

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev. Chris Tringham

Called By a New Name No 9

11th December 2001

Friends

Scripture Reading: John 15.1-15

In this series we have examined some of the names given to the relationship that we have with the Lord Jesus Christ, if we are his own. We have looked at 'Christians' (believe in me), 'Saints' (be like me), 'Sons', (identify with me) 'Disciples' (learn of me), 'Servants' (serve me), 'Stewards' (honour me), 'Witnesses' (tell of me) and 'Ambassadors' (represent me). These words are but metaphors, each calling up another aspect of our relationship with Him. No one in isolation is true, for all are present, and more. Like all the colours that flash from a diamond, they together tell something of the joy it is to live 'in Christ'. And now He calls us 'friends'. Here He says 'love me'. What a tremendous privilege to be considered a friend of the Lord Jesus. All this world's religions say 'do this', or 'don't do that', but all Jesus says is come to me and love me, and out of that love all else falls into place. Genuine Christianity does not have rules, it has the constraints of a love which flows from the close relationship of the believer with his or her Saviour. Consider then:

The Love This Friendship Shows.

The word for love here is *agapao* and means 'to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly'. It is a true brotherly love which develops between very close friends.

His love for us is Miraculous. Why?

Because it resulted in Calvary. The Holy God has provide an offering for the sin of mankind in order that we may come to Him. The conversion of a Hell-bent sinner to a friend of God is always a miracle. It is a change in the nature of sinful man to the image of the

Son of God. See John 3.16, Galatians 1.4 & 2.20, Ephesians 5.25 and Titus 2.13&14.

His love for us is Matchless. There is nothing like it. It is unique. Only through Jesus can man be a friend of God and God of man. See 1 John 4.9&10, Isaiah 44.3-8 & 45.22.

His love for us is Gracious. God took the initiative in sending His Son to pay the penalty of our rebellion. See Romans 5.7& 8. He even before time began planned our redemption. 1 Peter 1.18-20 and Ephesians 1.4

His love for us is Changeless. It does not fade like fickle friendships of convenience. When this earth has passed into nothingness and time has dissolved into eternity, His love for His own will be undiminished. See Hebrews 13.5b, 13.8, Psalm 103.15-18.

His love for us is Plenteous. His care and patience know no bounds. What can compare with this friendship that Jesus shows. Ephesians 2.4, Matthew 6.25-34, Exodus 20.6.

The Privilege This Friendship Bestows.

First there is the intimacy we share.

With intimacy comes confidence See v15. The more we get to know the Lord the deeper is our awareness of His plans and purpose for our lives. Abraham was called 'friend of God' in James 2.23 See the prayer of Jehoshaphat's in 2 Chronicles 20.5-7 then Isaiah 41.8 where God calls him His friend. As His friend God did not keep from Abraham His thoughts and counsels. This principle of intimacy with God is true for all those who fear and follow Him. See Psalm 25.14 and Amos 3.7. How much time do you spend in close fellowship with God?

Second there is the responsibility we bear See v14. The word for

'command' used here is *entole*, meaning 'a precept or principle which derives from the heritage and position of the bearer'. These commands are the injunctions of the Kingdom. We are always anxious to please a friend, especially when that friend is the King of Kings. See also v12. If we love the Lord we will also love others who are his.

The Commitment This Friendship Knows.

All friendship calls for commitment, and this friendship has a commitment at the deepest level.

First we are called to abide in Jesus.

See v4. The word abide is *meno* and includes in its meanings 'indwell, continue permanent and unchanged, be constant and steadfast, to be in close and settled union.' It denotes our abode as location, in time, and our condition.

Second we are expected to live lives that are consistent with His life. See v4&5. See 2 Corinthians 6.14, James 4.4 and Amos 3.3.

Third give ourselves for others. See v12&13. The kind of love that Jesus Christ had for us was calvary love, and the kind of love that He expects us to have for our brothers and sisters in Christ is that kind of love. See also John 17.26, 1 John 4.10&11.

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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