

## Audio Teaching Sermon

## Message #9

## Friends Obey His Commands

## [ A Intro – Pastor Jefferson 0:00 thru 1:34 ]

Hello friends. This is Pastor Jefferson coming to you once again. This is **part 9** of the continuing audio teaching sermon series. Welcome to an in-depth Bible teaching method that allows God's Holy Spirit to impart the Knowledge of God from out of the mouth of Jesus straight to your ear. In **Part 8**, we were discussing the details surrounding the crucifixion of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ. While the world as controlled by Satan would have you see a weak and small man being executed after making claim to being the Son of God, the Truth is Jesus was a most impressive man who would not be killed by the Romans. Instead, He gave up His life in a staggering display of the most incredible love and courage imaginable. I've long held that true love is not shown by what one says, but rather by what they do. The Bible defines the word **love** as '**demonstrated commitment.**' I will tell you that words themselves are tawdry cheap, most often driven by what proves to be nothing more than fleeting emotion and transitory sentiment. And that is never how God conducts His business. With that in mind, please open your Bibles now to **John 15:13**.

## [ B Greater Love Than This 1:34 thru 3:12 ]

As I like to do, I am going to read this verse directly from out of the Greek, using a word-for-word approach. It is Jesus speaking to His disciples, teaching us some of the wonderful truth of God's Word. He says, <sup>1</sup> "Greater than this love no one has, <sup>2</sup> that One the life of Him should be laid down <sup>3</sup> for the friends of Him." While you might not have realized it, Jesus was in actuality issuing a prophecy for Himself. He knew that He was destined for the cross. Hence Him saying, "Greater than this love no one has," The word we see for **greater** is **MY-zone-ah** and translates to '**something of significant size, importance or intensity.**' In the New Testament it often is used to emphasize the magnitude of God's works. Just as in the last sermon, where we spoke about Jesus shouting out in a loud voice, the word here for **greater** shares the same root word as the word loud. The word we see for **love** is **ah-GAH-pen** and means '**a selfless, sacrificial, and unconditional love.**' It is the highest form of love, frequently associated with the love of God for humanity. **ah-GAP-eh**, the root word for **ah-GAH-pen** is not based on emotions or feelings but is instead an act of the will, characterized by a commitment to the well-being of others.

[ **C** Jesus Laid Down His Life 3:12 thru 5:01 ]

Thus, the love Jesus as demonstrated towards humanity, no one has a greater love than that. And while others can certainly give their life for another, their love can never equal the love of Jesus, as no one else was the sin-free Son of God. Once more, this phrase is yet another way of indirectly stating there is but one way to God the Father, and it's through the validated love of Jesus. The verse goes on to say, "that One the life of Him or to phrase it in more modern terms "that one's life (of Him) -meaning Jesus "should be laid down for His friends." The word we see here for **life** is **sigh-KEN** and translates to 'the life force that animates the body.' It means the life of an individual, a human being. This word is a close relation to the word the Bible uses to state that Jesus **yielded up His life**. The word used for **laid down** is [2] **THEY-ya** and it means 'to place or to set.' It is used to convey an act of intentionally placing or setting something or someone in a specific place. It emphasizes the intentionality and authority behind such actions and decisions. This word is only used twice and in the other place it is talking about Jesus placing His enemies under His feet. Thus, the decision of Jesus to surrender His life bore the marks of being willingly intentional and with the full authority of God Almighty.

[ **D** Who Are the Friends of Jesus? 5:01 thru 6:31 ]

So, we see that Jesus laid down His life for His friends. The word we see for **friends** is [3] **PHI-lon** and means 'a friend or the act of being friendly.' But the word is actually derived from another Greek word for love, **phil-LEH-oh**, which means 'to have affection for.' In this case it portrays the idea of a friend who is dearly loved. It implies a close, personal relationship characterized by mutual affection and care. As you can see, Jesus expects us to make the effort to create a bond with Him. He already proved by His actions that He loves us. We need to reach a place where we come to likewise love Him—and not just for what He can do for us. Unlike **ah-GAP-pay**, which denotes *unconditional* love, **PHI-lon** emphasizes a bond of friendship and companionship, part of the give and take on a two-way street as it were. Interestingly, this word is used just three times in the Bible and in each case, it is speaking about very close friendships. So, that now begs the question as to who are the **friends** that Jesus is talking about? As God frequently does, the answer to that question resides in an adjacent verse.

