

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 9:10-13**.
- B. Read letter "from Jesus."
- C. This morning we want to talk about the real friend we have in Jesus.
- D. Many Bibles are "red letter editions" meaning that the words of X are in red. The color does not matter, but it should be said that the actions of X are just as important as the words of X.
- E. This morning we want to examine the gospels and see what a friends we have in Jesus, because of the life He led.
- F. In our lesson we want to focus on six major areas of the life of X. These six areas are:
 - 1. He healed the sick (esp. the leper).
 - 2. He mourned for the dead (with those that mourn).
 - 3. He cared about people.
 - 4. He taught people the truth.
 - 5. Forgave people who had sinned.
 - 6. Died to save us from our sins.

I. JESUS HEALED PEOPLE... HE WAS THEIR FRIEND.

- A. Scripture text: Matthew 8:1-3.
- B. No one touches a leper, no one kisses a leper goodnight, no one shakes their hand and says nice to see you, no one hugs a leper to show love.
- C. Experiments with monkeys show that the absence of touch causes severe emotional and psychological problems.
- D. Jesus could have refused to heal this person (the easiest thing to do), He could have just said the words (the easier thing to do), but He did what no one else would do... He touched the leper.
- E. What kinds of people are lepers to us (who won't we touch)? The poor, the dirty, the AIDS victim, etc?

II. JESUS MOURNED WITH PEOPLE... HE WAS THEIR FRIEND.

- A. Scripture text: John 11:35.
- B. In two little words, in this action of Jesus we see an entire sermon that He preached! Jesus knew of their feelings, their sorrow and gave compassion, concern and help.
- C. Jesus could mourn with those who mourn.
- D. On another occasion we see Jesus weeping over the city of Jerusalem. He had such compassion over the plight of the Jews. He cried over the lost and the doomed (Lk. 19:41; Mt. 23:37,38).

III. JESUS ASSOCIATED WITH SINNERS... HE WAS THEIR FRIEND.

- A. Scripture text: Matthew 9:10.
- B. Jesus ate with the outcast and the rejected; with publicans and sinners (Mt. 11:19).
- C. He did not condemn the woman caught in adultery, He was her friend (Jn. 8:1-11).
- D. Jesus had great compassion for the masses who needed leadership (Mt. 9:36).

IV. JESUS TAUGHT THE PEOPLE... HE WAS THEIR FRIEND.

- A. Scripture text: John 4:9-28.
- B. The woman at the well got more than she bargained for! Jesus told her all about her past, how to worship, and about living water. She was so amazed that she forgot the water pot (v28) when she went into town!
- C. The Sadducees and a lawyer asked Jesus questions to trick Him, yet He answered them and then had one of His own! After this no one even dared ask Him anything else (Mt. 22:23-46)!

- D. It is no wonder that the people said that He is unlike any other teacher, for He teaches as one with authority (Mt. 7:29).

V. JESUS PRACTICED FORGIVENESS... HE WAS THEIR FRIEND.

- A. The paralytic was not looking for forgiveness, he just wanted to be healed of his physical condition. Yet, the first thing that Jesus said to him was, "Thy son, your sins are forgiven." (Mk. 2:1-10).
- B. When the woman came and broke the alabaster box of perfume and began to wipe Jesus feet with it and her hair, He pronounced her sins forgiven (Lk. 7:36-50). This act, probably more than any other helped prepare Jesus for Calvary.
- C. Jesus practiced forgiveness under the worst of circumstances:
 - 1. While dying on the cross He asked for forgiveness for the people killing Him (Lk. 23:34).
 - 2. While hanging on the cross, He saved the thief who asked for mercy (Lk. 23:39-43).

VI. JESUS DIED FOR EVERYONE... HE IS OUR FRIEND.

- A. Very simply in the death of X on the cross we see the greatest act of love ever] shown (Jn. 15:13).
- B. We know of our condition and how it can be made right by His suffering (Rom. 5:6-8).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. What a Friend we have in Jesus!
- B. Jesus is a friend who:
 - 1. Touches us with love and heals our infirmities.
 - 2. Mourns with us in our losses and misfortunes of life.
 - 3. Cared enough to eat and associate with publicans and sinners.
 - 4. Taught us from God the things really important in life.
 - 5. Practiced forgiveness even when we didn't deserve it.
 - 6. Died, sacrificing His life that we might live.
- C. To put it very simply Is Jesus your Friend, or are you friends with the world? (Jas. 4:4).
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.

Dear Friend:

I just had to send you a note to tell you how much I love you and care about you. I saw you yesterday as you were walking with your friends. I waited all day hoping you would want to talk with me also. As evening drew near, I gave you a sunset to close your day and a cool breeze to rest you. And I waited, but you never came. It hurt me, but I still love you because I am your friend.

I saw you fall asleep last night and I longed to touch your face. So, I spilled moonlight on your pillow and on your brow. Again I waited, wanting to rush down so that we could talk. I have so many gifts for you. But you awakened late the next morning and rushed off to work. My tears were in the rain.

Today you looked so sad, so all alone. It makes my heart ache because I understand. My friends let me down and hurt me so many times, too.

But I love you. Oh, if you would only listen to me, I really love you. I try to tell you in the blue sky and in the quiet green grass. I whisper it in the leaves on the trees and breathe it in the colors of the flowers. I shout it to you in the mountain streams and give the birds love songs to sing to you. I clothe you with warm sunshine and perfume the air with nature scents. My love for you is deeper than the oceans and bigger than the biggest want or need in your heart.

If you only knew how much I want to help you. I want you to meet my Father. He wants to help you, too. My Father is that way, you know. Just call me, ask me, talk with me. Please, please don't forget me. I have so much to share with you, but, I won't hassle you any further. You are free to call me. It's up to you. I'll wait because I love you!

Your friend,

JESUS