**Friends / Name above All Names**

Object lesson: Have kids walk with you. Have one speed up and another slow down. When a large gap develops share a bible verse with the others. Call everyone back together and ask the two, out of step, what they learned.

You have to stay in step with Jesus. If you try to do things on your own & in your own strength you will fall out of sync and find yourself far away and missing out on God’s blessing. (Do you walk in front of or behind your friends or do you do you walk side by side)

Philippians 2:5-8: In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Jesus was God but he took the lowly form of a servant while here on earth

When I think of Christ as a servant it always brings the picture of Christ, the King of all Kings, washing the feet of his disciples. His disciples could not understand what was going on. This was supposed be there next King. He was supposed to lead them out from the Roman’s oppression but now he was on the floor washing their feet. How could they respect someone who is washing their feet?

How would you feel about voting for the Next President of the United States knowing he was the guy who used to pick up your trash? You would have a hard time respecting him. That is why Peter objected.

Jesus said in John 13:7 “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.”

Little did his disciples know at that time that Jesus was much greater than they ever imagined. It all started making sense after he rose from the dead and they started looking back over all the things he had said and done. They probably remembered how he had washed their feet and said:

John 13:15 "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done”

Shortly after washing their feet, Jesus took the role of being a servant to the next level by dying on the cross for us. Think about that: The creator of the universe died on a Cross, a horrifyingly brutal death, meant for criminals, and he did it for you and me.

Jesus told a Parable in Luke

Luke 20:9-19: He went on to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. 10 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11 He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. 12 He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out. 13 “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.’ 14 “But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

If this was your vineyard what would you do? Would you show love towards the tenants? Would you give your life for these people?

Jesus told this parable before his death. He knew that the people had rejected every attempt his father had made to reach them (Sending the Prophets). He knew He was going to be rejected by many and he knew that the only way to save us was to die on the cross.

Bottom line is: **Christ choose to die for an uncaring world**

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this that one would lay down his life for his friends.

I always find it amazing that this verse refers to us as friends. It seems like it should say “Greater love has no one than this that one would lay down his life for his enemies” because that is actually what Christ did. He died for an uncaring, unloving, self-absorbed world. This really brings meaning to the phrase “with friends like you who needs enemies”

But the verse goes on to say

John 15:14-15 -  You are my friends if you do what I command. 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.

So if we follow Christ he calls us ‘Friend’ no matter what we have done in the past he freely accepts us as a friend. If you think about that statement: Our relationship with Christ is not Master / Servant but Friend. That is completely mind blowing. You think about how many people would consider it to be the greatest thing ever to be friends with some Rock star, Movie star or Major Sports figure but **Christ is calling us to be friends with the Creator of the universe** andmost people don’t even care.

The first time around Jesus died to give us a chance to freely accept him because he loved us. God is not forcing anyone to give their life to Christ, He is asking you to come and recognize him as Lord and savior. It is your choice.

In the first half of this verse we see Christ as the humble servant calling us Friend But let’s now go back and look at the second part of the verse in Philippians:

**PART 2**

Philippians 2:9-11: Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is **above every name**, that at the name of Jesus **every** knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and **every** tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father!

Now we see Christ the King in which **every** knee will bow!!!

In any fight or war someone loses and in the end they have to submit to the authority of those who have won the battle.

When I think about this I can see a picture of some big kid holding a little kid down telling him “Say I won, Say it”. In this case the little kid will be those who did not freely accept Christ when they had the chance and saying “I don’t believe!” and the big kid is God saying “You will believe, because every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that my Son Jesus is Lord.”

I am a big fan of “The Lord of the Rings” and In the book/movie we have a scene were Sauron (the bad guy) is launching the final stages of his conquest of Middle-earth, and Théoden, King of Rohan, the good guy, rallies his forces to help defend the city of Gondor from the looming threat. In this seen the king is in front of his army leading the charge with all his loyal subjects behind him. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POdknqszMDY>)

Now this scene is not realistic with the king riding out in front of his army to war. Now days when a country goes to war the leaders are shuffled in to underground bunkers where they hide till the war is over letting all their subjects fight for them. But even in the old days the king usually stayed protected at the back to plan out the strategy.

There was even a case in the bible where David, the king, stayed home during a war and ended up getting in trouble with Bathsheba when he should have been there with his men.

In the case of Jesus Christ, our King, he fought the first battle alone; He had no one by his side as he went to the cross. He gave his life for a world where no one really cared and he gave it willingly. But the Bible tells us the fight is not over for Christ will come again at the end of time and this time with a great Army (Revelation 19:11-14)

At the end of scene in the “The Lord of the Rings” you can sense the fear in the eyes of the enemy as the King and his army ride in. I see in this a picture of the end times. Christ will ride in with his holy army and there will be fear in the eyes of those that did not believe because they will realize they have missed the boat. They are on the wrong side.

In Lord of the Rings, at the end of the battle, the King dies for his people.

**But with Christ, he died first, rose from the grave and is coming back to win the final battle.**

When you are out in the world telling others about Christ you will find people who will despise you, make fun of you and even threaten you. Their words have no power but when you speak of Christ your words will cut like a two edged sword straight to the heart.

Never be ashamed of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The name of Jesus is above all names. His name is above all sin, all addictions, all disease, all bondage. His name reigns over your bills, unemployment, bankruptcy, divorce, loneliness, worry, anxiety. Every knee will bow at the name of Jesus. Ever circumstance will bow at the name of Jesus. He can melt the hardest of hearts, break any addiction, heal any disease, raise the dead, and cleanse you from any sin.

Romans 8:31 what then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who (or what) can be against us?

John 14:13-14 - Jesus Said Whatever you ask in my name this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do

Jesus name has the power to save you

Acts 4:11-12 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

A few Facts about Gods Name

1. In Hebrew God’s name was written YHWH. The Hebrews did not use vowels so no one knows how to pronounce it. So there are to guesses Yahweh or Jehovah and it means I AM
2. Jesus name in Hebrew is Yeshua can be pronounced Joshua in Greek it was Iēsous or Jesus and means "God saves."

Even if you have hated Him in the past, Jesus is merciful and can set you free today. Jesus is the name above all names! Give it the Honor and glory it deserves.

Which side are you going to choose?