

I'll Be a Friend to Him

by Jack Hyles

To be a friend of Jesus, one must do what he said to do, which is to obey his commands and follow his teachings.

Duration: 1:00:46

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 25:35-36, Luke 10:27, John 15:12, John 15:14, Acts 9:6, James 2:17

Topics: "Faithfulness To God", "Persevering In Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of staying committed to God and not giving up, using examples from the Bible. He mentions the story of David's son Absalom rebelling against him and how David remained faithful to God throughout the conflict. The preacher also references the Apostle Paul's perseverance and determination to stay on the right path. The sermon concludes with a call to the audience to abide in Jesus, follow his commandments, and be a friend of Jesus.

Transcript

Tonight on the subject, I'll be a friend to him. Before I speak, I hate to say this. I don't want to say it, but because several times lately I've had to say this.

Unless it is an emergency, I simply cannot meet with you after the service. Dr. Towns and I must spend some time together about the book. If it's an emergency, you be there and I'll take you.

But if it can wait, I hope that you'll let it wait. And Wednesday night, I promise you, I'll take the line no matter how many folks are out there. The line's gotten so long we have to build a bigger building, just take care of the line outside my office door.

But so tonight if it's an emergency, I'll take you. If it isn't, I hope that you'll wait. I'm going to speak tonight and I'll be a friend to him.

The only person in the Bible about whom it is said he was a friend of Jesus was Abraham. David was called a man after God's own heart. It is said of John the Baptist that not a greater was born of woman than he.

It is said of Moses that he spake to God face to face as a friend. But only about Abraham did God ever say he is a friend of God. Three times in the Bible, it is said that Abraham was a friend of God.

Socrates said, friend, there is no friend. But Socrates didn't know Jesus. Those who know him sing, what a friend we have in Jesus.

All our sins and griefs to bear, what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. Socrates said, friend, there is no friend. Those who know him sing, Jesus is the friend you need.

Such a friend is he indeed. He who knoweth every tear, he can banish every fear. Jesus is the friend you need.

Socrates said, friend, there is no friend. But those who know Jesus can sing, there is no friend to me like Jesus. He my every need supplies.

He not only saves and keeps me, nothing good from me denies. Socrates said, friend, there is no friend. But those who know Jesus can sing, no one ever cared for me like Jesus.

There is no friend so kind and true as he. Jesus is called in the Bible a friend of sinners. Again, the Old Testament seems to imply that he is a friend that is thicker and closer than a brother.

He is our friend. For these 28 years now, he has been my friend. There have been times when I wondered if I had any others, but he has been my friend for 28 years.

Oh, longer than that, but I have been his preacher and been preaching for him 28 wonderful blessed years. And he has been such a friend. I wish I had time tonight to stand behind this pulpit and shout to the housetops all he has done for me.

My, my, my. I thought tonight I would rather have a title, a friend of Jesus, than to have the plaque. And I am glad to have the plaque.

I don't guess I want the plaque so much. I just don't want anybody else to have it. And, but I, I'd rather have the title, a friend of Jesus.

And so our attention tonight is going to return, not to his friendship to us, though we could spend hours and hours talking of that friendship. Our attention tonight will be drawn to our friendship to him. As it was said of Abraham, a friend of God.

Lord Brooke was so enraptured because of his friendship with Philip Sidney, and so carried away with that friendship, that he requested that he be placed on his tombstone these words, and the request was granted. Here lies the friend of Sir Philip Sidney. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to have it placed on your tombstone? Here lies a friend of God.

When I was in Texas, I used to say, I, I want it on my tombstone to have these words written, Jack Hiles, soul winner. That's all I'd want, just Jack Hiles, soul winner. When I moved to Indiana, I went back for a visit and dedicated a new educational building that they built after I left.

I walked in the door and there was my picture, a life-size picture of me in the, and a little plaque underneath the picture said, Jack Hiles, soul winner. I want to be his friend. I want to be a soul winner, and I want to be a friend of Christ.

But now I want you to, I want you to, Jesus said, you are my friends. If you do whatsoever, I command you. Now it's very plain.

It's outlined here, how I can be a friend of Jesus. Now I want you to notice first, what is not said. It does not say, Jesus did not say that our friendship with him or to him is determined by what we do not do.

Didn't say, you're my friends, if you quit what I've told you to quit. Doesn't say that. Said, if you do what I've commanded you to do.

Didn't say, you're my friends, if you don't this and don't that. Now you understand, I'm a donor. I'm, I, I believe in negative preaching.

I believe in hellfire and brimstone preaching, and you know that's true. And I think it's wrong to drink, and I think it's wrong to curse, and I think it's wrong to dance, and I think it's wrong to wear a mini-skirt, and I just won't list everything I think. Every Sunday, I like to list it all, so nobody'll join this church in the false pretense.

But I, but I, and I believe in, I, I believe in fighting sin, and as the old country preacher said, healing the dead, casting out the sick, and raising the devil. You know I believe that. And I believe in being against things, but God knows to be a friend of Christ is not to quit everything.

You can quit it all. You can quit your drinking, your carousing, your lying, your stealing, your cheating, your dancing, your wickedness, your, your lustful life, but you won't be a friend of Jesus because of that. You're my friends if you do whatsoever I commanded you.

Didn't he say, um, I was hungry, and you gave me bread. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was sick, and you visited me.

And they said, Lord, oh, when were you hungry, and we gave you food. When were you a bread, and, and thirsty, when were you thirsty, we gave you a drink. When were you sick, we visited you in prison, and so forth.

He said, inasmuch as you've done it, notice the word, done, and one of the least of these, my brethren, he's done it to me. Paul said, when he got saved, first he said, who art thou, Lord? He got that right, and the next thing was, what was thou having me do? Then, so what would you have me quit? What would you have me do? If you're so busy doing what you ought to do, you'll quit what you ought to quit. I think we've got it all mixed up sometime.

We say, okay, quit all this, and then after you quit all that, start this. The Bible said that if you bring forth fruit, the Lord will purge, purge the, the branch that bringeth forth fruit. A lot of us need to start some things, and that'll make us quit some things.

But our Lord said, you are my friends if you do, not if you quit. An English proverb said, he is my friend who grinds at my mill. He is my friend who grinds at my mill.

