



A Farmer, His Family and His best Friend

Farmer Joe began small, but grew to obtain much land and livestock. During those years of experiencing growing pains, his livestock had rapidly reproduced to a greater number than he and his family could care for, but he could not financially afford to pay for labor to manage it.

And then his big break came. It was like a gift from Heaven. A friend gave him a Border collie pup named Hank. Joe's children bonded with the lovable canine immediately. Soon, Hank was rounding up cattle, herding goats, driving the chickens into their roosting shed and protecting Joe's family from everything suspicious - highway bums to dangerous varmints. He did the work of many men.

Once Joe's 2-year old son, Sid, got out of the gate and headed for the highway. When he was within 6 feet of the pavement where cars and 18-wheelers were whizzing by, Hank saw him and intervened. He kept intercepting and blocking Sid until his family saw him and came running - swooping him up into safety

Another time, when Joe's daughter, Beth, was 4 years old, Hank spotted a rattlesnake coiled and ready to strike her! He leaped onto the rattlesnake, ripping it apart, but in the process sustained several bites and almost died.

One day when Doris, Joe's wife, was feeding the chickens, a wild boar came charging toward her, Hank intercepted and fought a bloody fight. He suffered a punctured lung from the boar's tusk as well as many lacerations and tears that had to be stitched up.

Seventeen years passed. Joe's most trusted and loyal friend, Hank, had become crippled with arthritis. He limped when he walked. Joe began to experience some financial setbacks. In his strategizing, he tried to figure out where he could cut cost. Cold heartedly, Joe decided that Hank was no longer that asset he had once been; he could no longer justify his vet bills.

Doris, Sid and Beth, strongly protested against having Hank put down. Joe could see that he was outnumbered. So, the next evening Joe decided to take Hank out on the stock pond. He called for Hank to get into the boat with him, stroked his paddle to advance out over the deepest part and then began pushing crippled Hank out of the boat, attempting to drown him. In the process of Hank's resistance, the boat capsized, dumping Joe, who couldn't swim, in the deep water.

Joe was kicking, splashing, hollering, "HELP", but he began to sink. As water began filling his nose and throat, he felt someone pulling him up. It was crippled Hank. Hank struggled to swim while pulling Joe by the collar to shore. Joe was not worthy of the loyalty and friendship of his faithful companion Hank.

Meet Man's Best Friend

We need a friend who can help us - Romans 3:10, 23 "There is none righteous, no, not one: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

We need a friend who understands our need - Romans 5:12, 18 "As by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon **all men**, for that all have sinned: As by the offence of one [Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One [Christ] the free gift came upon all men [who believe] unto justification of life."

We need a friend that can fix our problem - Romans 5: 6, 8 "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

We must personally meet Him as our friend - Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." John 3:16a "For God so **love** the world [mankind], that he **gave** His only begotten Son [Jesus Christ]."

We must personally accept Him as our friend - John 3:16b "That **whosoever** believeth in [asks, accepts] Him should not perish [be separated from God forever], but **have** everlasting life [be with God forever]."

Just ask your best friend to save you - Romans 10:9, 10, 13 "That if thou shalt **confess** with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, **thou shalt be saved**. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth **confession** is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall **call** upon the name of the Lord **shall be saved**."

People treat God much the same way that Farmer Joe treated Hank. As long as times are good, God doesn't even enter their thoughts; they pat themselves on the back when they experience success, but are quick to cuss God when things go wrong.

Let's examine some of the similarities between the two subjects.

Hank was a gift from God into Farmer Joe's life.

Jesus Christ is a gift from God into our lives.

Hank's love for Joe was unconditional.

God's love for us is unconditional.

Farmer Joe was not worthy of Hank's devoted love.

Neither are **we** worthy of God's devoted love.

Hank risked his own life to save Joe.

Christ voluntarily gave His life as a substitutionary death. Taking our place, He paid our sin debt in full so that we can escape hell and enjoy Heaven as our eternal inheritance.

Hank rightly earned the reputation of being "*Man's Best Friend*".

Jesus exceeded the title as "*Man's **Best** Friend*".

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." **John 3:16**

Have you trusted in Jesus? Have you invited Him into your heart? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." **Acts 16:31**

Call **940.206.5980** and share your decision for Christ. Make Him your Lord and Savior today!

Evanna Hagler @ 2010