

John 15: 12-17

I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS

Recovering Friendship: Halving Our Troubles and Doubling Our Joys

Drew Hunter

Overview

Although friendship is a common experience, it is often not as rich, deep, and life-giving as it could be. Where do we start in addressing this important, but often neglected topic? We have to begin where friendship begins. It doesn't start with us; it starts with God. The Christian God is a God who eternally exists in friendship. The Father, Son, and Spirit have an eternal love for one another in community. He has made us in his image, and that's why we're made for friendship. Not just friendship with one another, but friendship with himself. And that's where we'll start. In order to recover friendship with one another, we have to recover the notion of friendship with God.

John 15: 12-17 reveals three aspects of friendship with God:

1. The Privilege of Friendship with God (Why does it matter?)
2. The Nature of Friendship with God (What is it?)
3. The Possibility of Friendship with God (How do we get it?)

Two implications from this text are that it shapes:

- *Our view of how Jesus views us
- * How we relate to God

Quotation

"Justification is God's way of taking you into friendship with himself. You must use justification by faith to seek friendship with God, and to enjoy God."

Walter Marshall

Understanding & Application

1. What is surprising or most personally significant when you hear Jesus stating that he will now call you His friend?
2. What images, longings, or thoughts come to mind when you hear of Adam, Noah, and Enoch walking with God or that Moses spoke to the Lord like a friend?
3. You have been invited into the eternal community of the Trinity. What does it mean for you that Jesus said the Godhead will come to you and make their home with you.
4. Do I merely relate to the Lord as His servant or as His friend?

5. In practical ways, how does the cross relate to you becoming a friend of God?
6. How or when are you tempted to doubt that constancy of the Lord?
7. What are the hindrances to you believing that God has a particular friendly love for you?
8. If you are the Lord's friend, how do the two of you like to spend time with each other?