But not only that, being a friend of Jesus is not what we sacrifice. Some have tortured themselves and lived in monasteries to be a friend of Christ, but that's not being a friend of Christ. It's what you do that makes you his friend.

The nuns of St. Anne slept upright in their coffins, but that did not make them friends of Christ. People have shut themselves in cells and worn sackcloth, but the Franciscans and Dominicans have not found the answer, for the answer to being a friend of Christ is not in what you sacrifice, but in what you do. It's

not in what you quit, but what you do.

If you want to be a friend of Christ, the Bible says, you're my friend. Jesus said, if you do whatsoever I command of you. Now, several things about this.

The first place, notice, it is in the linear. What you do. It doesn't mean that you're his friend if you do one time what he commanded.

It's linear. If you do it and do it and do it and do it and do it, nobody can be a friend of Jesus who reads in the Bible that he's supposed to tithe and doesn't tithe. Nobody can be a friend of Jesus who reads in the Bible that he's supposed to be a soul winner and doesn't do it.

Nobody. I don't care if he's a deacon in this church. He's not a soul winner.

He's not a friend of Jesus. You're a deacon on the board or on the staff or still on the platform or sing in the choir or sing the solos or a preacher or a pastor or a missionary. You're not a friend of Christ unless you do what he said and his commandment to go and preach the gospel to every creature is not given to a pulpiteer.

It's given to every single believer. Every one of us has been born again. Jesus said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also.

He that believeth on me, that's all of us, not the preacher alone, not the deacon alone, not the evangelist alone, not the full-time worker alone. He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also. Unless you do those works, you can't be a friend of Christ.

Or you can get a DD, but you can't be his friend. You can be a pastor, but you can't be his friend. You can be a missionary, but you can't be his friend.

You can be an author, but you can't be his friend. You can be a singer, but you can't be his friend. Nowhere in the world you can be a friend of Christ by quitting anything or achieving some position or giving some gift or arriving at some particular plateau.

In the Christian life, there is no way in the world you can be a friend of Christ unless you do what he said to do. You can't be a friend of Jesus unless you read your Bible because that's doing what he said to do. Unless you spend time in prayer, that's doing what he said to do.

Unless you win folks to Christ, that's doing what he said to do. Unless you're busy getting the gospel out, that's doing what he said to do. Unless you're giving God ten percent of your income or more, that's doing what he said to do.

There's no way you can be his friend unless you do what he said to do. It's in the linear. By the way, I'm glad about this.

I'm glad the Lord put it this way. That's within reach of all. Anybody can do this.

It doesn't say you have to reach some lofty position. Anybody. The man that works out the steel mills, and God bless you fellows.

I said to a young man, a young lady this last week, her tuition is being paid in our college this year by a man who works out the steel mill. And I said to her, I said, God pity you if you do not walk worthy of what that man is paying. Those men that work out in these blast furnaces and in these steel mills in the most undesirable conditions in the world.

Did you know, fellows, you can be a friend of Christ if you'll do what the Lord said to do. I was in Japan. Maybe I've told you this.

I was in Japan. Dr. Russell Anderson and I were there. I was preaching with Dr. Rice in a conference in the city auditorium in Tokyo.

And I'd finished preaching. It was about 12 noon Japanese time. I was sitting on the back row with Russell Anderson.

And I began to weep. And he said, Dr. House, why are you crying? And I said, it just dawned on me. It's bedtime back in heaven.

And I said, I just began to think how many little boys and girls right now are on their knees beside their beds saying, dear God, bless my preacher. We need Brother House and bring him back home to us safely. And I was thinking how many men who've worked hard all day in the steel mills of East Chicago with a grit and grime and breathe the soot of this area and have come home dead tired are standing with their Bibles open and their heads bowed saying, dear God, bless our preacher tonight and be with our preacher.

Oh, let me say, it matters not if you're a little lady that takes in ironing for a living. Well, the Jim Lyons used to say his dad and mother were in the iron and steel business. His mother took in ironing and his dad stole.

And so it doesn't matter. And that's what you'll do. But you can be a friend of Jesus.

You don't have to be pastor of First Baptist Church to be a friend of Jesus. You don't have to be an author to be a friend of Jesus. All you have to do, just do what he says to do.

Just, he said, you're my friend. If you do whatsoever I've commanded you, you may grow weary and quit, but you can't be a friend of Jesus unless you do it and do it and do it and do it. You folks that had a Sunday school class and got a little weary and quit, you're not a friend of Jesus.

You folks that used to go soul wedding and you got tired of it and quit, you're not a friend of Jesus. You folks that had a bus route and decided you wanted to quit and grow weary, you're not a friend of Jesus unless you keep on and keep on and keep on and keep on. I've said it so often, the apostle Paul said, I buffet my body every day.

Why? So he would quit that which was wrong. Why else? So he would keep on doing that which was right. Every day Paul would get up and he'd buffet his body and he'd say, Lord, God forbid that I should become a castaway.

And day after day he kept at it and kept at it and never quit. And there in that little mammertine prison, I can see it now, a loan about to be offered. He said, I'm ready to be offered.

And he picks up his pen and he writes, I finished the course. Oh, won't it be wonderful to be able to say I stayed at it. I didn't quit.

I didn't turn back. The battles came, but I stayed in the battle. The reversals came, but I kept on going.

The rough days came, but I wouldn't be defeated. I just kept on and kept on. I want to be a friend of God.

And if I'm a friend of God, I must continue to do what he commanded and do what he commanded and do what he commanded. That means in the summer slump, I do it. That means in the spring program, I do it.

That means in the winter time, I do it. That means I go soul winning and get the job done for God and do his commandments when I feel good. And when I feel bad, when I feel, when I've just had my carrot juice, or if I feel so bad because I just had a piece of pork or a cup of coffee or some other wicked, wicked thing, I, um, it doesn't matter.

Keep on going. Just keep on going. You know, we have some people in this room tonight who are used to wuzzers and gunner beers and spasmic folks.

Now, they've, they've, they've gotten their butts around. They've gone soul winning and boy, they go for a while. After a while, they peter out and run out of gas and, uh, and they quit.

And after a while we have a sermon and down the aisle they come and say, I'm going to keep on. But we have some people just keep on going all the time. Just keep on going.

