

Jesus is My Best Friend

Announcements

- **Starting Point** – Sunday, March 4, 5:00 pm at LCC, GCC and SSC.
Help get people in your small group connected in the church by inviting them to attend Starting Point.

Warm-up

What was the most interesting nicknames among your friends when you were growing up? Why were those nicknames given?

Word & Application

Nicknames endear us to others, draw us closer to them and possibly describe a favorite attribute. Just like many of us have nicknames or know people with nicknames, Jesus was also given a “nickname” that is descriptive of who he is.

Read Matthew 1:21-23. In these verses we see that one of the nicknames assigned to Jesus was *Immanuel*, which means “*God is with us.*” This means that God is not far off, but that he wants to be up close and personal with us.

How do you think this description of Jesus differs from most people’s perception of who he is? Why do you think most people think this way?

When we read in scripture, we find out that Jesus did not start his public ministry until he was thirty years old.

Read Hebrews 2:17-18. Based on these scriptures, why do you think Jesus waited until he was thirty years old to begin his public ministry?

Jesus wanted to make sure that when you come to him in prayer he is able to understand and empathize with what you are going through. Jesus understands everyday life situations. He was raised in a family with four half-brothers and sisters and probably experienced a lot of the challenging dynamics of family life. He spent at least 18 years of his life as a carpenter where he undoubtedly dealt with unhappy customers and tough economic times and other common daily challenges.

Read Hebrews 4:15. How does knowing that Jesus dealt with everyday life situations just like we face change your view of how he can relate to you? How does this perspective help us when we face life’s challenges?

Read Isaiah 53:3-5. This specific prophecy, or forecast, about Christ’s suffering was amazingly written 700 years before Christ was born. He understood pain. Though we center in on Christ’s physical suffering on the cross, he experienced emotional pain and rejection long before this.

Lately, has it been more comforting to you knowing that Jesus experienced physical pain or emotional pain? Why?

Read John 15:15. Just like the disciples, Jesus wants you to make him your best friend. Do you feel more like a servant of Jesus or his friend? What can we do to develop your friendship with Jesus?

In what part of your life are you most tempted to give in to discouragement? How does knowing that Jesus understands what you're going through encourage you in the challenging areas of life?

Not only does Jesus understand and empathize with what you are going through, but he also wants to connect with you on a personal level. What do you do to make sure that you stay personally connected to Jesus?

What has God been speaking to you about during this discussion? How has your perspective on your relationship with Jesus changed as a result of our discussion time today?

Prayer

Take time to pray that everybody in your group would begin to develop a personal relationship with Jesus like they have never had before. Also, take time to ask everybody in your group what specific prayer requests they have and also what prayers they have had answered recently.