

ΟΙ

'I call you friends.'

Jn 15:15



This is my commandment,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
No one has greater love than this,
to **lay down one's life for one's friends.**

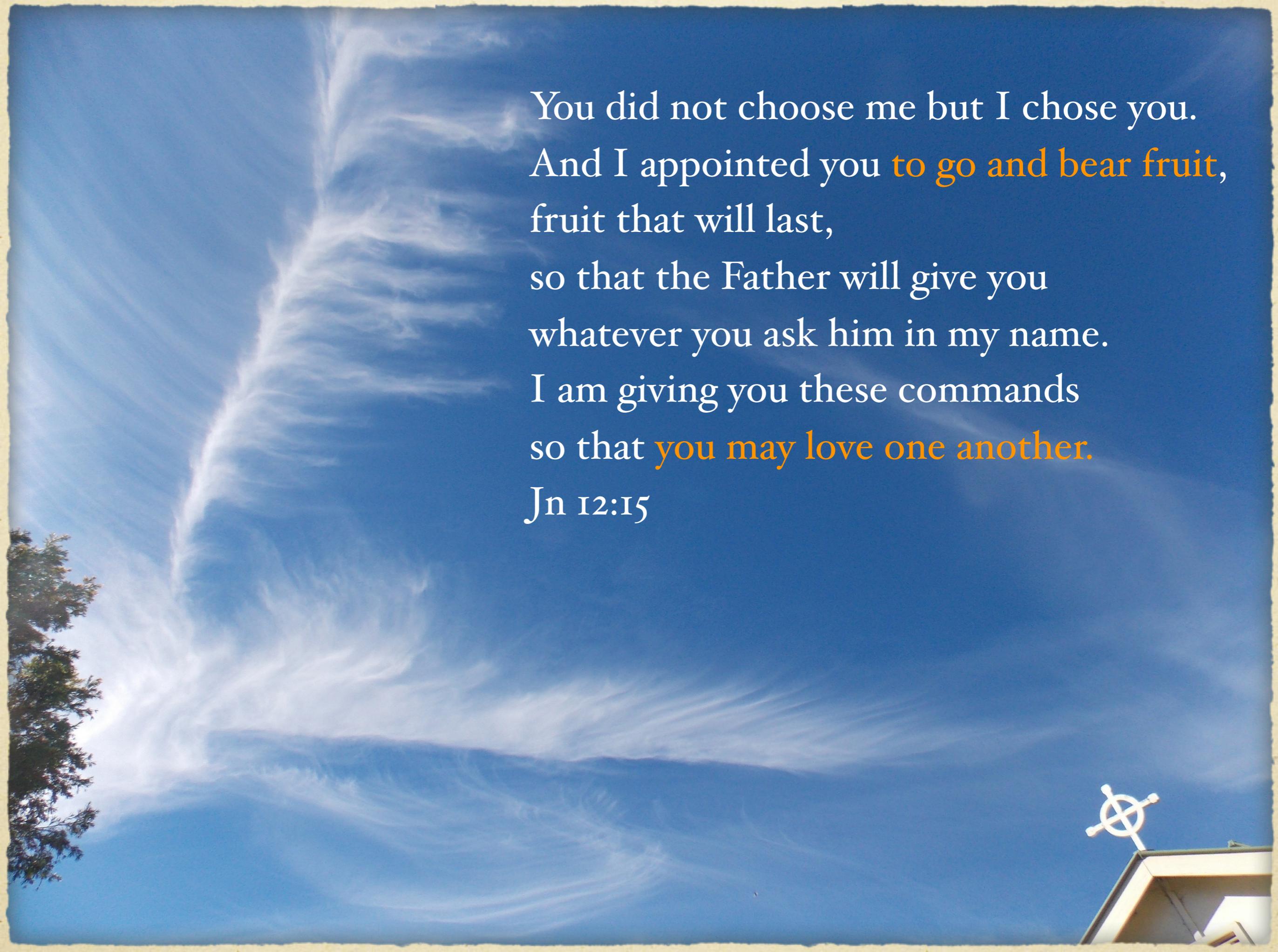
You are my friends if you do
what I command you.

I am not calling you servants,
because the servant does not know
what the master is doing.