I mean, some folks, when Brother Hand was in charge of the buses, uh, no, Brother Lyons was in charge of the buses, they worked in the bus ministry. Brother Hand came, they quit. Some folks, when Brother Hand was here, they liked old Roly-Poly, Charlie Hand.

And, uh, and, uh, so they worked Brother Hand. But when Dr. B.B. came, they quit. And, uh, and, uh, some folks, uh, like Dr. B.B., handsome fella.

And when this ugly fella over here came, they quit. I don't blame you for quitting, but anyway, uh, they, they quit. But some of you, oh, you like vineyard.

You're going to go for vineyard. And, uh, and, but some people, when Brother Lyons was here, they just had a bus route and just kept on going, kept on going. And when Brother Lyons left and Brother Hand came, they just kept on going.

And when Brother Hand left and Brother Streeter took it over for a while, they just kept on going. And Brother Streeter, uh, uh, uh, stepped aside and, and, uh, Dr. B.B. came, they just kept on going. And Dr. B.B. left, Brother Vineyard came, they just kept on going.

I mean, they just don't quit. They just keep on, that's the friend of Christ. Oh, yes, I like old Charlie Hand.

I do too, except, uh, I want to be a friend of Jesus, not just a friend of Charlie Hand. I like Brother B.B. I like this suave, I like this patent leather shoes. Brother Vineyard, they didn't have any patent leather shoes.

He is, uh, I like Brother B.B. best. Uh, well, don't you like Jesus best? And keep on serving Jesus. There are people in this church tonight who have been here, well, good night.

Ed Roush has been here since 1833. Uh, and, uh, but, uh, there are folks who have been here through the years. George Huesengate was a member of this church, joined this church the year I was born.

He's been here 27 years in this church. What are you all laughing about? But, uh, he, uh, the year I was born, he joined this church. And one preacher came, he just followed him.

Another preacher came, he followed him. I always tell young preachers, the crowd that gets you off to the side when you first get there and try to win you on the expense of the former pastor, you watch them. They'll be, they won't be with you long either.

Folks came when I first came here and said, uh, Brother Hopp, we're so glad you're here. Boy, I'll tell you, we're glad you're here. This, this is what we had before.

We're glad somebody's come with some fire! Huh. And, uh, now then they wish somebody had come back without so much. And, uh, they're, they're on, they're on the way.

But the way you become a friend of Jesus, just keep at it. Just keep at it. You know, years ago when I first started preaching, I, uh, and of course I, I'm proud of this.

That's why I tell it so much. I got a little wart there, right? See, Don? It's a wart. Years ago, I was a pastor in East Texas and, uh, went soul winning and knocked on the doors.

We didn't have any doorbells. In fact, we didn't have many doors where I pastored. And knocked on the door.

It wasn't long. Those unpainted doors. I got festered, a little festered right there, a little sore.

And it began to swell and get infected. And, uh, it became a little wart there after a while. I called it my Jesus wart because I got it out soul winning.

And everybody in the neighborhood started calling me the Jesus wart. And, uh, I'd go knock on the door of a house and some little girl said, Mama, the Jesus wart's here! I was a kid, preacher, 22, 23 years of age. I just keep on going.

I try to knock with my left hand, but it just don't do very good. And I'd go back and knock with my right hand. And it got where it bleed.

And now I've got a scar there. And, uh, and it's swollen there. It's my Jesus wart.

And I wanted to have a soul winning church. And, uh, now after these 28 years, we still have a soul winning church. It's always the same.

I've often said, I want to have the kind of church here at First Baptist until when a person comes on any particular Sunday, he'll get just about what he'd get any other Sunday. Just keep on at it. Keep on doing what the Lord said.

Uh, we have some folks here, we get in the fall program. That's wonderful. We have some folks do it when it's hot, when it's cold, when it's snow on the ground.

We have some folks that'll work if the weather's just right. If we have a big, big, big day, we have some folks that work as hard in the summertime as they do in the spring and fall. We have some folks that by, by

snow, by sleep, by zero, by a hundred degrees, it doesn't matter.

They just keep on going for God. That's the way you're his friend. You do it, you do it.

We have some young folks over here. If I preach a hot sermon on young people, uh, young, young, young girls pitch a hot sermon on mini skirts, you'll come down here and kneel at the altar and, uh, and promise God you're going to wear decent length skirts. And what's that? What happened? Oh, you stay with the house.

It doesn't matter about the outside. God looks on the heart. You're, listen, you got bats in your belfry, rooms for rent upstairs.

God looks on the heart, but lustful men look on the legs. Anybody that knows the Bible knows the Lord tells us how to dress and, uh, let you come. But we have some young ladies over here that they just keep on dressing modestly all the time.

We have some young men in this, in, in young people's section here, young men around the building. I get up and I say, this parking and necking and promiscuous behavior between young men and young ladies, isn't it ever! And down the aisle they'll come and get right with God. And they'll say, we're going to promise God to behave properly.

No more necking and no more promiscuous, uh, behavior toward the opposite sex for us. And for a few weeks they do, they, they do fine. But then they drift away.

And after a while I preach another hot sermon, but we have some young men just going to be, they're going to live right. If hell freezes over, they're just going to live right. I mean, come hell or high water, nobody's going to tempt them.

They're going to live right. We have some young ladies that, that they'll come down the aisle when I preach against that thing on that same subject. And they'll say, Oh God, forgive me.

I'm sorry. I let those wicked hands touch my pure body. I'm sorry that I let those wicked hands make me unchaste.

And, and, uh, and I'm going to, I'm going to be bantered. And then they, for a while, but then some dirty minded, lewd beast will come up and put his dirty hands on that which is sacred. And pure for you.

And then you'll yield not to preach another sermon. But we have some, some young ladies over here. I mean, it's down in here.

They're going to go to the altar chaste. I mean, they're going to be decent and they're going to be honorable and no dirty, vile, wicked young boys going to place his filthy hands on their body and rob them of that thing that's most precious and most holy. Why? Their heart is fixed on decency.

And they're a friend of God. They just keep on. They're in the linear tense.

They just keep on and keep on and keep on. I know some folks in this room tonight, I get up and I say, you God robbers, you, you're going to, you rob God, God's liable to cause your car to swerve on a busy highway and the, and the squeaking of brakes and the smell of rubber and the clashing of steel and the

spinning of blood and the spinning of water from the radiator and the gasoline and the fire. And you'll be lying there beside the road and you'll be put in some hospital.

