

## **EVIDENCE OF FRIENDSHIP**

"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, [his plans, etc.] but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." John 15:14,15.

The end of Jesus' earthly ministry was come. During those three and a half years he had uttered truths which served to test his followers, which proved to some a cause of stumbling – to all who were not "Israelites indeed:" – truths which had brought the opposition of the nominal Jewish church, and of which, even some of his followers, had said: "This is an hard saying; who can hear it? and walked no more with him." But now this work of separation was all over; even Judas had gone out, and Jesus and the eleven are alone. He has been telling them some things regarding their new and high privileges, their new relationship toward God about to be purchased by his death, into the enjoyment of which they should enter after he should ascend to the Father, and His work of redemption be recognized as perfect. Then would come the "power from on high" – the Spirit which would endue them with ability to understand spiritual, or heavenly things.

It may have escaped the attention of some that at this time the disciples were not begotten of the spirit, (John 7:39) though they were justified by faith. They were justified human beings, but not begotten new creatures, consequently Jesus' teachings contain little reference to the highest things, except in parables; he explained little concerning the "high calling" of the Bride, but said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." How this

corroborates Paul's statement: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God,...neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. Though justified men, they must be begotten of the Spirit to comprehend things above the human plane.

After telling them of the future unfolding of truth and of his words, he tells them why his revelations are for them, viz.: because he will henceforth treat them as friends and reveal all things to them.

There are two important lessons conveyed in these words of the Master, as applicable to us as to the eleven Apostles: first, the rule by which He judges who are his friends – "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." If we submit our wills completely to his will, thus becoming dead to the world and alive toward God – then he reckons us friends; second, the rule by which we may judge whether he reckons us among this class of special "friends," viz.: If he reveals his work and plans to us, even all things which he has heard of the Father.

Now apply these rules to yourself. If you can say, "Not my will but thine be done;" not my plan of saving the world; not my plan relative to the preaching of the Gospel; not my will regarding the nominal church; not my will regarding myself and what I shall do or be, but "Thy will be done" in all these things, then you are a "friend" in this special sense spoken of by Jesus. Now try the other rule: Have you evidence that you are a special friend? Is the Spirit leading you daily into more and more of an understanding of his words and plan – revealing more and more of the "mystery" kept hid in former ages, and showing you "things to come?" Do you say yes? Very good, then yours is the blessed experience of heavenly wisdom, which at the same time is a proof that you are a special "friend." Continue your consecration, **[R412 : page 8]** continue your sacrifice, and you shall

continue to abide in his love and to have fresh evidences of his friendship by growth "in grace and in knowledge."

If the Word and plan of God are not opening before you: If you are not being led of the Spirit into all truth – if he is not showing you "things to come," (John 16:13.) then it looks indeed as though you were not of the special friends, and it should be your first work to gain this divine friendship by self-surrender – consecration.

All who believe themselves acceptable servants of our Master should look for, and not be satisfied without this witness of the Spirit that they are Christ's friends.

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## **LETTER FROM BROTHER SUNDERLIN.**

### **FORT EDWARD, N.Y.**

"Greatly beloved" brother Russell:

Yours of the 18th came to hand Monday evening, 21st inst. I accept with gratitude the sympathy and love expressed, and I know that you will rejoice with me on account of returning health; in the Lord's good time I have been directed to the remedy ("Compound Oxygen") that is now working great good to me.

I always feel like chiding myself when I begin to be lavish of special praises to God for health, or any of those things that men regard as blessings. It is "Our Father," and sick or well, pain or ease, his infinite all abounding love is the same, and by each and every means, and all his dealing with me, he is "treasuring up his bright designs."

This has sustained me, and though he let me down, down, DOWN, to a lone dreary waste of mind and spirit, where I had no strength, I was able by his grace always to gasp "Thy will be done."

Amen! It must be best; proceed O Lord with thy good pleasure in me, and burn up all the dross.

I thank you and appreciate the kindness that prompted you to send me the medical formula, and the doctor from whom it came also; but it so happened (?) that just before it came I had written to doctors in Philadelphia, regarding my case, and though they gave me no particular encouragement, but said: "We don't see how you live," I had confidence in the OXYGEN, and though I felt as though I could not afford the price, I sent for it. Before it came, I was much worse, and it found me in a direful condition; but it has just raised me right up – no guess-work about it.

One week ago last Saturday, it came about noon. I was so bad that night that it took five or six doses of morphine to quiet me, the next night one, and none since. The third night after it came I slept sweetly without any anodyne.

One week ago, Monday, I could not sit up to have my bed made, but got to one side to have it stirred and regulated – four days after the "Oxygen treatment" came I rode out. At first getting up I hobbled about on crutch and cane – I now walk about the yard a little thus, and can walk about the house with cane only. Of course it is a new strength, a sort of infantile life; but I am thankful for it, while my dear Lord understands that I do not undervalue my sickness and pain and sorrow and darkness and gloom, which though intended for evil by the enemy, is among the "all things" working for good.

I had hoped to finish my last article for "Z.W.T." but shall not be able to, in time for next issue. It is yet hard work to think and write, but I do not now feel the labor of hanging on to life.

With much love to yourself and dear sister Russell, and wishing to be remembered to all yours and ours, I am as ever,

Yours in Christ Jesus,

J. C. SUNDERLIN.

Our readers will be interested in the above. Brother Sunderlin has been in the furnace of affliction for several months and unable to write for the TOWER. (His articles in this number, were written before his illness.) You will all be glad to know of his recovery, though since he has caught cold and got a set-back.

Regarding the remedy he mentions: It is called "Compound Oxygen treatment," and is prepared by at least two firms in Philadelphia, Pa. Thinking that a remedy which has done our brother so much good might be of benefit to others, we wrote to see what terms we could make for our readers.

We have made arrangements by which you can have what are termed "Home treatments," for seven dollars and fifty cents, the usual price of which is from ten to fifteen dollars. You can either address Drs. Feltwell and Fondey, Philadelphia, Pa., saying that you are a Watch Tower reader; or you can send your order to us and we will attend to it for you.

This remedy is specially recommended for Consumption and Nervous Debility and Spinal Weakness. By enclosing stamp for postage, and addressing as above, some printed descriptive circulars will be sent you.

EDITOR.