**Series: Jesus Is\_\_\_\_.**

**Title: JESUS IS A FRIEND OF SINNERS**

**Speaker: Robert Beasley**

 A friend is one who knows all about you and loves you just the same.

Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.

 -Oprah Winfrey

 True friends are those rare people who come to find you in dark places and lead you back to the light.

 Friendship isn’t about who you’ve known the longest. It’s about who walked into your life, said  “I’m here for you”, and proved it.

“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’

 (Luke 7:34)

 "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance:

 Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst."

-The Apostle Paul

(1 Timothy 1:15)

***Luke 19:1-8***

 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.

 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich.

 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus!”

 “Come down immediately.

 I must stay at your house today.”

 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord,

 “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

**Because Jesus is a Friend of Sinners:**

 **-God has time for me.**

 “Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.” (Revelation 3:20)

**Because Jesus is a Friend of Sinners:**

 **-The Truth can be told and forgiven.**

 “If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wrong.” (I John 1:9)

 “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends….” (John 15:13,14)

**Because Jesus is a Friend of Sinners:**

 **-I have a new identity.**

 “You Israel, my chosen, are descendants of Abraham, my friend.” (Isaiah 41:8)

 “Abraham ‘believed God, and he credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham.” (Galatians 3:6,7)

**Because Jesus is a Friend of Sinners:**

 **-I have a new future.**

 “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. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.” (John 15:15,16)

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 For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6)