God's going to take, take your tithe. If you don't give it to him and you'll come down now and you'll say, I'm going to start tithing and you'll do it for a while. And then you'll poop out till the bills get a little high.

I know some people in this room going to give the tithe. I don't care if the bills do get high. I know some folks don't have to have a sermon.

Some folks that don't have to be reminded over and over again. There's a little lady in this room tonight. God bless her.

She doesn't have much money. One of our sweet senior citizens. Every month I get a sweet little love letter from her.

Precious love letter. I guess I should call her name. I don't think I will.

But she writes me in a quivering handwriting and, and says for the highest, you're the greatest pastor in all the world. You know, I get all kinds of letters. Those are my favorite letters.

And, uh, we should read some of the others too. But, uh, I, uh, I wish they'd invent glasses that had defrosters at the top. But, uh, anyway, and she sent, sent every month, she sends a \$5 bill for the radio ministry.

It's just regular as, as the month comes around. And I'd like to say to her tonight, prices are going up. Could you make that six from now on, please? But, uh, I mean, it doesn't matter.

She does it in the summertime. She does it in the winter. She does it when she feels good.

She does it when she feels bad. She'll, that's what's made the First Baptist Church of Hammond what it is. Not a bunch of spasmodic spurters.

Have you seen that commercial on television about that, uh, the, the rabbit and the turtle? Huh? About the rabbit that makes the fast starts and, and, uh, I like it at the end. It says the turtle gets there first and saves enough fuel to take his family out to eat. And there's a bunch of little turtles all going out to eat, uh, to McDonald's, of course.

But, uh, I, uh, but that's the way, I mean, I mean just fine. Listen, I believe in going fast. I believe in not going any faster than you can carry the message.

Don't you recall the story in the Old Testament? David's son Absalom had rebelled against David and, uh, and had taken over, and they were fighting, and David left the land. We'll study that on Wednesday night. David left the palace and left the city of Jerusalem, went down to Nahum, and David looked back and saw the dust of the battle arising and realizing his own son was fighting against his own forces.

And David's heart was broken the darkest day of his life, I think, as he looked back and saw the dust of battle rising. And God came down and reminded David, there's a heavenly army up there and may him, may him the place of two camps is what it means. And, uh, and finally the battle was over and David wanted to get the report.

He wanted to get the report about the battle. And there were two, two, two messengers. One was named Cushiah and the other was named Ahimeaz.

Cushiah was sort of a plodding kind of a fella. He didn't break the Hurd-Yard-Dash record, a mile run record. He'd run a mile in about five minutes.

Oh, Ahimeaz could run it in 3.5, 3.52. But, um, um, so Ahimeaz, when the battle was over, Ahimeaz said, I'm going to go, I'm going to go, let me take the message. And Cushiah said, okay. And so Ahimeaz ran and ran.

He got there first, and oh Cushiah just plodding along like the turtle. And Ahimeaz got there and David said, what's the message? And, uh, uh, David, and Ahimeaz said, message, message. Yeah, what is the old man say? And Ahimeaz said, this is in the Hebrew.

You won't find this in the English now. Since we have a college here, I like to teach a little Hebrew as long as I can. In the Hebrew, uh, Ahimeaz said, good night.

I'd be, I'd be Cushiah here. You have to check the Hebrew very carefully to find that good night. But, uh, I'll be, I'll be, I'm the fastest rider of all.

David said, what's the message? Message. I don't have the message, but I won the race. No matter if you win, if you win the race, if you don't bring the message.

Here comes old Cushiah. He's plodding along going as fast as he can, but he brings the message. He brings the message.

He just keeps on going and keeps on going and keeps on going and keeps on going and keeps on going. He won't quit. And that's the kind of folks that become a friend of God.

Let me ask you a question. Have you promised God you'd tithe and quit? Have you promised God you'd come to church on Wednesday night and quit? Have you made a holy vow to God you'd be clean and decent and you quit? Have you made a promise to God that you'd go soul wedding and quit? Did you get on your knees here and say, dear God, I'll find a place in the Chicago area where young boys and girls need encouragement and need to hear the gospel. And I'll get me a bus and I'll be on the job for God.

Did you join the foster club and quit? Did you join the ladies soul wedding and quit? Did you go to the men's soul wedding and quit? Take a Sunday school class and quit? Take a department and quit? And get back on the job and say, by the grace of God, I'm going to be a friend of Jesus. I'm going to keep on prodding along. I'm not going to quit.

I'm going to do it and do it. But that isn't all. Notice this.

It says in John 15, 14, ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you. I like that word whatsoever. It doesn't matter whatever the Lord asks, you do it.

Whatsoever, no matter how little, no matter how big, you do it. Now, David was the friend of God and of course David whatsoever. Don't you recall that day when the Lord came to Abraham and the Lord said, Abraham, yes, Lord, I want you to leave the land, your own land and leave your family.

I want you to leave your wealth and leave your heritage. I want you to go to the first city, which has foundations, whose builder and ruler is God. Abraham immediately rose up and he left all and he followed the will of God.

And one day the Lord came, Abraham, yes, Lord, I want now, I want your son, I want you to take Isaac, take him to Mount Moriah and I want you to offer him for a sacrifice. If you will check the next verse, it says he rose up early in the morning. Now, Abraham wasn't like me.

The Lord had to argue for seven months before I'd come pastor this church. He had to fuss with me for seven months before I'd come. You know why? I just didn't feel worth it to live in this beautiful, beautiful area where the gold dust filled the air and where the architecture is so pretty.

Oh, I did not realize the beauty of the, of Indiana Harbor and the beach over here in North Hammond. I just didn't have a hard time realizing it. But Abraham said early in the morning, he rose up, he took Isaac.

I'm sure if it had been me, I'd have said, but Lord, I've already left my home. I've already left my family. I've left my nation.

I've given up everything. Oh, dear God, don't take Isaac. Lord, you promised me that Isaac would be the bearer of the seed and you'd bless the whole world through Isaac and his seed would be as the sand of the sea and the stars of the heavens.

Oh God, don't take Isaac. But Abraham didn't. He didn't argue.

