

YOU ALWAYS HAVE
A FRIEND
IN JESUS
for Boys

JIM GEORGE



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Jesus Is Your Friend

To say that Jesus was a special person is an understatement. That's why you won't read very far in the New Testament books of the Bible—especially Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John—before you discover that the stories of Jesus contain many lessons and show you character qualities about Jesus and His relationship with people. He treated people with kindness and helped many who were sick—even some who were dead!

Jesus was the greatest teacher who ever lived, and the greatest person who ever lived. His life, death, and being raised from the dead have transformed the lives of millions of people since He returned to heaven almost 2000 years ago.

“Yes,” you agree, “Jesus is a special person, but what does this mean to me?” To begin to answer this question, think about this: This greatest of all people who have ever lived—Jesus Christ—wants to get to know you and become your friend. Look at what happened to some of the men who followed Jesus—to them He said:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you (John 15:15).

Can you think of some nice things that might happen if Jesus was your friend? List them here:

Fun in God's Word!

It's always good to know the person who says he or she wants to be your friend. So let's take a few minutes and have some fun in God's Word as we get to know J-E-S-U-S.

Jesus is the Son of God. Many kids—and adults too—get confused when Jesus is called “the Son of God.” They think this means that Jesus was not God, but was only God's Son, which makes them think Jesus is someone less than God. But read the verse below and answer this question: How did these people respond when Jesus said He was the Son of God?

For this reason [the Jews] tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:18).

According to John 20:31, what is the purpose of the Gospel of John, or the book of John?

These [things] are written [the words/messages in the Gospel of John] that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.

According to the rest of John 20:31, what is the result of believing Jesus is the Son of God?

...that by believing you may have life in his name.

Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples, heard Jesus say He was "the Son of God." He also heard others call Jesus by that title. What did Thomas call Jesus, knowing He was "the Son of God"?

Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

Jesus is truly special because He is God who made heaven and earth. He created the first people on the earth, Adam and Eve. He had a special relationship with them, and now Jesus, who was God in human flesh, wants to be *your* friend. That's pretty cool, right? Actually, that's epic!

What else did Jesus do? Read on.

Entered this world as a baby. God is Spirit, which means He does not have a body. Since the time everything was created, God has wanted to have a personal relationship with the people He created. To make that possible, He had to become a man. Read the verses below and write out how God would become a man.

You [Mary] will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end (Luke 1:32-33).

The angel promised Mary that a baby would be born. According to the verses below, where did the angel tell the shepherds they could find this very special baby?

Today in the town of David [Bethlehem] a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a boy wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger (Luke 1:11-12).

Once Jesus was born, He was God in a human body. He was a human person, like you and me. But He was also God, and He possessed all the qualities of God, which means Jesus possessed a perfect, sinless nature. He was and is 100 percent God and 100 percent man.

Sacrificed Himself for His friends. It takes a very special friend to be willing to die in your place. And yet that is what Jesus said He was willing to do for His friends. According to John 15:13, what is the proof of the greatest love in the world?

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

How did Jesus demonstrate His love for His friends—and you—according to Romans 5:8?

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Unites His friends with God's heavenly family. Jesus wants to be your friend, but with that friendship comes an additional relationship. What does God the Father want to do through your friendship with His Son?

God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure (Ephesians 1:5 NLT).

When you come into God's family through your friendship with Jesus, what gift does the Father give to you according to Galatians 4:6 (NLT)?

Because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.”

When Jesus becomes your friend, He comes to live in your heart!

Secures eternal life for His friends. Jesus offers His friends a special kind of life—eternal life. “Eternal” means lasting forever—having no end. What do you have to do to receive eternal life, this life that has no ending?

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him [Jesus] shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

Do you believe that Jesus is God and that He died for your sins? If so, God the Father wants you as a friend for His Son!

What a Friend You Have in Jesus!

Throughout this book you will read many stories from Jesus' life that are found in the Bible. They will help you understand that God came to this earth as a man so He could provide an opportunity for you to be His friend. Each chapter you read will show you how super special it is to be God's friend through His Son, Jesus.

Jesus Is Your Friend

In this chapter we had some fun in God's Word learning that **J-E-S-U-S** is God and **J-E-S-U-S** wants to have a personal relationship with you and be your friend. Think about how special your friend **J-E-S-U-S** is as you write out the points for each letter. (I'll get you started with "J.")

Jesus is the Son of God

E _____

S _____

U _____

S _____

Write out one thing you liked, learned, or want to do after discovering that Jesus wants to be your friend.

A prayer to pray—

Jesus, it's hard to make a friend and to be a friend. Thank You for wanting to be my friend. Amen.