[ **E** Those Who Gather Are His Friends 6:31 thru 8:36 ]

Look now in **John 15, verse 14**. Jesus says, <sup>1</sup> “You are a friend of Mine <sup>2</sup> if you do what I command you.” The word we see for a friend as used here, is **PHI-loy**. It is closely related to the similar word seen in **verse 13**. **PHI-loy** is a more personal use of the term and indicates Jesus is addressing each person individually and not en masse. So, only those who are obedient to Jesus’ commands are considered His friend. This goes hand in glove with what we’ve been discussing regarding being either with Jesus or against Him. If we are with Him, remember He said we **gather**. If we are against Him, we scatter. And as we said, the word **gather** was used ‘**to indicate the making or assembling of disciples or bringing lost sheep together.**’ The true friends of Jesus do as He commands. Thus, true friends of Jesus are the ones working to fulfill the Great Commission. Therefore, Jesus is speaking of those who He has already come to know well enough to recommend to His Father in Heaven as being sufficiently educated. Thus, those counted as friends of Jesus are what I describe as “**fully fledged.**” When we are on the road to holiness, we live inside the nest of God’s protection. We receive ample help in our walk towards spiritual maturity. The Holy Spirit is there to both teach us and protect us. We are pupils of the Most-High. That’s what a disciple is. We are gaining strength and adding feathers. When God knows we are ready, we are tested and then indwelt by His Holy Spirit. We are now fully fledged and able to take flight—that being working now as an Apostle.

[ **F** A Slave is Still in Bondage 8:36 thru 10:07 ]

Okay, but Jesus is not yet finished speaking. In **verse 15** He adds additional clarity to His words. <sup>1</sup> “No longer do I call you slaves, <sup>2</sup> for the slave does not know what his master is doing;” When we examine the word for **slaves**, we see the word **DOO-los** and it means ‘**a person who is in servitude.**’ When we look up the word **servitude** we see that it is described as ‘**a condition in which one lacks liberty, especially to determine one’s course of action or way of life.**’ When we have not yet become fully fledged friends of Jesus, He is saying that we are still slaves—that being slaves to sin. When we are yet in the nest, we can still become destined for the **Lake of Fire**, should we elect to make an early exit off the road to holiness. Just as a bird who climbs out of the nest too soon, we too would then have no hope. Our eternal destiny has not yet been determined. But Jesus also defines the disciple, as a slave who has not yet gained sufficient knowledge of his

master's business. Thus, while we are on the highway to holiness, we have not yet been granted liberty from sin. The word **liberty** is defined as **'the quality or state of being free.'** We are still persons in bondage.

[ **G** **Jesus Will Call Us His Friends** **10:07 thru 11:37** ]

But do not worry. Jesus is not yet finished speaking. But I do hope that you are seeing the incredible precision and cohesiveness with which the Bible is constructed. Continuing on with the words of Jesus in **verse 15**. He says, <sup>1</sup> *"You however, I have called My friends,* <sup>2</sup> *because all the things I heard from My Father,* <sup>3</sup> *I have made known to you."* Can you see the template for **Discipleship Training** Jesus lays out here before us? Jesus is our instructor, and everything which He learned from His Heavenly Father, He has successfully taught to those of us who have become fully fledged. That is the point when we transition from being a slave over to becoming His personal friend. We need to be wary of those who preach that salvation comes at the end of a walk forward during an altar call. Satan is a great deceiver and as the father of all lies, seeks to dupe us in any way that he can. The act of walking down the aisle of your church can certainly be a beginning. But it is only the beginning. And learning everything we can about God does not merit salvation all by itself. This is why Jesus is teaching that only those who successfully build a personal and intimate relationship with Him will be called His friends.

[ **H** **Prayer in the Garden** **11:37 thru 13:02** ]

The Greek word we find for **I have made known** is [**2**] **egg-nor-REE-sah** and it is yet another word only used only twice in the entire Bible. Here it means **'to reveal, to inform or to declare.'** The root for this word is **ghin-NOS-ko** which means **'to know in a personal and intimate sense.'** Once again, everything we learn continues to be both coherent and consistent. Let's look at the other location where this word appears; flip over to **John 17 verses 25 & 26**. This chapter of John reveals what Jesus prayed to His Father while in the Garden of Gethsemane, just prior to His capture by the Romans. He said, <sup>1</sup> *"And I have made known* (here's our word **egg-nor-REE-sah**) *Your name,* <sup>2</sup> *and will continue to do so,* <sup>3</sup> *such that the love you have for Me,* <sup>4</sup> *may be in them,* <sup>5</sup> *and I in them."* It is important to note the timing of His prayer. Jesus went to the Garden following His last supper with His disciples. So, it was likely approaching midnight on Thursday. He would be captured within a short time. At this point Jesus had about nine

hours left before He would be nailed to the cross.