He didn't whimper. He didn't complain. You know what? Dr. Towns, I want to pastor the largest Sunday school in the world, but I want to be the kind of servant of God where the Lord says, I want it and I want to give it to him.

Whatever it is, it doesn't matter. I mean, he said, Jack, I want it. I want to say, okay, here it is.

Here it is. I want to be a friend of his. Oh, let me say whatever he wants.

Give it. If he wants your job, let him have it. If he wants your money, let him have it.

If he wants your house, let him have it. If he wants you to quit your job and go to school and prepare for the ministry, do it in God's name. Give everything you have to God.

Our country's perishing for the lack of somebody to give whatsoever. Nothing too great. There's a third thing.

If you read it carefully in the original Greek, and I mean this, you'll find he did it promptly. Jesus said, he said, you're my friends if you do, and the word do means do it promptly, do whatsoever I've commanded you. Do it right now.

Abraham did it promptly. Now, what did our Lord tell the people to do? He said, you're my friends if you do whatsoever I have told you. Now, what did he tell them or command? What did he command them? If you'll check the preceding verses, you'll find only three commands our Lord has given.

The first one he gave is in verse four, where he says, abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so no more can ye except you abide in me. What's the first

command? You must abide in Christ.

That means that, Dr. Willings, that means on Sunday morning we get up and we spend our time walking with God, and that means we come to church and abide in Christ. That means we go home on Sunday afternoon, and all Sunday afternoon we live in Christ. That means on Monday morning we get up and we're still to abide in Christ, just like we did on Sunday.

And that means all day Monday and night, all night Monday night, just walk with God and be with Him and fellowship with Him in a sweet fellowship. That means on Tuesday and Tuesday night and Wednesday and Wednesday night and Thursday and Thursday night and Friday and Friday night and Saturday and Saturday night. That means we're to abide in Christ, live in Christ, walk with Christ.

No stranger to Him, if I'm going to be His friend, I've got to abide with Him. And this word abide here in John 15, 4, is an interesting word. It is the same root word that you find in John 14, 2, in my Father's house are many mansions.

The word mansion in John 14, 2 comes from the same word of the word abide in John 15, 4. What does it say? Mansion in me. If you want to have a mansion, abide in Christ. If you want to live the happiest life in the world and live as a foretaste of heaven, now abide in Christ.

And the Lord is simply saying, abide in me all the time. Let me ask you a question. How often do you pray on Monday? Huh? How much of your Bible do you read on Monday? What kind of fellowship do you have all day on Tuesday? Young people, you've been to camp.

That's wonderful. But let me tell you this. If you went to camp and got all excited and don't walk with Christ the other 51 weeks, you didn't get much at camp.

I'm glad you went. God bless you. And I thank God for every victory.

But you know what I'm interested in? I'm interested in some young people that go to camp and don't just come home and say, I got right with God. I'm interested in you going to school and studying hard and dressing decently and being courteous and kind and being the kind of a soul winner, the kind of a Christian, the kind of obeyer of the rules and the kind of inspector of authority, the kind of disciplined Christian 365 days a year, anything less than that, you cannot be a friend of Christ. Now, I'm not against the camp.

I'm not against the ranch. I'm not against the altar. I think we ought to use it.

But some of us are going to have to learn to walk with Christ all the time. I mean, day and night, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, when it's hot, when it's cold, just walk with Christ. Just walk with him.

I was with a preacher recently, and we were fellowshiping for a while. And he began to mumble a little bit, and I began to listen. And I was talking to him, and I thought he was sort of rude.

I was talking. He wasn't listening to me. And I heard him say, Oh, Lord.

Oh, Lord. And I waited for a while. We started talking again.

It wasn't long until after I'd talked a while longer, I was talking again to him. It seemed like I always do all the talking. And I heard him say, Oh, God, help.

Oh, God, help. And I waited for a while longer. And I waited to, I wanted him to listen to me.

I had something to say. And he listened for a while longer. He talked a bit.

And then after a while, and you know that right in the middle of a sentence, he was saying to me, he all of a sudden stopped and talked to the Lord. And said, Oh, God, forgive. Ma Sunday said Billy Sunday was that way.

She said that Billy Sunday walked down the street, and he'd talk to you, and you'd never know. He'd say, Yeah, that's right. Oh, God, help me.

God bless the meeting. That's right. That's right.

Yeah. I know. Oh, good Lord, give us power tonight.

I know, Joe. And Ma said you couldn't tell him. Billy Sunday started talking to God and somebody else.

He was with God all the time. And ask a question. You walk with him at work? You walk with him at school? You walk with him day by day? The Lord said, You're my friend.

Did you do what? What did the Lord command you? What did he command? First thing he commanded was to walk with him. Walk with God. Number two, the second command he gives us is in verse eight.

He says, Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. That's the second command. You can't be a friend of Christ unless you walk with God, walk with God, abide with Christ, walk with God.

You can't be a friend of Christ unless you bear fruit, bear fruit, bear much fruit, bear much fruit, bear much fruit. That's why for twenty-eight years I've been for soul winning. You know who I'm for? I'm for the soul winner.

I know some preachers that split their infinitives and dangle their participles and hang their gerunds and say, I have, I have did and I've done and I have saw and I've seen, but they're soul winners and I'm for them. Oh, Dr. Bob Jones, didn't you hear the fellow say, I seen that seen something and say, I have seen and seen nothing. And I'm for the soul winner.

Never in fourteen years have you heard a soul winner criticize this platform. Never. For that matter, you haven't heard a Bible-believing preacher criticize this platform.

Never. You haven't heard it in fourteen years. No, you haven't.

No, you haven't. No, and you've not heard me criticize one church that believes this book from this pulpit in fourteen years. No, you haven't.

No, you haven't either. No. Why? I'm for the soul winner.

I'm not going to run down the fellow who's after the same devil I'm after and trying to win people like I'm trying to win them. The fellow's bearing fruit. I'm not going to chop his, chop off his limb.

I'm going to be for him. I've got a book called Let's Go Soul Winning. I've got a long play record called Let's Go Soul Winning.

I've got a tape called Let's Go Soul Winning. I'm on seventy radio stations called broadcast called Let's Go Soul Winning. I am for the soul winner.

And by the way, that's why you come to me and start criticizing some soul winner in this church. You won't get any comfort from me, dear brother or dear sister. I'm for the soul winner.

