

## Jesus' Friendship Guide – Aug. 23, 2023

**Jesus' 12:** Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas son of James, & Judas Iscariot.

**Inner 3:** Peter, James, and John - the closest to Jesus.

Why these 3? Peter: “the rock.” Leader. Bold. Preached / Pentecost, 3000

- James & John were prominent leaders in the early church.

Here is what they were not:

- Were not perfect. “Sons of Thunder”
- Were Not community leaders w/ power
- Were Not wealthy . . . didn't have the biggest boat
- Were Not best educated . . . not on Jerusalem Jeopardy.
  - o They had **open hearts of love**, Jesus would open their eyes. **Believe.**

**James 2:23** – “Abraham believed God & it was counted to him as righteousness and he was called a friend of God.” **Belief is crucial in having Jesus as a friend.**

The Inner 3 were friends of Jesus. Saw things others did not.

**John 15:15** – “No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not understand what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because everything I have learned from My Father I have made known to you.”

**Jesus called them friends.** The inner 3 were eyewitnesses to special moments.

- They saw His greatest moments of glory & His darkest trials.
- Thru 3 special moments, we get a glimpse into what we need for friends

**1 – Healing of Jarius' Daughter** - Story told in **Luke 8:49-56.**

- **51** When they arrived at the house, Jesus wouldn't let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, James, and the little girl's father and mother.
- **52** The house was filled with people weeping and wailing, but he said, “Stop the weeping! She isn't dead; she's only asleep.” **53** But the crowd laughed at him because they all knew she had died. **54** Then Jesus took her by the hand and said in a loud voice, “My child, get up!” **55** And at that moment her life returned, and she immediately stood up!
  - o **We need an inner circle of people who believe in us.**
    - The ones who believe in you will encourage you. Succeed.

- Recall: in His hometown Jesus “could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them” because of their unbelief. (**Mark 6:5-6**)
  - We’ll be limited in life w/o friends who believe in us & encourage us

## 2 - Transfiguration – Matt. 17

- Lead-in - Matt. 16, Jesus asked who people say that he is. Peter knows.
- **Matt. 17** – 6 days later Jesus took Peter & the 2 brothers, James & John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. 2 As the men watched, Jesus’ appearance was transformed/transfigured so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. 3 Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus. 4 Peter exclaimed, “Lord, it’s wonderful for us to be here! If you want, I’ll make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” 5 But even as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”
  - We need friends who know our true self. Inner self. Our secrets.
    - We can be totally who we are; pull back the mask.
      - We’re better moms, teachers, nurses w/ good friends
      - We’re less effective w/o support of friends.
  - Beware of wanting lots of friends, not giving attention to who..
    - “The righteous should choose his friends carefully” **Prv. 12:26**
    - “A person of too many friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” **Prv. 18:24**

## 3 – Prayer in the Garden – Matt. 26

- 36 “Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” 37 He took Peter and the 2 sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” 39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground & prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”
  - In our darkest times, we need friends who will go pray with us.
  - In midnight hour, we need friends who will keep walking farther.

- Even Jesus wasn't going this alone. He asked for help... from his friends.

**Inner Circle** – those to whom we show our inner self.

- People we trust to be there with us when we need them.
- People who give us great support.
- People who help us see & know God better
  - Two people see more than 1. God's infinite greatness is more than 1 person can take in. Coming together, we get more.
- People we love & love us.
  - **John 15:13** – “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.”

These 3 loved Jesus. **James** - 1<sup>st</sup> of the disciples to be martyred. **Peter** also was martyred. **John** was exiled & suffered, b/c he loved Jesus. . . impacted by love. **1 John 3:16** – “By this we know what love is: Jesus laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.”

Jesus didn't look for perfect people to be His close friends.

- He chose good hearts & open minds
- He chose people who could encourage & offer support
- He chose James & John & Peter – who have you chosen?

**Proverbs 18:24** says “there is a friend that is closer than a brother” – that friend is Jesus.

**Song/week** - “Friend” – by Joel Vaughn