has said to love one another means you need to work at getting reconciled brother or sister you have not spoken to a wrong that's been carried a debt that you refuse to forgive you're going to love others as Christ loved you those things ought not to be obstacles to getting things right

[35 : 45] Jesus laid down his life for you while you were yet his enemy that you were outside that you were against Christ if you're not saved you're against Christ he died that you might be reconciled to him he did not wait for his enemies he died for them you know Jesus in Matthew chapter 5 he brought something that challenged people he said this if thou bring thy gift to the altar and remember that thy brother hath ought against thee he says what first be reconciled to thy brother I want you to understand that loving another is not a feeling to work up for many of you that's the name that might come to mind is someone you must be reconciled to for others it's not a broken relationship it's all maybe it's a burden to carry a need to meet a place to serve the same love and lay down in a different way whatever it is don't leave it for some day

I want to encourage you today to take care of it do it whatever is needed this morning if you've never trusted Christ I want you to understand he laid down his life for you while you were still his enemy Romans told us but God commended his love toward us and while we were yet sinners Christ died for us the friend above all others is offering himself to you this morning and you have

gone on without him long enough the offer is free and it's for you the Bible says whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord whosoever will I'm glad Ron sang that song this morning that's a good song you are the whosoever if there's never been a moment in time when you've called upon the Savior today is the best day to do it to get that taken care of call upon him by faith believe that he died for your sins and rose again in victory and call upon him receive his gift of salvation come and be reconciled to God that's where it starts it doesn't start by doing good things it starts with a relationship understand that the encouragement ought to be here too you love others the way Christ commanded us you know what sometimes you feel unnoticed you can feel used others are like sucking the life out of you the encouragement somebody noticed it was your friend Jesus nobody took note he did he took note he noticed you a friend a friend he told the purpose stand the purpose of God cleaning and pruning us we might be a closer friend to Jesus where are you Newton the writer of amazing grace wrote another hymn called a friend above all others he says one there is above all others well deserved the name of a friend he is loved beyond the brothers costly free and knows no end they who once his kindness prove find it everlasting love which to all our friends to save us could or would have shed their blood but our Jesus died to have us reconciled him to God this is the boundless love indeed Jesus is a friend in need oh for grace our hearts to soften teach us Lord to lengthen to love we alas forget too often what a friend we have above but when home our souls are brought we will love thee as we ought today as heads are bowed and eyes are closed today and are not sure that's the question where do you stand with God if you were to stand before God today and God says why should I allow you into heaven what would you say would it be because of what Jesus did or would you try to make a list or I hope he lets me in let me tell you your hope is not in yourself and what you done your hope is in Jesus Christ if you don't know for sure there's been a time that you've called upon him to save you I encourage you we're going to have an opportunity to respond to come and we have somebody show you from God's word how you can know that he is more than just a God in heaven but he can be your!

[40 : 45] friend I encourage you today don't wait maybe you're here today and God's been speaking to you about some things in your life if you love me keep my commandments covers a pretty big territory maybe there's a matter of obedience that God's been speaking to you about that you say Lord not my will but your will Lord let me be a friend and do what you've instructed me to do and to not hold back Heavenly Fathers we just commit this to you this morning Lord we pray just have your hand upon each heart each life here today Lord we might understand what it means to be called your friend there's no greater friend in the world

Lord I pray just work upon each heart each life you know the need Lord if there's one here today that doesn't know you as savior to say I know I feel the outsidersness of the bond of fellowship amongst believers because not of who we are but because of who you are Lord I pray today would be the day of salvation Lord I pray for those who know you that they might not just be your acquaintance but desire to be your friend and Lord we ask all these things! in your! precious name as the piano plays what about you today?