Oh, soul winners are a crazy kind of a lot. I mean, look in the platform. Max Elton, little bitty runt, wears a size fourteen coat.

That's child size. Size six shoe. Wears a boy's shirt.

Only thing he's got, he wears a man's size. His head's oversized, but he's a soul winner. And I'm for Max Elton.

There's C.W. Fisk. Look at that shirt. Nobody's right with God to wear a red shirt to church and a white tie and look as jazzy as he does, but he's a soul winner and I'm for him.

Look at old Sully. He won't even shake hands. He never has taken his right hand and shake my hand.

Never has. He won't do it. Keeps his hand in his pocket all the time.

I've been preaching on a Christian ought not to eat too much. He just keeps shoving it in. If he had two hands, he'd weigh four hundred and fifty.

We'll get to you here in a minute, Doc. You just sit still. But he's a soul winner and I'm for him.

I'll tell you what, he lives in sin. He eats bacon and pork chops and pork roast and bologna and all that. But if he's a soul winner, I'm for him.

And there's Dr. Binning. Look at him. You can see him.

He said the other day, he said, you know, he said, in our New York tournament at the college, we ought to have a big life size picture of me. I said, which? Big or life size? He's three foot ten. The other day, a man that owns a carpet company was out at the college.

He was giving a bid on laying the carpet, I guess. Owns a carpet company. And Dr. Binning's asking if he were saved.

He called me on the phone, Doc, and said, for the highest praise of the Lord, I just won the fellow to Christ who owns a carpet company. And I think I'll just start taking him then. You know, out of the heaven, old scrawny limb has a peach on it and a beautiful limb, doesn't have any peaches on it.

Don't you recall when the Israelites got to Promised Land, and the Lord said to them, said, cut out all the trees, but don't mess with the fruit trees. Don't mess with the fruit trees. As long as there's a tree bearing fruit, don't cut it down.

And I'm not going to cut down any fruit trees. The fellow wins more souls than I do. I'm not going to cut him down.

He's a fruit tree. I'm not going to mess with the fruit trees. And look at John Colston.

God bless him. He just woke up. He doesn't even know what I preached on tonight.

Dr. Evans punched him when I started down the line, and said, he'll be to you after a while. And John said, wake me up when he gets to where he gets to me. He just woke up.

He waddles when he walks. And he's the cutest thing running, looking at him from the back while he's running. He really, honestly, is one of the cutest things that ever lived.

But he spends three tanks of gasoline in his car every week, just out running down people trying to serve the Lord and get the job done for God. Look at Dr. Evans. I'm sorry, look at him.

He used to be a paratrooper. The night he almost got killed. He told his wife he's going to be at 1230 on Saturday.

She thought he meant 1230 noon. He meant 1230 in the morning. During the night, Friday night, he went home, the doors locked.

He tried to break in. There she stood with a gun pointed right at him. He almost had a red shirt too, you know.

And somebody came in the other day and said, sometimes he loses temper. No, he hasn't lost it. He's still got it.

He's still got it. I'll tell you one thing about him. He's a fruit tree and I'm not going to cut him down.

Take Dr. Evans. Only God could love a fellow to wear a suit like he's got on tonight. I don't like PhDs anyway.

Earn a PhD. It'll be a sin. They'll all be out sewing instead of learning all that stuff.

God bless him. He's a sew winner. Mrs. Evans and Dr. Evans bring people down this aisle again and again and again.

So I'm for him. That's the kind of people who are friend of God. Look at here.

Here's a PhD over here. So the Hilton down here can't even write his name. But they can both be a friend of God.

Look at a fellow with a physique as well built as mine. Look at there, to a fat slob like Sully. But anybody can be a friend of God.

Isn't it an amazing thing that the smallest little lady out here, the little widow who lives alone, can't get the window unstuck. And she, a little lady, I wanted a Jesus, live on the north side of heaven. And I went over to see her one day and she wasn't home.

And I asked somebody where she was. She was a member of this church. She was nearing 90.

They said she's down at Miner's Department Store. I got in my car. I said, what's she doing there? And they said she's keeping cool.

I said, what? They said, you'll find her just inside the door at Miner's Department Store. She's keeping cool. I couldn't understand it.

I got in my car. I wanted to see why. I drove down to Miner's Department Store, walked inside, and there she was over here on the right.

And she's sitting there keeping cool on a little box of some kind. And I said, why are you here? And she said, I'm a widow. I don't have much strength.

And she said, I can't open the window. And it's summertime. And there's nobody to open the window at my house.

And she said, the only way, and I have emphysema, and the only way that I could breathe is to get to an air-conditioned place. And she said, I come down. I walked over here on the north side.

I walked to Miner's every day and just sat inside the door to keep cool. I said, God bless you. You're about to keep cool.

And some of us went together and bought an air conditioner for her bedroom. But that little lady can be a friend of God. She can be a friend of God.

Oh, listen, some of the sweetest, dearest Christians I know in this world are in this room tonight. And you couldn't spell much, and you can't write a book. Your name is not on the sign out in front.

And you didn't get the plaque, and your picture won't be in the paper. But I'll tell you what, there's a Father in heaven that knows you're His friend, because you stay by it, and stay by it, and stay by it, and stay by it, and stay by it. And you never, never quit.

And you keep on going. And whatever He asks you to do, you do. And you're just bringing forth fruit, just bringing forth fruit.

But there's a third command here that our Lord says we ought to do. And that command is found in verse 12. This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you.

Now look, how many of you here tonight can love everybody? You could. Maybe you don't, but you could. I can do that.

Can you? Raise your hand. Way up high, way up high, way up high. Come on.

All right, God bless you. Brother Phil says that Will Rogers said he never met, never met a man he didn't like. But he said he never had met Brother Hiles.

And, but, but anybody can love, and anybody can abide in Christ, and anybody can bring forth much fruit. That means that being a friend of Jesus. That means you little ladies back here with graying hairs, you can be a friend of Jesus.

That means you teenagers over here, you can be a friend of Jesus. That means you men that own businesses, you can be a friend of Jesus. That means you fellows that sweep out the place, you can be a friend of Jesus.

That means you folks on the staff, you can be a friend of Jesus. That means you folks out at the steel mill, you can be a friend of Jesus. Jesus said, if you love one another.

