Some things in Scripture are harder to understand and believe than others. Christ, the Sovereign Creator of all things, the offended Judge who declared the penalty for sin to be death, the One who willingly died to pay that penalty and redeem us from bondage to sin, now calls us His friends. Certainly we would like to consider Him our friend; but are we really His friends? If He were telling someone about His friends, would He include us? Somehow this seems too much—to good to be true; but He insists it is.

**John 15:9-17 (KJV)**, As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. (Emphasis added)

Actually, Christ said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you” (John 15:16). We are His friends by conscious choice on His part, even though He knows more about our inward nature than we will admit to ourselves. He has demonstrated His friendship by the greatest act of love imaginable, when He voluntarily died to save us from our sins. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (v. 13). Furthermore, for His friends He promises, “Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you” (v. 16).

His love for us surpasses human love. “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love” (v. 9) “that your joy might be full” (v. 11). He has “ordained” us as friends so that we “should go and bring forth fruit, and that our fruit should remain” (v. 16). What joy!

There should be a response on our part to His friendship. Almost as a self-evident fact, He states, “Ye are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you” (v. 14), among other things, “that ye love one another” (v. 17). How can we do less?

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