[ **I** Jesus Was Sent From God His Father 13:02 thru 14:37 ]

In **verse 25**, we read that Jesus prayed, <sup>1</sup> *“O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, <sup>2</sup> I know You <sup>3</sup> and these* (He’s speaking of His disciples now) *know that You sent Me.”* The vast majority of humanity does not know God the Father, regardless of the level of their religious activity. Jesus repeats something He’s said many times, *“ I know You.”* meaning His Father, God Almighty. He continues on by stating that His disciples know that it was God, His Father who sent Him down to earth to become the Redeemer of humanity. Jesus keeps inserting critical elements of knowledge within His words which must be understood and deemed as truth before a person can truly come to know who Jesus really is. Even today, the vast majority of religions use the name and personage of Jesus in their teaching. But they refer to Him as merely another prophet and not the Son of God. In fact, God forbids any other religion from claiming that their founder or prime person is the Son of God. Not Buddhism, not Islam, not Hinduism, not Sikhism, none are allowed to make that claim. And in the odd situation when a person has arisen, laying claim to such, God does not allow them to draw breath for very long.

[ **J** The Love God Has for Each of Us 14:37 thru 16:12 ]

Notice now in **verse 26**, where Jesus says, *“And I have made known Your name, and will continue to do so.”* This shows clearly that Jesus was speaking both about the time He spent with His disciples as well as the coming time following His death. These too are prophetic words telling us that He would be resurrected. Had He remained in the grave, Jesus could not have continued teaching. After His resurrection, Jesus did resume His teaching of and making disciples by instructing them of all they could know about God, Himself and the Holy Spirit. We know this due to the presence of the Greek word for **name**, **ON-nom-mah**, as discussed back in **Sermon #4** of this series. Jesus then states His purpose or goal; *“such that the love you have for Me, may be in them, and I in them.”* Can you see that the cause of human redemption continued beyond the death of Jesus and that He would continue His ministry of teaching, just as He did before? The word we see for **love**, as in the love God has for Jesus, which Jesus wants in each of us, is **ah-GAH-pay**, which translates to **‘the unconditional love which God has for humanity.’** It’s the love which Jesus displayed when He surrendered up His life for us on Calvary’s cruel hill.

[ **K** Brought to Full Maturity 16:12 thru 17:33 ]

The fact is that the demonstrated commitment displayed by God Almighty, by having His Son die for the sins of humanity, proves there is no higher love than that. God wants the love He has for His Son to be inside each one of us, and so have Jesus inside of us as well. And there is a telling result of this love. Open your Bible now to **John 17:23**. It is still Jesus praying and reads, <sup>1</sup> "I am in them, <sup>2</sup> and You are in Me, <sup>3</sup> that they (disciples of Christ) <sup>4</sup> may exist <sup>5</sup> in full maturation as one, <sup>5</sup> so that the world may know that it was You who sent Me <sup>6</sup> and loved them <sup>7</sup> even as you love Me." The word we see for **full maturation** is [1] *teh-tel-lie-OH-men-oi* and means **'to bring to completion, to make perfect, or to achieve fruition.'** This is yet another word only seen this one time in Scripture. It conveys the idea of bringing something to its intended goal or state of completion—that being disciples to the point of having a mature personal and intimate relationship with Jesus.

[ **Z** A Few Final Thoughts 17:33 thru 18:53 ]

The one thing I see which is consistent across the whole of this ministry is that those persons who enroll in **Discipleship Training 101** quickly become very excited about the information they are learning, or they simply quit, usually around **lesson 3**. And for those who stick with it and complete **Volume 1**, they all begin to share the same viewpoint on the information as contained within the pages of the Bible. The further along in the training they progress, the more harmonious their beliefs, attitudes and views of Scripture become. My experience with other religious settings equates to the Biblical wild West, where divergent dogma is the norm. Everyone seems to have a different opinion on what Scripture is saying. The reason for the change with this type of teaching is that all true disciples share the exact same instructor—**Jesus Christ**. And Jesus uses the characteristic of unity and harmony to show the world that we are truly unified in Christ. **Until next time my beloved, this has been Pastor Jefferson, speaking in God's Holy name and for His glory alone. Amen**