I am calling you friends,
because **I have made known to you
everything that I have heard from my Father.**

Jn 12:15





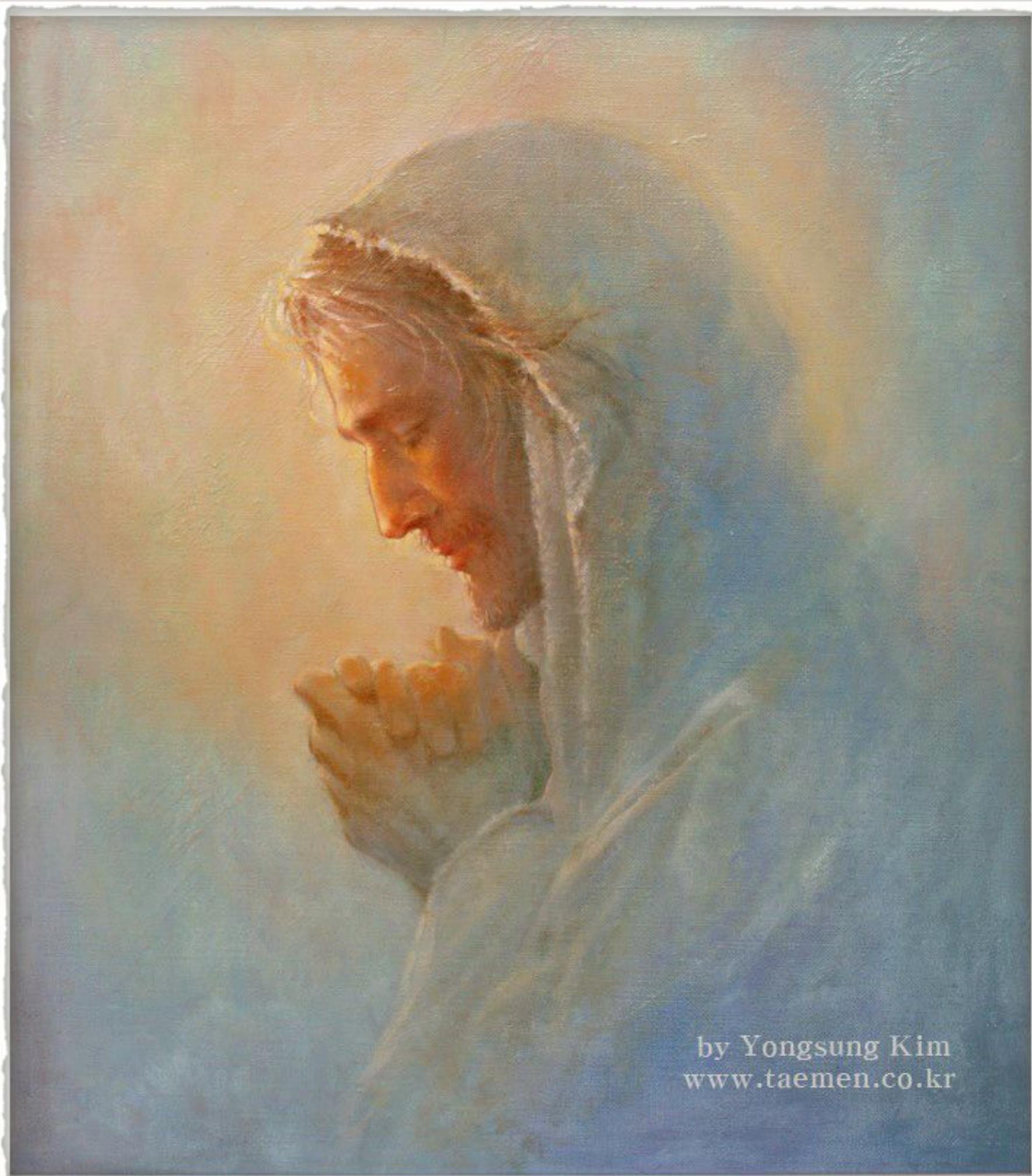
You did not choose me but I chose you.
And I appointed you **to go and bear fruit**,
fruit that will last,
so that the Father will give you
whatever you ask him in my name.
I am giving you these commands
so that **you may love one another.**