Brother Phil, suppose I said, I want to be your friend, but I hate your boy David. Would you accept my friendship? You wouldn't do that. Let me ask you a question.

Do you think that you can be a friend of God and hate any of his children? Huh? Anybody here, anybody in the world you hate tonight? Any of God's children you hate? Then you can't be his friend. Right? Brother Helton, God bless your, your children. You're going to go to Mayo Clinic this week with one of your girls, and a couple of them, right? And precious girls.

I drive down the street, down Calumet Street sometimes, and Brother Helton honks, and those little girls get so excited, and they get in the back window. And, and I get excited too, by the way. And we wave and throw kisses, you know.

If we were closer, we'd do more than throw them too, I'll tell you for sure. But, Brother Helton, not Brother Helton and I, but, he just doesn't move me very much. But, Brother Helton, suppose I said to you, I'm your friend, buddy.

And that little girl of yours is not well in your family. She walked up, and I said, get out of my way. And I did like you.

And I just kicked her aside. I couldn't be your friend. You'd say, hold it, preacher.

You're going to have to love my children if you are my friend. And the Heavenly Father looks down, sees all the churches bickering and criticizing each other, and all the preachers sitting in hamburger joints talking about each other, and all the criticizing of God's people. And the Lord says, you can't be my friend.

Yeah, you can be saved, but you can't be His friend unless you love His children. Now, you'll forgive me, but I'm going to love all God's kids. Now, all God's kids don't love me.

And sometimes I'm afraid it's because I'm not too lovable. But I'm going to love all His kids. I'm not going to sit in judgment against God's kids.

You know why? I want to be His friend. I want the Lord to look down and say, well, Jack's my friend. Let me ask you a question tonight.

Any of God's kids you don't love? Huh? Well, yes, I can't stand her. Her dog got in my flower bed. If she's one of God's kids, you can't be a friend of God unless you love her.

You'll stay for the house. You don't know my mother-in-law. Well, that's the only exception.

You can't hate your mother-in-law and still be a friend of God. No. But do you know what she did to me? I'll tell you, she spread rumors about me all over the church.

You can't be a friend of God unless you love her. Well, she stole my boyfriend. Well, why don't you feel sorry for her? Send her a sympathy card.

I hate her. And you can't be a friend of God. You preachers visiting tonight, some of you young preachers from Hiles Anderson College, you can't sit around hamburger joints and talk about other preachers.

I was in a meeting not long ago with some of the biggest preachers in America. And one of them started talking about a preacher. And by the way, what he said was true.

I think the preacher, he talked about what had done something wrong. And these preachers, some of the biggest preachers in America, said something ill about a preacher who loves God and believes the Bible. And after just a moment, I stood up and they said, where are you going, Dr. Hiles? And I said, I'm leaving.

And they said, why? And I said, I'm not going to sit in a meeting ever where one of you men's name is brought up. I want you to know I'll defend you in case somebody brings your name up and starts to criticize you. I want every one of you men to know I'll defend you.

And I said, if you know that, I must defend the brother that's been spoken against in this meeting today at noon. Now I said, either we don't talk about him in an adverse vein anymore, or I'm walking out of this meeting and I don't plan to come back. I'm just not going to be a part of that.

Why? Because he's God's kid. That's why. I don't love God's kids.

I can't be his friend. I want to be a friend of the Lord. I want to be a friend of Jesus, and I can't be a friend of Jesus and hate his children and not speak to his children and talk about his children.

I'm not going to do it. I want to be his friend. Don't you recall Abraham? Now, think about this for a minute.

Abraham was a friend of God. Find some time in Abraham's life where he ran down another Christian. Find it.

Oh, Saul and Barnabas got into a fight one time, and thus, find some place for Abraham. Well, you see, Lot and Abraham had a falling out. No, they didn't either.

Lot's herdman and Abraham's herdman had a falling out, but Abraham did everything he could to make peace. He said, choose what you want, the land you want. And Lot chose the well-watered plains towards Sodom, and Abraham took the barren land where nothing would hardly grow.

Abraham was a man who loved the children of God. For 14 years we've been in this church, and God has blessed us, and I believe this with all my heart. I think one reason God has blessed us so much, folks have cussed us, but we've tried not to cuss back.

Folks have talked about us, we've tried not to talk back. There are some schools in this area where our name is Mudd, but their name is not Mudd. I spoke one day at the Moody Bible Institute, and I'm not saying that's one of them, but I spoke one day at the Moody Bible Institute, and when I got through speaking, I had to take the fast way out, and I went down to the boiler room.

I don't know how I got down there, but I was trying to find the fast way out, and I got behind a couple of Moody kids, students, preacher boys, and they were talking about me. I'm sure they were the only two people in the whole world talking about me that day, but they were talking about me. And one said, what do you think about Hiles? And boy, I was ready to listen in.

Here's a chance. And he said, I don't know. He said, I guess I've heard him criticized more than any other man on earth.

And then he said, but I never have heard him criticize anybody that loves God, believes the Bible. Don't misunderstand me. I'm not talking about yoking up with liberals.

I'm not talking about the folks that don't believe the virgin birth and us get together for some great citywide meeting, as my pastor used to say, where all the Coons, Kikes, and Catholics get together and have a big citywide meeting and break down all the barriers. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about God's blood-bought, born-again people who all love each other.

That's what I'm talking about. And you can't be a friend of God unless you do. I hate to say it, but you can't not like me and be a friend of God.

And I have to like you, too, and if I can like you, you bet you're going to like me. One day he walked out here not long ago, and she said, I just can't stand you. And I said, honey, you're not the easiest person to love in the world yourself, and you're not one of my favorite people, but I love her.

I love her. I have to. Why? She's one of God's kids.

She's one of God's kids. I want to be a friend of Jesus. There's so many things I want for you.

I want us to have, I'm tired of seeing 6,700 in Sunday school back there. I'm tired of seeing 6,000 and 7,000. I'm ready to see 9s and 10s and 11s and 12s.

Amen? But there's something I want more than I want that. I want that 6,700 and 11 people back there to be solid from the ground up. I want you to be the kind of Christians about whom our Lord can say, He's my friend.

I want to grow the kind of Christians that walk with God and abide in Him and bring forth much fruit and have learned to have the love of Christ in their hearts. That's what I want for you. I want you young people.

