


LOVE VS. LIKE

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Quick Backdrop

Has it ever occurred to you that Jesus not only loves you unconditionally, but He also likes you? It's one thing for Him to love you and give His life for you, but He also really likes you and enjoys spending time with you. We see this in an intimate conversation Jesus had with His disciples in John 14-17, especially one particular exchange in John 15.

1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

As you read this exchange below, notice how Jesus refers to His disciples.


John 15:13-15

¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ 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.

2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

Jesus calls you His friend! That's a big deal. Think about friendship for a minute. Write down three or four things that define a good friendship.

Now write down three or four things that friends do together.

Now compare your friendships with your relationship with Jesus. Which of these best describe your relationship with Jesus:

1. **Deep friendship:** we spend a lot of time together
2. **Casual friendship:** we see each other occasionally and are polite to each other
3. **Acquaintance:** I know who Jesus is but don't know Him very well
4. **Unacquainted:** I've heard of Jesus but don't know much about Him.

3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

Most of us would like to deepen our relationship with Jesus and cultivate that friendship. Of course, the best way to cultivate a friendship is to spend time with that friend and be curious about the things your friend is interested in. Here are some ideas:

1. Jesus said the best way to cultivate friendship with Him is to do His commands. But what are those? The passages below will help you know Jesus' commands.

Matthew 6	Matthew 25:31-46	Luke 10:25-37
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2. Do with Jesus what you would do with any friend: spend time. Go to a park with Jesus and take a walk. Find a place of solitude and read Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
3. Write a note to Jesus expressing how much He means to you.
4. Look at the things you've written down in Taking In Inward above. How can you implement these dynamics and activities of friendship into your relationship with Christ?

Fold or Cut