Jn 12:15

➤ motif of friendship

- an expression of the love of God we see made manifest in the person of Jesus

➤ - in-dwelling of the Triune God sustaining everything and drawing everything into divine communion



by Yongsung Kim
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Revolutionary nature of Jesus' friendship

- Christian love as friendship

1. from friendship because the other is good
to friendship-love that reveals the
goodness of the other

➤ Aristotle (384-322BC)

- friendship is one of the higher acts of the human soul
- adamant that he will only call people friends where they are mutually recognised as bearing goodwill and wishing well to each other, perfect friendship is contingent on virtue in both partners



Liz Carmichael, Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love

➤ Love creates and reveals goodness

- goodness is not a pre-requisite for friendship
- the outgoing love of friendship cares about the goodness in the other, that of God and the community and even goodness for my sake
- the love of friendship creates personhood, and has an emphasis on the formation of character and the practice of prayer so that character can come to graced perfection

Revolutionary nature of Jesus' friendship

- Christian love as friendship



2. Jesus calls all to be friends, men and women

-Membership was not limited by a persons' race, class or gender.

Both men and women found a place where gender did not impose all the limitations on individual participation that it usually did in the larger society.

Wendy M Wright, Bond of Perfection, Jeanne de Chantal & Francois de Sales,

p 11,12

➤ true friendship reserved for a minority of educated and virtuous males who enjoy and depend on each other's character

-takes great care to elect whom it will love

-partial, exclusive and contingent on worthiness

(unlike the universal love of Christ)

➤ Cicero's "On Friendship" was not a tribute to personal affection but a final attempt to revive democratic networks that rested on shared ideals, on personal relationships to save the failing republic of Rome from monarchy and dictatorship.

The Friendship of Women-The Hidden Tradition of the Bible,
Joan Chittister

As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. Gal 3:27,28

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body.

Col 3:14 NRSV

King James 2000 Bible

And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

We cannot live without love.

St Pope John Paul II,

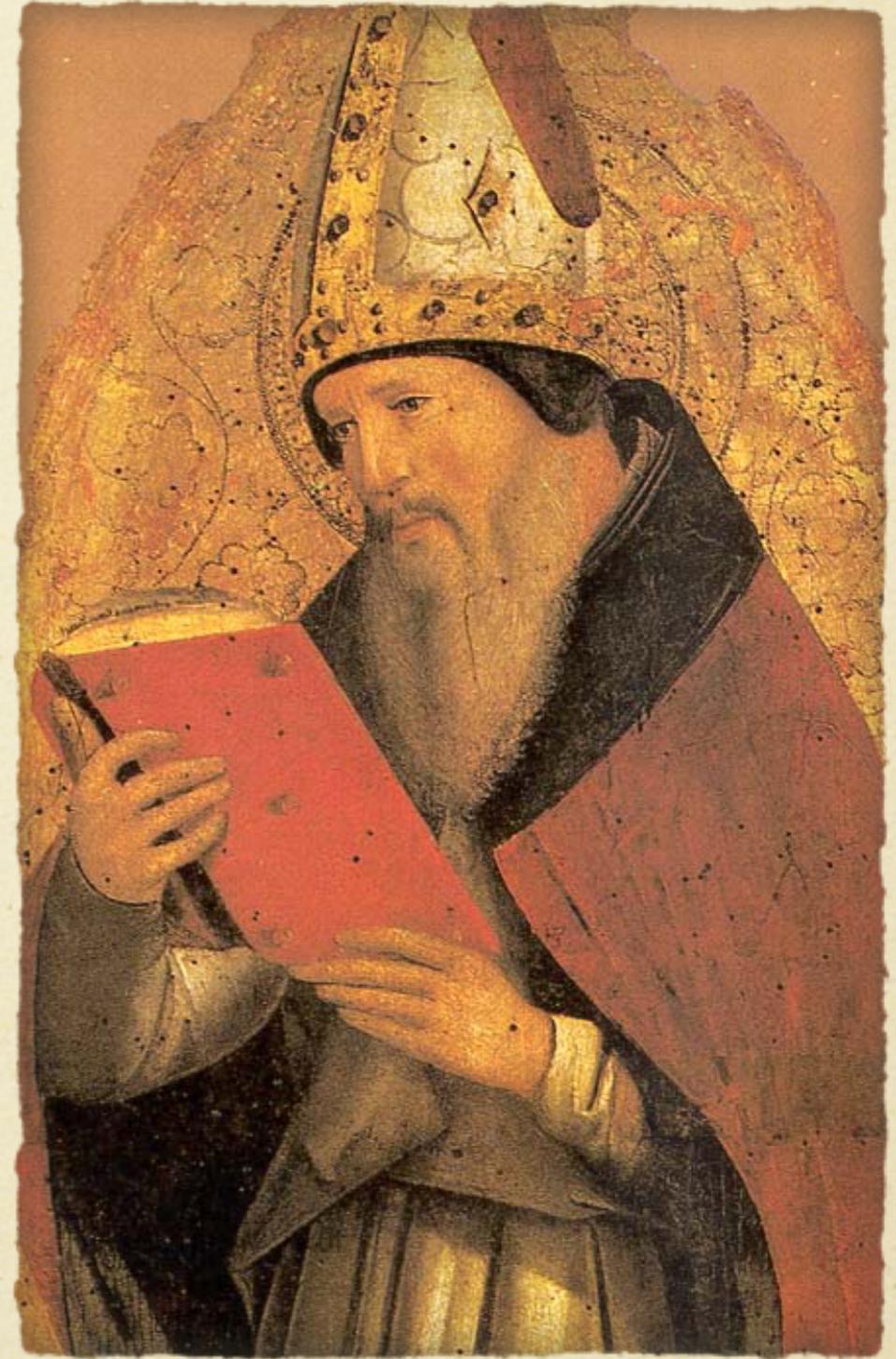
The Redeemer of Man, 10



Friendship with others teach us a great deal about how we might cultivate our friendship with God.

One Spirit was not sent at one time and then a different Spirit at another. Nor is there one love for our neighbours which is entirely different from love for God. There do not exist two kinds of love: we love God with the same love with which we love our neighbour.

Augustine, Sermon 265, 8
the Heart of Holiness, p85



Anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 1 Cor 6:17

Friendship with another person is a holy gift.

Whether is developed between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion. CCC 2347

A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter: he that has found one has found a treasure. Sir 6:14

The Value of a Friend

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.

Ecclesiastes 4:9

We have a natural inclination toward friendship and we are taught by Jesus to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Purify or consecrate our human friendships so that they are genuinely helpful:

1. Seek out those friends who will share our spiritual values.
2. Learn from every human friendship how to be friends with God.

Holiness means being friends with God. So we accept every friendship as a reflection of the kind of friendship God wants to have with us.

Fr Gary Lauenstein CSsR *The Heart of Holiness, Friendship with God and Others*, pp21,22

Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love, Liz Carmichael,

- an enduring tradition of identifying caritas (love or charity) with friendship, and thus define God as friendship
- relatively free use of the language of friendship by patristic writers, and some later systematic and mystical theologians
- its use inhibited from the time of the Reformation through towards the present day

- Jurgen Moltmann suggested that Christ's three traditional titles of Prophet, Priest and King be supplemented with a fourth and equally biblical title, that of Friend
- friendship makes Christian love both a universal invitation to the messianic feast, and yet also specifically personal and welcoming.

Icon of Friendship
8th Cent Coptic Icon



Jesus holds
the Book of the Gospels,
the story of the love
between God
and humanity.

He embraces
St Menas,
a Coptic ascetic martyr
of the 3rd century.

Jesus' face is calm
with a gentle expression
of friendship.

Menas
represents each one of us.



Jesus
stands alongside
accompanying Menas
sharing the burdens
of life



Look, the virgin shall
conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call him
Emmanuel', which means,
'God is with us'. Mt 1:23

'Take my yoke upon you,
and learn from me; for I
am gentle and humble in
heart, and you will find
rest for your souls.'
Mt 11:29

"And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." Jn 8:29

On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Jn 14:20

Jesus answered them, 'Do you now believe?' The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world! Jn 16: 31-33

Jesus is slightly taller.

