

No. 9 Young Ones—Prove That Jehovah Is Your Best Friend (Local elder)

Note to speaker:

Warmly encourage young ones to prove their friendship with Jehovah by observing his commandments and defending his standards

CULTIVATE FRIENDSHIP WITH JEHOVAH (4 min.)

The Bible defines true friendship (Pr 17:17; 18:24)

We need Jehovah's love at all times, but especially when under stress

We can make Jehovah our best Friend by observing his commandments [**Read 1 John 5:3**]

We need to have the right motive for our obedience

To illustrate, you might follow the rules at school or at work to avoid punishment yet not be friends with the one who made the rules

In contrast, we obey Jehovah out of love; we value our close friendship with him and recognize that our Friend, Jehovah, wants what is best for us (Ps 25:14)

We care about how our actions affect him

True friends stand up for each other

As Jehovah's friends, we defend his reputation and standards, for example, when he is accused of giving burdensome commands

LEARN FROM JOSHUA'S EXAMPLE (6 min.)

Read and meditate on God's Word regularly (Jos 1:8)

Pray specifically for Jehovah's help in observing his commands (Jos 10:8, 12)

Follow the advice Joshua gave to Israel after he had been Jehovah's friend for decades

[Read Joshua 23:6-11]

Never 'mingle,' or make friendships, with those who do not worship Jehovah (Jos 23:7)

Never serve the "gods" of this world (Jos 23:7; w93 1/15 28 ¶15)

"Stick to Jehovah" by being determined to prove your friendship with him (Jos 23:8)

Identify yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses to your teachers, schoolmates, and neighbors

Recognize situations that can test your friendship with God—temptations to view pornography; to use tobacco, drugs, or alcohol; or to engage in immoral conduct

Prepare to defend Jehovah's standards when opportunities arise (yp1 127)

Make good use of the brochure *Answers to 10 Questions Young People Ask*

"Be on guard constantly" because tests can come unexpectedly (Jos 23:11)

Let's observe how a young Witness misses an opportunity to defend God's standards tactfully

TWO-PART DEMONSTRATION (2 min.)

[Note: Please adhere closely to the script. Rehearse thoroughly so that the demonstration will be natural and conversational, neither comical nor overly dramatic. The Witness teenager should avoid a self-righteous tone in the second portion of the demonstration. Select participants who are appropriate for their parts in age, manner, and appearance. Both participants should be exemplary in defending their faith. Participants may use their real names if preferred]

[A Witness teenager named Hannah and a non-Witness classmate named Emily are standing and talking after school]

Emily: I think it's so cool that Ashley and Jessica have come out as being lesbian, don't you?

Hannah: **[Grimaces]** Actually, I think they're disgusting.

Emily: Wow, Hannah, that sounds so prejudiced! Is that you talking, or just your religion?

Hannah: **[Abruptly]** It's what the Bible says, Emily. Lesbians *are* disgusting.

Emily: **[Sarcastically]** Whatever.

[Speaker interjects: Could Hannah have done a better job of expressing God's standards, doing so in a way that made them clearer and more appealing to Emily? Let's give her another chance]

Emily: I think it's so cool that Ashley and Jessica have come out as being lesbian, don't you?

Hannah: **[Calmly]** Well, I respect Ashley and Jessica, but I can't say I approve of what they're doing.

Emily: Wow, Hannah, that sounds so prejudiced! Is that you talking, or just your religion?

Hannah: It's my view, Emily, but it's based on the Bible. You know, some people think that the Bible says things about how homosexuals should be treated that aren't actually there.

Emily: What do you mean?

Hannah: For example, the Bible says that we should respect *all* people, regardless of their sexual preference.

Emily: But I thought you were prejudiced against gays and lesbians.

Hannah: Not at all—I reject homosexual *conduct*, not *people*.

Emily: I don't get it.

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Hannah: Well . . . ***[Pauses]*** I also choose not to smoke. In fact, I find the thought of it sickening. But suppose you were a smoker. I wouldn't be prejudiced against you for your view, just as you wouldn't be prejudiced against me for my view—right?

Emily: I guess so.

Hannah: It's the same with our differing views of homosexuality. Everybody has the right to choose. Based on what I've learned from the Bible, I've made a lifestyle choice to reject homosexuality, and I appreciate those who respect my right to make that choice.

Emily: I never thought of it that way.

[Participants exit; speaker resumes]

BENEFIT FROM JEHOVAH'S FRIENDSHIP (2 min.)

Jehovah blessed Joshua and the Israelites when they proved their love for him by obeying his laws

He supported them in the assignment he gave them, empowering them and fighting for them (Jos 23:10, 11)

He will likewise bless you when you prove by your actions that he is your best Friend

Review question: How can you prove that Jehovah is your best Friend?

Answer: 1 John 5:3; we prove our friendship with God by observing his commandments and defending his reputation and standards

(Speaker does not need to read or comment on every cited text or discuss every subpoint)