Jesus Is a Friend Who Loves at All Times

It's easy to love friends who return your love. Friendships are also easy to keep when you don't ask much from your friends. But what about times when you really need their help? Are they still there when you ask for their help? And what if that help is needed for a while, even a long while? The mark of a true friend is long-lasting love and care, regardless of any problems the friendship presents.

Many people think the word *love* has to do with emotional attraction to another person. But the Bible has another way of looking at love and measuring it. Furthermore, in the Bible we find the perfect person to demonstrate God's definition of love—Jesus Christ.

Fun in God's Word!

In this chapter we want to see how our friend Jesus practiced love. Because He was perfect, His love was perfect. Let's learn how to follow His example so that we can live out His command to "*love one another*" (John 13:34).

Jesus loved His friends. Can you imagine having Jesus in your home not only as an honored guest but also when you have a need? That's what happened in John 11 when Jesus' friend Lazarus became sick and died. You can read the full story of His visit to the home of three of His friends in John 11. What does John 11:5 say about Jesus' feeling toward these three friends?

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

As a friend, Jesus' love for this family outweighed any concern He might have about His own safety. (At this time in His ministry, people were trying to kill Him.) A friend like Jesus loves even in difficult times.

Can you think of a time when you came to the aid of a friend? What did you do?

What will you do the next time you have a friend who is in need?

Jesus loved His fellow workers. What does this verse tell you about Jesus' relationship with His disciple, John?

One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved [John], was reclining next to him (John 13:23).

What does this verse tell you about Jesus' feelings toward all of His disciples?

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end (John 13:1).

It's easy to love your family and friends, but what about other kids at school? Jesus would want you to love them too! Is there a boy at school who isn't a close friend but one you could reach out to and show Jesus' kind of love? Put his name here:

What act of kindness could you do to show Jesus' kind of love to that person?

Jesus loved His enemies. Again, it's easy to love your family and friends. But what about those kids at school who give you a hard time? Maybe there's a bully at school or in your neighborhood. Maybe there's a group that won't let you join them. In Matthew 5:43, what did Jesus say you are to do?

I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

How did Jesus respond to those people who nailed Him on the cross?

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34).

Most kids aren't really mean, and are not really the "enemy." Whatever you do, don't treat them the way they treat you. What does Jesus tell you to do instead?

Do to others as you would have them do to you (Luke 6:31).

Follow Jesus' advice and treat other kids the way you want them to treat you. Then see what happens!

Jesus loved you enough to die for you. What did Jesus do to show us what love is?

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us (1 John 3:16).

God is love, and He showed us what love is by sending His beloved Son, Jesus. What was Jesus' mission when He came to earth?

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

Read John 1:12 below. What should be your response to the fact that Jesus loved you so much that He died to save you from your sins?

As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name (NKJV).

What a Friend You Have in Jesus!

In Jesus you will find both the greatest model of love and your ultimate resource for loving others. Jesus was perfect love in human flesh. He loves you perfectly, and He teaches—and commands—you to love others in the same way. Here's how your friend Jesus wants you to love: Circle the word “love” every time it is used in these verses:

Love—chooses God as first and most important. “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’ This is the first and greatest commandment” (Matthew 22:37-38).

Love—chooses others as the next priority. “*The second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’*” (verse 39).

Who is your neighbor? This same question was asked of Jesus, who explained that each of us is responsible to be a good neighbor to those who need our help (Luke 10:37).

Love—chooses to obey Jesus. “*If you love Me, keep My commandments*” (John 14:15 NKJV).

When Jesus said, “*keep My commandments,*” He was talking about following what the Bible says you and I should do. For example, you show Jesus that you love Him when you follow the Bible’s command: “*Children, obey your parents*” (Ephesians 6:1).

Love—chooses to follow Jesus’ command to love others. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34).

When you refuse to like another person, you are not following Jesus’ command. What does this say about your love for Jesus?

Love—chooses to forgive rather than seek revenge. “Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matthew 5:43-44).

How do you usually respond when someone tries to hurt you?

How should you respond, according to Jesus?

Jesus Is a Friend Who Loves At All Times

In this chapter we have had some fun in God's Word. Look back at the four facts about Jesus' love for others, and write out the points that show you how Jesus loved others—including you!

Jesus loved His friends

J _____

J _____

J _____

Write out one thing you liked, learned, or want to do now after discovering that Jesus is a friend who loves at all times.

A prayer to pray—

Jesus, thanks for helping me know more about You and Your love. I really need help, especially with the kids who are mean or not so nice to me. Amen.