Inscription of Saviour

His embrace of Menas

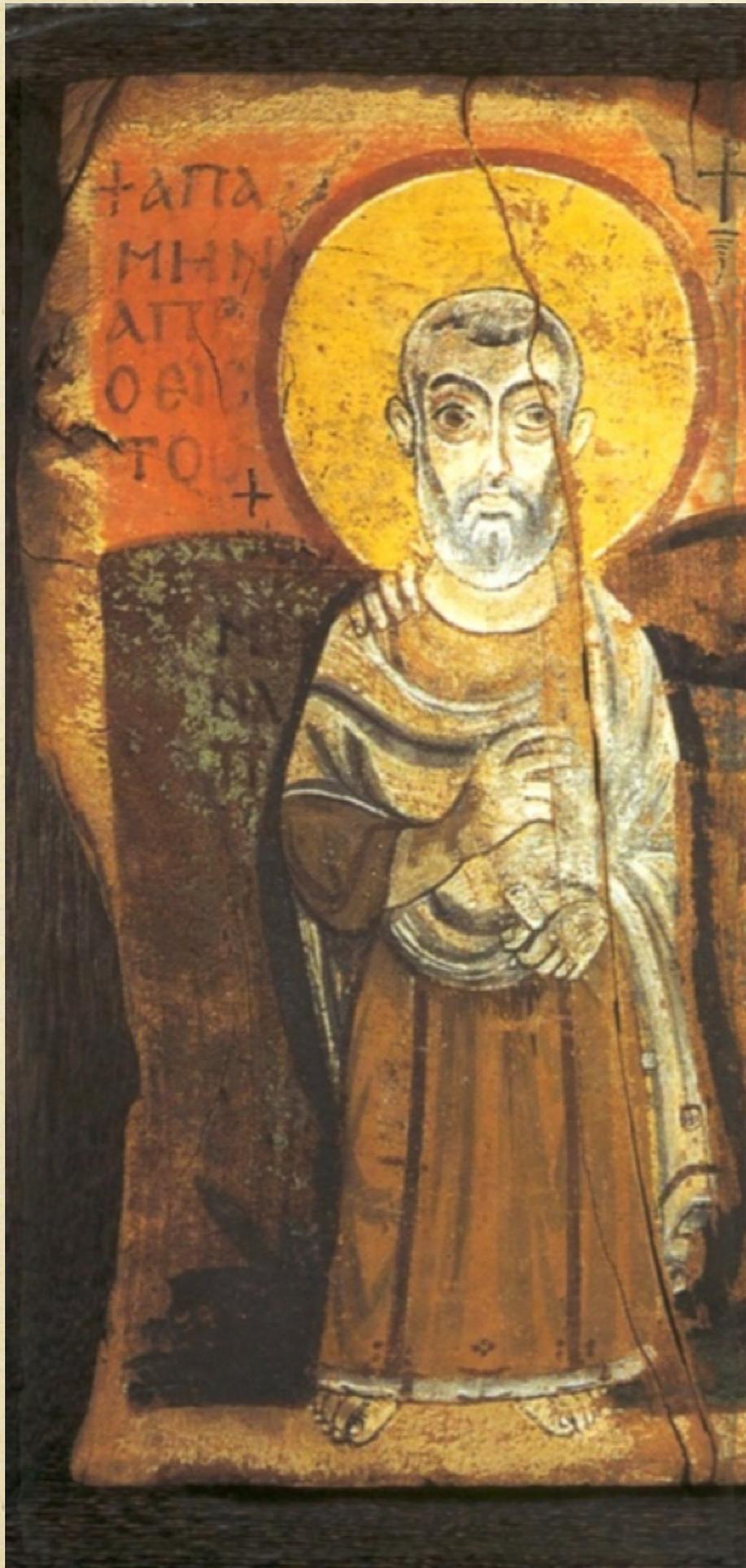
One eye on his friend
and the other looking out.

We need to follow his example.

Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2



Apa Mena Superior



Menas holds a small scroll.

Our knowledge of God is still growing.

Menas has large ears.

We are to be listeners of the Word.

Mother Teresa was asked what her secret was and she said, “My secret is simple, I pray.” So someone asked her what she said when she prayed and she said, “nothing, I listen.” So the interviewer asked, “OK, when you pray what does God say?” And Mother Teresa answered, “Nothing, He listens.” Prayer is a mutual listening.





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The more you remember your friend, the more you remember
the love of God and the greater your desire to love God.
(The Dark Night 1.4.7)

