

A photograph of a forest floor in spring. The ground is covered with a dense carpet of purple bellflowers (Campanula medium) with green foliage. In the background, several trees with thin trunks and emerging green leaves stand against a soft, hazy light. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

**CAN
GOD
BE MY
FRIEND?**

Friends are special. You may meet lots of boys and girls every day at school, but are they all your friends? Of course not, you have not chosen to spend time with everyone in your class. We do like to spend time with a friend: someone we can talk to about the things we are interested in. Friends help each other when things go wrong and enjoy being together when everything goes well.

However much we care about our friends, we cannot always be

with them. We cannot always help when they are worried about something or when they are feeling lonely. We may be ill or away on holiday or we may even move to live in a different place and not be able to see a friend any more.

How wonderful it would be to have a friend who is always there when you need them. Someone who will always listen when you are feeling sad. Someone who is always able to keep their promises.

God is just such a Friend, but in

the Bible we read that we are enemies of God. How could we possibly be enemies of the God who gave us life and so many things to enjoy in His wonderful world? We are enemies of God because we want to have our own way. The God who made us tells us (in the Bible) what is best for us, but because of our sinful hearts we don't want to hear what God says.

If God knows best, and He does, 'having our own way' can only lead to unhappiness. Things may

make us feel happy for a time, but they don't last. Knowing the God who never changes is the way to lasting happiness. How can we stop being enemies and become friends of God?

God is good and He cannot say that the wrong things we do, do not matter. We deserve to be punished for every wrong thing we have done. That means every lie we have told, every unkind thought we have had, every time we have been jealous or selfish.

Long ago, God planned how our

sins could be forgiven so that we could know Him as our Friend. God's Son, Jesus, would come into the world and die to take sin's punishment. That does not mean that everyone's sin is forgiven. The Lord Jesus died for everyone who will trust in Him.

Someone may ask, "What does it mean, to trust in Jesus?" It means to believe that what God says about us is true: we are sinful and we need to be forgiven. It means believing that Jesus took all the wrong things that I have done and took the

punishment for them. It means believing that the sin that was like a big wall separating me from God, has all been forgiven because Jesus died in my place.

When we are trusting in the Lord Jesus and we are not enemies of God any more, we will ask God to help us to live in the way He says is best for us. That will mean loving God and loving other people instead of selfishly wanting 'our own way'. We will find that God is the Friend who never changes and who always hears us when we pray.

*All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned, every one, to his
own way; and the LORD has laid on
Him (Jesus) the iniquity (sin) of us
all.*

Isaiah chapter 53 verse 6 (NKJV)

*For God so loved the world that He
gave His only begotten Son, that
whoever believes in Him should not
perish but have everlasting life. John
chapter 3 verse 16 (NKJV)*



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