

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of September 19, 2021

THEME: "Ye Are My Friends" SPECIAL FRIEND

Sunday **Read John 15:11-20**

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." It is amazing that the Son of God desires to be our Friend! Jesus is the Savior of the world; He is the coming King of kings. He wants to be my Friend! Could there be anything better than having Jesus as a Friend? We all have friends, and they add so much to our lives: companions, confidants, consultants. Having Jesus to provide that makes us the beneficiaries of the greatest friendship imaginable! Now this is all contingent on our obedience to His commands. That is a big "if," but reasonable. It is the desire of Jesus to have trustworthy friends, so His expectation is understandable. Now to keep His commandments requires us to know His commandments. They are recorded in the Holy Scriptures with particular emphasis on a study of the four gospels in the New Testament. Keeping these commandments of Jesus is the key to the abundant life of which Jesus spoke in John 10:10 where He said this: *"I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly."* If reading and obeying the Scriptures means having Jesus as a Friend, it is well worth our effort to do that daily!

COMPANIONSHIP

Monday **Read Matthew 28:18-20**

"I am with you, even unto the end of the world." Friendship with Jesus is an enduring relationship, not only for a lifetime, but for all eternity. What could be better than having the Son of God as a lifetime companion! Just knowing Jesus cares for us gives us a strong sense of security as we face those daily problems. There is nothing too hard for Him, and to know He is by our side whenever and wherever gives us a confidence that is immeasurable. With that sense of assurance that He is with us causes us to watch where we are going and what we are doing; we have a dimension to life that unbelievers can never enjoy. Some may say that Jesus went back to heaven and question how He could be with us if He is in heaven. That is a good point. However, it is important to remember that God is a trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Never is there one without the other. Jesus spoke of His oneness with the Father in John 17:22: *"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one."* We read of Jesus and the Holy Spirit being one in Philippians 1:19: *"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."* Receiving Christ as Savior is a birth of the Spirit as we read in John 3:6: *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* By faith in Christ as Savior means having Him as a Friend for life!

BROTHERLY LOVE

Tuesday **Read Proverbs 18:24**

"There is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother." All of us who have been blessed with siblings in our earthly families have an understanding of the joy of having brothers and sisters. There is a closeness that is beyond description. It is an innate love: the care and concern for family that is above all other concerns with the exception of the love of parents for their children. That family tie is referred to as brotherly love. What we are told in today's Bible reading is that by faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, we have a Friend who sticks closer than a brother. Imagine that! I think I would do anything I could possibly do for an earthly brother,

whether it be in my earthly natural family or my heavenly spiritual family. We are told that Jesus will go even beyond that on our behalf. Knowing that our Savior will stick closer than a brother gives an indescribable confidence!

RELIABLE HELP

Wednesday Read Hebrews 13:5-6

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." The fact that we have the presence of the Lord Jesus as a Friend gives us the assurance that we can face up to anything. Just knowing that we will never be left alone to deal with things that seem impossible is a real blessing. Jesus is capable of handling anything as He demonstrated many times. No matter the circumstances, our faith in Christ enables us to handle situations that would be impossible if it were not for that help from our Lord! The love relationship is a mutual one, with mutual responsibilities. We do what we can; and the Savior picks up where we would fall short. This ever-abiding presence of Jesus is to keep us from sin and to help us when we are faced with difficult circumstances as a result of the spiritual warfare with the devil in which we are engaged. Victory is assured because of the reliable help of our Lord!

FAITHFUL GUIDE

Thursday Read John 16:13

"Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." A good friend is a faithful guide. It is highly beneficial upon starting a new job to develop a friendship with a colleague who has been around a while. Having that experienced person as a guide makes things far more comfortable in accomplishing what is expected of us. Having been born into God's family means we have the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, as a lifetime guide. That is counsel that is totally trustworthy. To follow the Spirit's lead is to stay on solid ground. We come across situations where we are not sure what to do, what path we should take. It is then that it is a good idea to follow the Biblical instruction in Proverbs 3:5-6: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths."* There could be no greater offer than this one God gives us here. We have a faithful guide by our faith in Christ as our Lord. We have the Guidance of the Perfect Spirit. How's that for a GPS while traveling through life!

ENVIABLE CONTACTS

Friday Read Romans 5:1-2

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ: by whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." One benefit of friendships, particularly if the friend knows people of great influence, is that we can have a contact that may open doors to benefits we could never imagine. Having Jesus as a Friend gives us access to God! It can't get any better than that: having Jesus as our Friend. We can approach God in heaven at any time. Then to realize that God welcomes us with open arms is an added blessing! Yes, God is pleased when we pray as we see in Proverbs 15:8: *"The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight."* God loves when we approach Him, that is, if we have responded to His love by receiving

His Son as our Savior. Those who have never received Jesus into their hearts to forgive their sins on the merits of His shed blood are detestable to God when they approach Him. God is holy, and we must have clean hearts that have been cleansed as mentioned in I John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* That gives us a contact with God!

CO-LABORERS

Saturday.....Read I Corinthians 3:9

"We are laborers together with God." What a high privilege to be working together with God in the great task announced by the Lord Jesus at the outset of the Age on God's calendar in which we are now living: the Church Age. Jesus mentioned this work in Matthew 16:18 where He said this: *"I will build my Church."* That work still continues today, and we are working together with God to get it done by winning souls to Christ. We do that by planting and watering seeds of Scripture in the hearts and minds of lost souls and await the Spirit's move to reap the harvest. In this great eternal work of God, it is our high privilege to work together with Christian friends. Much of that labor in soul winning is at the throne of grace interceding for lost souls and for Christians to have opportunity to share the gospel with friends and colleagues. The prayers of Christians bring victory!