God knows I pray for you. I cry more over you. This week I have prayed, and I got in my motel room in Decatur, and I said, Oh God, this week I called a certain young lady by name.

I said, if she doesn't get right this week, she's going to go to the devil. I know it. Dear God, she's got to get right.

I called another one. And I said, Dear God, please, that one sweet girl grew up in our church, used to come to my office as a little girl and look in wide-eyed and ask my advice, and now she's gone off. By her own admission, she's not been living right, been living in sin.

I paid her way to camp. I found out she wasn't going to go, and I paid her way myself. As she walked out the door, I said, Oh God, this week, it may mean the difference between being a sweet, dedicated Christian and living in sin and a wrecked and ruined life.

Oh God, salvage that young lady. I want you more than I want life itself. I want you to be people who walk with God.

I got a letter last week. A fellow said, Do your folks worship you? I wish he could read my mail. I got a letter the other day in Docketown.

A fellow wrote me from over here in Illinois. He said, I saw your picture in a sword and had hair on your head. I said, It must have been a high school graduation picture.

By the way, Brother Camel, if all that hair is yours, I hate you. Nobody ought to have that much hair. Selfish, won't share it.

I said to Bill Harford the other day, I said, I ain't got much of him. It's all mine. He said, Mine will be all mine for three more payments too.

But a fellow wrote me and he said, he said, Yeah, he said you're a deceiver. He said, You got your picture in the sword of the Lord. It's got hair on the top of the head.

The truth is you're almost bald headed. He doesn't know how bad bald head I am. I only have two hairs.

They're both 14 feet long. I just weave them in and out, in and out, in and out. I don't want Elmer Towns making fun of me, Brother.

He'd just love to have as long a hair as I've got. But I'm really a two-haired hippie is what I am. But I, I just keep it all on top.

The Bible told the ladies not to be adorned with plaited hair, but didn't say a thing about men. And a fellow wrote me a letter and he said, Hey, he said you're a deceiver. He said that picture was taken years ago.

I wrote back and I said, no, it was taken just a few months ago, less than a year ago. But I said, the truth is I am a lot more bald since I, since, than I was then. And I said, perhaps the reason I've lost so much of my hair in the last year is letters I get from people.

But I, I get a lot of letters. But this fellow wrote me and said, Brother Hiles, he said your folks worship you. I want you to love me.

God knows I do. And I, I want you to stand beside me and I want you to love me. And I want you to be for me.

And for these 14 years, we've known blessed peace and harmony and sweet fellowship, but God in heaven knows this is true. And everybody that knows me well knows this is true. I don't want you to worship me.

I appointed you for 14 years to him. And you know, that's the truth. And I want you to love me, but I want you to love him more.

And I want you to follow me, but I want you to follow him more. I want to have a church full of people who love God, who give everything to God. Let it all on the altar.

Say you can have it all. All of me you can have. My money, my life, my time, everything I own.

It's yours. Let God have it all. That's what I want you to be and have.

God knows it is. Just all on the altar, dear Jesus, Master, I hear thy call. Somewhere I know thou canst use me.

I must surrender my all. I want you to be his friend. I want you to get to heaven.

And I don't want the Lord to say, who are you? I want the Lord to say, that's my friend. That's my friend. I'll be a friend to him.

He was my friend. They laughed at him. He was praying on the side of the hill, Gethsemane.

I can see that little hill. He was praying in that garden. And Judas came and placed the dastard betrayal kiss upon his brow.

And they led him away as a common criminal. And they took him to the high priest and on to Herod, and on to Pilate, and on to Herod, and back to Pilate. And they stripped him down to his waist and took the cat of nine tails and laid it across his back.

He did that for me. Then they took a tree and cut it down, made a cross of it and placed that tree upon his wounded back. Now Isaiah said you couldn't even tell it was the back of a human being or the body of a human being at all.

He did it for me. Then he bore that tree on his back up Golgotha until he bent beneath the load. And he did it for me.

And then they laid him on that tree and took nails and spikes and put them in his hands and feet. And he did it for me. And then they took the cross and lifted it up and put it in a hole.

And there he was hanging a public spectacle. And he did it for me. He's my friend.

A friend that sticketh closer than a brother. There is not a friend like the lowly Jesus. What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear.

And then they plucked his beard. He did it for me. The dogs licked his wounds.

He did it for me. They backhanded him and slapped him and said, if you are the Christ, come down from the cross. He took it for me.

Here is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the King of Glory. And yet he has no throne but a cross. He has no crown but a crown of thorns.

He has no scepter but a barred walking stick. He has no royal robe but a soldier's overcoat. He has no subjects but a jeering mob.

He did it for me. And finally, after he had taken the suffering like no man ever suffered, the worst thing that ever happened to him happened. The Father looked down and saw him bearing our sins and turned his back on the Son.

And Jesus cried, my God, my God, why is thou forsaken me? And the Father had turned his back upon him. He did it for me. About three o'clock in the afternoon, he cried, it is finished.

They took his body and wrapped it in linen, laid it in a borrowed tomb. He did it for me. He was my friend.

And tonight at the right hand of the Father, he sits pleading my case. He's doing it for me. He's not ashamed to call me his brother.

I want to be his friend on earth. Brother Fisk, I want folks in the Hamlin to know I'm his friend. I said to the Lord before I walked in this room tonight, I know I'm stubborn, but I've never, never turned my back on Jesus.

One time, and you know it, I've tried to stand before him and I've tried to exalt him. I know I'm hard-headed and I know I think I'm the only one right. And I know I've made mistakes, but for 14 years, in fact, this ends my 14th year as pastor of this church.

For 14 years, I've made mistakes. I wish I could take some days back. Wish I could take some words back.

But I said, dear Lord, you know it's true. I've tried to be a friend to Jesus. I have.

I haven't always succeeded, but I've tried to be his friend. Let us tonight, let us look at the cross and say, oh Jesus, if you would do that for me, I'll abide with you. I'll bring forth much fruit and I'll love all your kids.

I'll do your commandments. I want to be your friend, our heavenly Father. I wish I could do better.

I wish I could have the tongue of William Jennings Bryan or Robert G. Lee, but I don't. But dear God, I can be your friend as much as they can. I wish I had the tongues of angels, but I don't.

But help me to be your friend.

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