

# Jesus / God is My Friend I Am a Friend Sep 3, 2017

## Key Scriptures:

Jer 3:4 "Have you not just now called to Me, 'My Father, You are the friend of my youth?"

Mt 11:19 "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds." (Lk 5:20; 7:34)

Jn 15:15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends... (Jn 15:13-15)

Jas 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God (Isa 41:8)

## Friendship calls us to self-sacrifice, it involves vulnerability, responsiveness and intimacy.

Jn 15:13-15 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

## A friend is someone:

1. You are comfortable with or whose company you prefer.
2. You can count on for support and honesty.
3. Who believes in you.
4. With whom you can share your dreams.
5. With whom (in times of hurt or struggle) you can share with them and it eases the pain.
6. Who offers safety and trust that what you say will not be used against you.  
A friend does not spread details of others failure, but rather seeks to protect their reputation.  
1Pt 4:8 ... love covers a multitude of sins. (1Cor 13:6)
7. Who is sensitive to your pain and struggle and wants to share that time with you.

## A good friend:

1. Is one who makes honest commitments, and acknowledges quickly when those promises cannot be fulfilled (Pr 3:28-29; 6:1-5).
2. Refuses to despise poor neighbors, but instead shows kindness toward them (Prov 19:7; 22:9).
3. Forgives, and then lets the matter rest. He does not keep bringing up past mistakes and failures (Pr 17:9, 14).
4. Is willing to share in one's adversity (Pr 17:17; 18:24; 27:10).
5. Does not wear out their welcome by paying too many visits (Pr 25:17).
6. Will sing your praises to others (Pr 27:1-2).
7. Can sharpen your thinking with good counsel (Pr 27:17; 28: 23).

# The benefits (value) of good friends

## 1. Comfort, sympathy

Prov 17:17 A friend loves at all times, ... (Job 2:11-13)

## 2. Support and encouragement

Rom 1:11-12 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. (1Sa 23:16-17; Pr 18:24; 27:10; Eccl 4:9-12)

## 3. Sacrificial service

Jn 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. (Rom 5:7)

## 4. Shared joy and sorrow

Lk 15:5-6 "When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 "And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' (Rom 12:15)

## 5. Constructive criticism

Pr 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy. (Eph 4:15)  
Pr 27:9 Oil and perfume make the heart glad, So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.

## 6. Encouragement in good works

Heb 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

## 7. Admonish, challenge

Rom 15:14 I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another (Pr 27:17)

## 8. Blessing of unity

Ps 133:1 how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! ... 3 For there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forever. (Ps 119:63; Mal 3:16; Phil 4:1).

## 9. Greater (expression and anointing) in worship (Ac 2:42-43,46-47)

## 10. Sharing our possessions (Ac 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 11:29)

## 11. Serving together

Gal 5:13 but through love serve one another (1Pt 4:10; Gal 2:8-9; Phil 1:3-5).

## 12. Praying for each other

Jas 5:16 ... pray for one another so that you may be healed (Job 42:10; 2Th 1:11-12; Jas 5:16).

## 13. Peaceful living

1Thes 5:13 Live in peace with one another (Rom 12:18; Phil 4:2-3)

## 14. Covering sins

Pr 17:9 He who conceals a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends. (Pr 10:12; 16:28)

## **Problems with friendships:**

- They can entice you to sin (Dt 13:6-8).
- Friends can lead to your ruin (Pr 18:24).
- Jealousy.
- Feelings of judgment and condemnation.
- Unmet, unfulfilled expectations.
- Lack of mutual agreement and desire.
- Having too many friends (Pr 18:24) - you can't invest needed time in them.
- The potential of hurt and betrayal (Ps 41:9).

## **Avoid:**

### **People with anger issues**

Pr 22:24-25 Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man, 25 Or you will learn his ways And find a snare for yourself.

### **People with poor morals**

1Cor 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." (Pr 12:26)

### **Worldly minded people**

Jas 4:4 do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

## **How we develop friendships—by:**

Being friendly, reach out to others.

Investing your time (both quality and quantity)

A friend is someone you will waste your time with.

Opening your heart and life to others.

Risking confiding in someone.

Seeking someone's advice.

Sacrificing your time, talents, etc. for others.

Perceiving the needs of others and trying to meet them.

Giving the unexpected and not the essential.

Working together.

Relaxing and recreating with others; common interest (1Sam 18:1)

Fighting a common enemy

## **How to pick friends – look for some of these things:**

They will support my values.

They will challenge and inspire me into godliness.

They don't scoff or mock me.

They have character qualities that I admire.

They support and strengthen my relationships.

They make positive deposits in me (they add to and don't subtract from me).

## **Friendships are valuable because:**

They are powerful.

They help us form values.

They provide companionship in life.

They provide a support base in life.

They give us strength in times of crisis.

They provide a corrective safety.

## **Conclusion:**

Two friends are invaluable, but three are priceless. To have a friend we must be a friend, and nothing can compare to the joy and strength of the unbroken cords of friendship.

## **Quotes:**

Some people make enemies instead of friends because it is less trouble. (E. C. Mckenzie)

Be slow in choosing a friend, slower in changing. (Benjamin Franklin)

Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company. (George Washington)

When we lose a friend, we die a little.

If you really want to know who your friends are, just make a mistake.  
No man is useless while his is a friend. (Robert Louis Stevenson)

## **Illustration**

Pepper Rogers writes, "A few years back I was in the middle of a terrible season as football coach at UCLA. It even got so bad that it upset my home life. My dog was my only friend. So, I told my wife that a man needs at least two friends, and she bought me another dog."

## **Unbroken Friendships:**

Eccl 4:9-12 Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. 10 For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. 11 Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? 12 And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.

God does not want us to be lonely. Hidden within these words in Ecclesiastes we find three unifying cords necessary to build a friendship that cannot be broken.

1. Cord #1: A friend is someone dedicated to you (vv. 9-10).
2. Cord #2: A friend is someone who you can depend on (v. 11).
3. Cord #3: A friend is someone who will defend you (v. 12).

## **Bible examples of good friendships:**

God and Abraham (Is 41:8)

God spoke to Moses as to a friend (Ex 33:11)

Ruth and Naomi (book of Ruth)

David and Jonathan (1Sam chapters 18-23)

David and Hushai (2Sam 15:37)

Elijah and Elisha (2Ki 2:1-14)

Paul and Timothy (2Tim 1:2)

Jeremiah and Baruch, his scribe (Jer 36:19, 26)

Jesus is spoken of as a friend of tax collector's and 'sinners' (Lk 7:34)

Jesus and his disciples (Jn 15:14-15).

Jesus with Lazarus, Mary, and Martha (Jn 11:5).

## **References used:**

Nelson's Topical Bible  
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Collins Thesaurus of the Bible  
Nelson's annual preacher's sourcebook  
Dictionary of Bible Themes