

Jesus, Friend of Sinners Mark Hall and Matthew West

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If you want to watch the video: [https://youtu.be/BY6VAygy\\_iQ](https://youtu.be/BY6VAygy_iQ)

Jesus, friend of sinners, we have strayed so far away.  
We cut down people in Your name, but the sword was never ours to swing.  
Jesus, friend of sinners the truth's become so hard to see,  
the world is on their way to You but they're tripping over me.  
Always looking around but never looking up I'm so double minded -  
a plank-eyed saint with dirty hands and a heart divided.

Oh Jesus, friend of sinners, open our eyes to the world at the end our pointing fingers.  
Let our hearts be led by mercy. Help us reach with open hearts and open doors.  
Oh Jesus, friend of sinners, break our hearts for what breaks Yours.

Jesus, friend of sinners, the One whose writing in the sand  
made the righteous turn away and the stones fall from their hands.  
Help us to remember, we are all the least of these.  
Let the memory of Your mercy bring Your people to their knees.  
Nobody knows what we're for, only what we're against When we judge the wounded.  
What if we put down our signs, crossed over the lines and loved like You did?

You love every lost cause. You reach for the outcast,  
for the leper and the lame, they're the reason that You came.  
Lord, I was that lost cause, and I was the outcast,  
but You died for sinners just like me, a grateful leper at Your feet.  
'Cause You are good, You are good, and Your love endures forever.

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Why do you think the phrase “Jesus friend of sinners” is repeated so often?  
What does that phrase mean to you?  
How do we (Christians) “cut down people” in Jesus name?  
Have you ever done that to someone else? If you have, how did that make you feel? Do you still feel the same way? Why?  
Have you ever been on the receiving end of this type of action? How did that make you feel? Did it effect your perception of Jesus and/or Christians?

Luke 6:41-42 *“And why quibble about the speck in someone else’s eye—his little fault—when a board is in your own? How can you think of saying to him, ‘Brother, let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the board in yours? Hypocrite! First get rid of the board, and then perhaps you can see well enough to deal with his speck!”* The Living Bible<sup>1</sup>

What do you think the phrase “plank-eyed saint” means? Is it easy to be a “plank-eyed saint”? Why? How do we stop that kind of mindset/behavior?

John 8:1-11 *“Jesus went across to Mount Olives, but he was soon back in the Temple again. Swarms of people came to him. He sat down and taught them. The religion scholars and Pharisees led in a woman who had been caught in an act of adultery. They stood her in plain sight of everyone and said, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught red-handed in the act of adultery. Moses, in the Law, gives orders to stone such persons. What do you say?’ They were trying to trap him into saying something incriminating so they could bring charges against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger in the dirt. They kept at him, badgering him. He straightened up and said, ‘The sinless one among you, go first: Throw the stone.’ Bending down again, he wrote some more in the dirt. Hearing that, they walked away, one after another, beginning with the oldest. The woman was left alone. Jesus stood up and spoke to her. ‘Woman, where are they? Does no one condemn you?’ ‘No one, Master.’ ‘Neither do I,’ said Jesus. ‘Go on your way. From now on, don’t sin.’”* The Message<sup>2</sup>

Have you ever found yourself the one holding the stone – judging? How does that make you feel? Jesus asked the accusers to judge themselves. Do you think this had a greater impact on them than if Jesus had told them they were sinners and so could not judge the woman? Why?

“Nobody knows what we're for, only what we're against When we judge the wounded.”  
What does this line mean to you? How do we, as a society, judge the wounded? Is there something you can do to help change that?

“What if we put down our signs, crossed over the lines and loved like You did?”  
What “signs” do you carry that you might put down? What line could you cross if you did? How would that feel? Are there “lines” you feel you couldn’t cross no matter what? What are they? Why do you feel this way? What does loving like Jesus mean to you? What would it look like in your life if you loved like Jesus did? Would it be easy for you? Why?

Read this slowly three times ...

“You love every lost cause. You reach for the outcast,  
for the leper and the lame, they're the reason that You came.  
Lord, I was that lost cause, and I was the outcast,  
but You died for sinners just like me, a grateful leper at Your feet.  
‘Cause You are good, You are good, and Your love endures forever.”

What word or phrase caught your attention? (If one didn’t, read through once more paying attention for a word or phrase.) Does that word/phrase evoke an image or feeling? Describe it. Spend some time with the word/phrase and the image or feeling it evoked. Can you sense a message from God? What is it? How does it make you feel? Reflect on that message over the next few days when you have time. If you can’t sense a message right now, that’s OK! Hold that word or phrase, and the image or feeling it evokes, close over the next few days. Come back to it when you have some quiet time and ask God to open your heart and mind to what God wants you to take from it.

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<sup>2</sup> The Message Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson