

“One-On-One With God”

John 15:12-17

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Good morning. By now most of you know who I am. My name is Gerald Turley, and my wife's name is Karen; most people call me Jerry. Before I start today's lesson, I would like to say: I am NOT a professional preacher. I have preached perhaps 15-20 times, I'm not sure. The biggest congregation I preached for was about 15. I have not had the privilege to address a congregation as large as this.

I am a little nervous, and if I stumble along the way, I'm sure you will understand. The sermon for today is one I prepared, but I assure you, it is scriptural. If I fall short, I sincerely hope you will address this issue, because if you are not aware of your mistakes, you cannot correct them.

We all have one-on-one relationships with friends and family. These relationships grow stronger as time goes by. We get to know them better, and they get to know us better, and this strengthens our relationships.

This is also true of our relationship with our Savior. But there are two exceptions. Our friends and our family are not always there when we need their help. But, our Lord is always there! Every second, every minute, every hour of the day.

The Lord tells us not to build on shifting sand, but on the rock. Man has built skyscrapers, and with modern technology, he is building higher and higher. But how high can man go?

But, with our relationship with the Lord, how high can we build our skyscrapers? Our relationship with the Lord starts here (BIBLE). This book is a love letter to man. He's trying to show us the great love that He has for all of us. He died for us: What greater love could He should for us! Remember: Love is a two-way street. If we are weak in prayer, we are weak everywhere.

Read your Bible. But there is a great difference between reading your Bible, and studying the Bible. That being said, I'll now get on with today's sermon. I'd like to mention today's sermon was taken from the New Open Bible, New King James Version, Study Edition. The sermon for today: A One-On-One Relationship With God Thru Jesus.

I believe, as Christians, the closest relationship we have is with Jesus. This relationship is closer than that with spouses, family, or friends. I'm sure there are many personal feelings we have that we only reveal to Jesus.

However, in the Old Testament, the closest relationship to God was that between God and Moses. In **Exodus 33:9**, **"...and it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses."** Also, in **Exodus 33:11**, **"So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friends."** Don't we all want to speak to our friends face to face?

In **Exodus 33:18-23**, the Bible records a conversation between Moses and God:

And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

In **Numbers 12:5-8**, the Bible also says:

Then the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. Then He said, "Hear now My words: "If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"

The Lord was rebuking Aaron and Miriam because they spoke against Moses, they did not approve of his marriage to an Ethiopian woman. He (the Lord) severely punished Miriam by turning her into a leper. Because of Aaron's remorse, Moses cried out to the Lord, asking that Miriam be healed, and after seven days the Lord healed Miriam.

In the Old Testament, the Lord gave many visible signs. We now go to the New Testament, where we now have Jesus in human form. There are many passages in the book of John, where Jesus speaks of His love for His friend John. As in **John 19:26-27**, where, ***"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, 'Woman, behold your son!' Then He said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother!' And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."***

Would we trust a loved one to someone other than a friend? In **John 15:12-17**, which is rather lengthy, Jesus uses the word **"friends"** three times in these verses...

This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. This I command you, that you love one another.

At this time, the point I am trying to make here is that we all have a friend in Jesus, and Jesus also had friends—these are one-on-one relationships.

Jesus also said in **John 15:13**, ***"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."*** And what did Jesus do for us?

We now speak to God through Jesus. So, when we pray, how do we do this? I personally talk to Jesus as a friend and tell Him my concerns. This, to me, is a personal relationship, a one-on-one relationship.

I believe we all have our own way of praying. But there is a song, "What a Friend we Have in Jesus." The words say a lot. When we talk to a friend, we are at ease, and we may ask them for their advice or guidance.

Isn't this a personal relationship? And this is the type of relationship we must have with Jesus. As we become closer to Jesus, we will rely on Him more.

It's not always easy to say what we really feel, but I believe as we get closer to Jesus, we become more open and relaxed, then we can truly tell Him what concerns we have, and when we are comfortable with this, we have a real one-on-one relationship with our Lord.

When I was first asked to preach, I felt that I would just take a sermon, of which there are thousands out there, and read it. However, this is not what was in my heart. I could also have stood up here and read Bible verse after Bible verse; however, I hope I have made my point on a personal relationship with Jesus, and how important this is. I sincerely hope that this will motivate you to have a personal, or one-on-one relationship with Jesus.

At this time in our worship, we extend an invitation to those who have fallen away from the truth, and those who have the desire to follow Jesus Christ and be baptized to come forward and let their needs be known. We are here to help and here to teach and walk with the new Christian.

To comment on this lesson: church@fourlakescoc.org