

## Q&A

### *Q: Fr. Alex, is Jesus my friend or my Father?*

This is a good question. First off, I'll just be talking about the Person of Jesus, and not God the Father, as in Father of the Holy Trinity. About Jesus, often you'll hear from people that Jesus is your friend—someone you can talk to, confide in—and also a father and Lord: He gives you direction, leads, is powerful and all-knowing. The truth is that He is both. He does all these things and much, much more. There are a couple of traps, in fact, to seeing Him as just a friend or just in a fatherly role. Seeing Him just as a friend can put Him on the same level as the friends you might have at school. These people might be very important to you, but they are not God! They make mistakes along with you, get off the right path, and stumble sometimes like all of us. They might give you inspiration, but the inspiration Christ gives us is unique, perfect and ultimate. Our friendship with Him is a paternal friendship—we are children looking up into the loving eyes of a father.

But if we only see Him as a father or Lord, there can be a temptation to let Him become distant in our lives—almost like an over-Lord who is unapproachable, untouchable. Christ, during His earthly ministry, was always very approachable and touchable. And He is the same for you and me, right here and right now. He is never there to crush us, but only to lift us up, bring us closer to Him.

There's a balance to look for—reading scripture, talking to your parents and Orthodox friends, and approaching me can help you to understand ... little by little.