

A NOTE TO PARENTS

"No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ... This I command you, to love one another."
John 15:15, 17

Jesus distinguishes between servants and friends on the basis that the servant is not in on the master's secrets: he does not know what is in the package he is delivering, or who is this important person to whom he is serving dinner; and it is not his place to wonder. The friend, on the other hand, can freely ask the master of the house, "Who was that? What was in that letter? What are your plans?" The master may reply, "I can't tell you right now;" still, the point remains: a friend is the one who is allowed to ask, and with whom the master may share his dearest secrets.

Jesus tells his disciples that they are no longer servants, but friends, because (through him) the Father has revealed his secrets to them. They know God, not as a distant, inscrutable Lawgiver, but as intimate friend. They are still to obey his commandments (John 15:14), but that obedience has its base in intimacy and love. This promise is for us, as well; but it is an empty one if we do not apply ourselves to fostering that friendship by prayer and obedience. One does not keep a friendship going by never meeting the friend, never telephoning, never trying to please them.

Look over the pictures on the back of this page with your child. Talk about masters and servants and how they relate to each other, and about friends and how they relate. Can a servant become a friend? How? Is it OK for some people to give orders to others? What are other ways people relate—competition, for example? Can friends also be rivals? Is it OK for Christians to want their team to win? Does Jesus expect us to be friends—that is, truly intimate—with everyone we know? What different possibilities can you find in each picture? What can we change about our way of praying and living that will make us better friends for God?

© 1988 by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard. All rights reserved.
THE SUNDAY PAPER, 19 Colony Road, New Haven, CT 06511, USA
203 - 624-2520 • www.the-sunday-paper.com



THE SUNDAY PAPER JUNIOR

Year B
6th SUNDAY
of EASTER

Jesus said, "I am giving you
a new commandment:
LOVE EACH OTHER, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU."

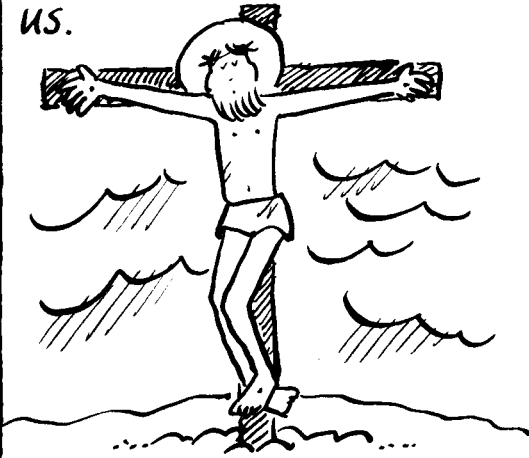
JOHN 15:12



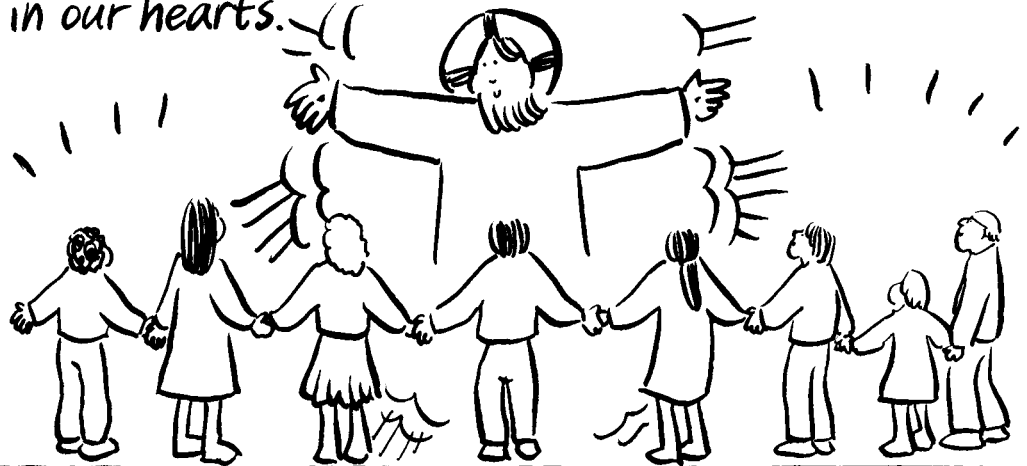
God loves the world that he made.



