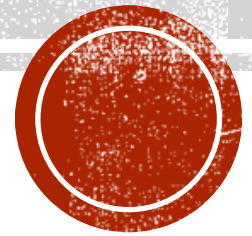


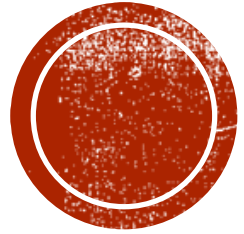
OUR FRIEND, THE KING



WHAT IS A FRIEND?

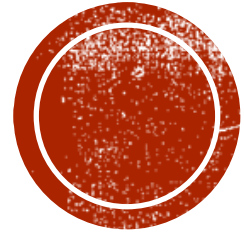
- The word 'friend' has many definitions in today's culture
- A true friend
 - Is there when you need them most
 - Knows the good and bad and loves you regardless
 - Is for you, not against you
 - True friendship knows no boundaries of time, geography, or other worldly bounds





**HOW DO YOU VIEW GOD?
ARE YOU HIS FRIEND?**





THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS DESPERATION TO REACH HIS FRIENDS...

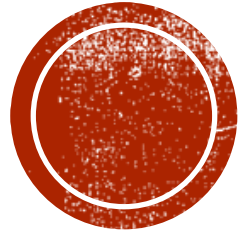
Matthew 21:33-39 (pg. 791)

THE VINEYARD

- Vineyard (Garden) with a wall around it (Genesis 2:10-14)
- Gave the vineyard to tenant farmers (Genesis 2:15-17)
- Tenant farmers were to cultivate and grow and produce a profit (Genesis 12:1-4)
- Sent servants to collect the profit and they were beaten stoned and killed (Old testament prophets)
- Sent His son to collect the profit and they killed him (Gospels)

God is our friend... He seeks us often and wants a relationship with us





WHO IN OUR WORLD ARE FRIENDS OF RULERS?

Consider the Christmas story...

THE LIFE OF KINGS

This worlds Kings

- Born in castles
- Announced to the elite
- Viewed as the heir to the throne
- Enters this world into a life of luxury

Jesus

- Born in a manger (Luke 2:7)
- Announced to the poor and forgotten (Luke 2:8)
- Rejected by his own people (Matthew 2:3: Isaiah 53:3)
- Left a world of perfection to enter a world of sin and pain (John 3:13 and Philippians 2:5-8)



THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST

- **John 3:13**

No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven.

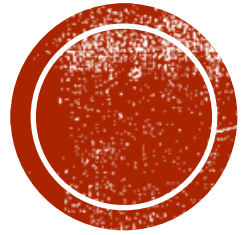
- **Philippians 2:5-8**

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

Though he was God,
he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.

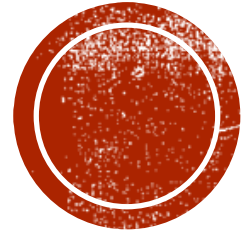
Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;
he took the humble position of a slave
and was born as a human being.
When he appeared in human form,
he humbled himself in obedience to God
and died a criminal's death on a cross.



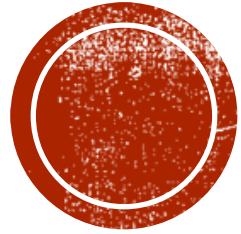


JESUS WEPT...

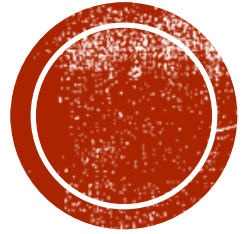
John 11:35



**HOW DO YOU GAIN
FRIENDSHIP IN THIS
WORLD?**



**WHAT CONDITION DO WE
NEED TO BE FOR
FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD?**



But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

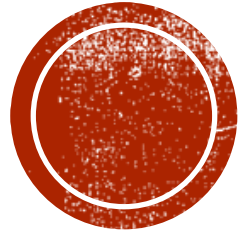
Romans 5:8

THE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS... SALVATION

- Salvation is for
 - The rejected
 - The broken
 - The lost
 - The sinner
 - The destitute

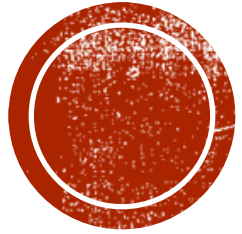
If we show up trying to prove why God should accept us, we misunderstand God's love.





**THE RESULT OF
FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD...**





“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:5

WHAT COMES AFTER FRIENDSHIP . . .

- But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! – Galatians 5:22-23
- This is not how we have to be to come to God; but rather what we will be transformed into from a relationship with God
 - Repentance, sorrow, a desire to change



A HUMBLE AND CONTRITE HEART

It's not if Jesus wants to be your friend, it's if you view yourself as someone who NEEDS Jesus as a friend.

Humility vs. Self Sufficiency

Psalm 51:17 vs. 1 Samuel 15:17-23



AN OUTCOME IS A HEART FOR OTHERS...

After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them. – John 13:12-17



AN OUTCOME IS A HEART FOR OTHERS...

Seek the LORD while you can find him.

Call on him now while he is near.

Let the wicked change their ways

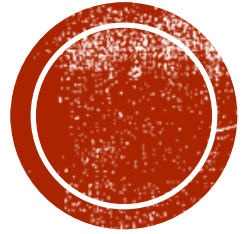
and banish the very thought of doing wrong.

Let them turn to the LORD that he may have mercy on them.

Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously.

-Isaiah 55:6-7





**Jesus responded in a dark time
of the world, came out of glory,
and stepped into darkness to
rescue us, His friends.**

This is still true for all today!

THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS

- Why is Christmas on December 25th?
- How many people celebrate Christmas but don't know Jesus?
- Can you use the dark nights, Christmas lights, and a little baby in a manger to tell others about God's friendship with them?