God sent Jesus to show his love. He loved us so much that he died for us.

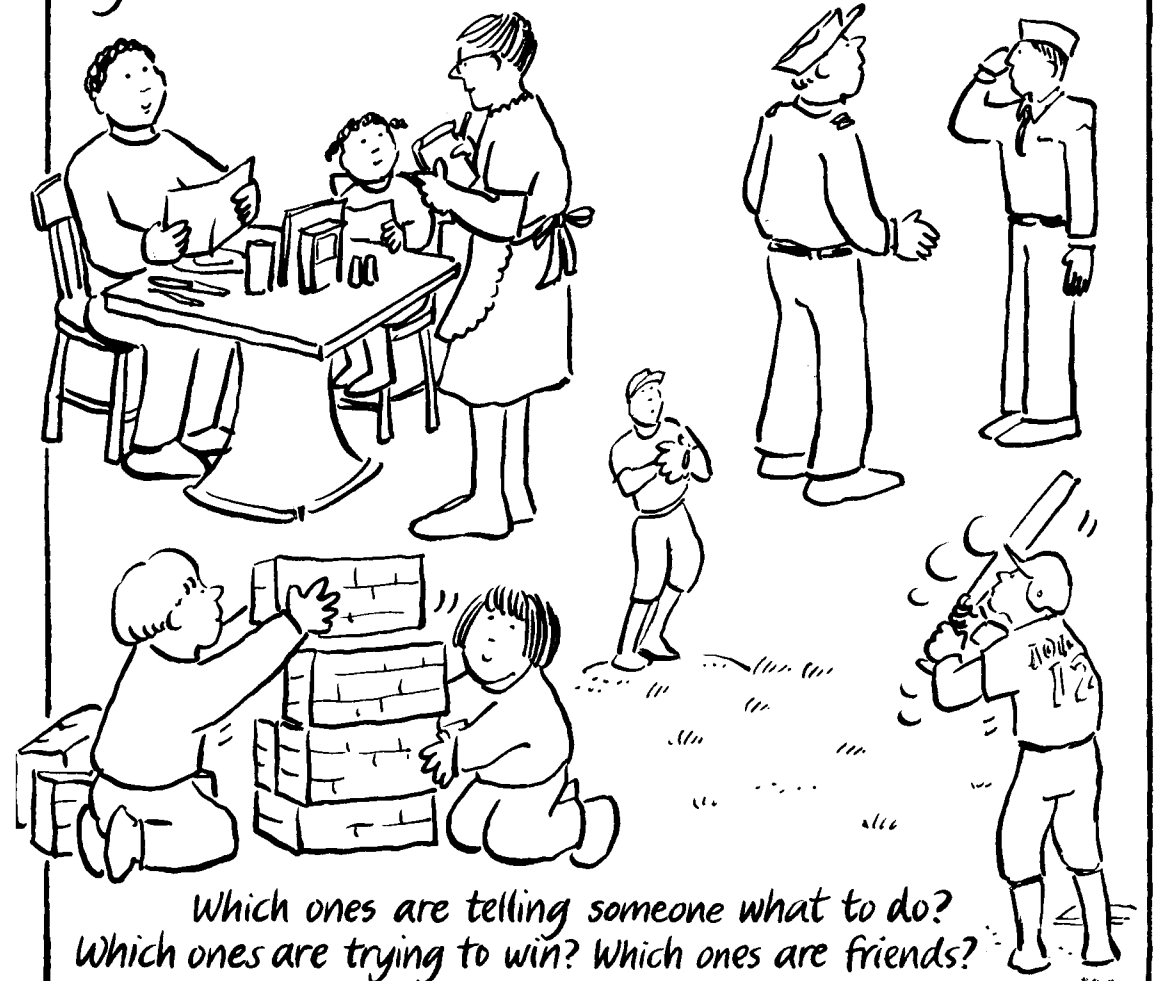


God gave Jesus new life to share with us. He gave us his Spirit to live in our hearts.



We belong to Jesus. We love each other because we know he loves us all.

Jesus said we are his friends. Friends know each other and love each other. A friend does not just do what you tell them. A friend shares ideas. A friend does not only try to be the winner. A friend cares about doing things together.



Which ones are telling someone what to do? Which ones are trying to win? Which ones are friends?