

What You Really Need Is.... A Lifelong Friend

Proverbs 18:24

²⁴A man of *too many* friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Having multiple superficial relationships actually brings us down rather than bringing relational satisfaction.

There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother, and that friend will stand with you through difficulty.

The first, best, and most loyal friend a person can have is Jesus Christ Himself.

Luke 7:34

³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

Jesus' did not treat all relationships the same; He related differently with the Crowd, the 12, The Three, and the One.

The Crowd and the 12

Matthew 13:10-11

¹⁰And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" ¹¹Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

The Three

John

John 13:23-25

²³There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴So Simon Peter *gestured to him, and *said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking." ²⁵He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, *said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

John 19:26-27

²⁶When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He *said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷Then He *said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

Jesus Christ, the Friend of friends, had many people who loved Him, but one best friend- the disciple whom He loved.

Knowing the hearts of all men, Jesus found only one whose interests were aligned with His, and in whom He found undying loyalty.

A best friend is a rare and indispensable gift from God to you to support you as you walk through this life.

Proverbs 18:24

²⁴A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly; and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

Anyone who would have close friendships must practice a coercive kindness.

But there will still be one friend who is closest of all; a cherished best friend.

Paul and Timothy, Jonathan and David

Take an inventory of your life: do you have lifelong friends, or do you have a string of broken relationships in your past? Friendship is based on Christ-like friendliness; but how we often sabotage these friendships to our own hurt!

Proverbs 27:6s

⁶Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

The encouragement: Rarely, but at times, loyalty will mean you need to wound your friend to help them to grow.

The warning: Flattery is not helpful, but if “words that wound” becomes the basis of your relationship, it will fall apart.

Leviticus 25:14

¹⁴If you make a sale, moreover, to your friend or buy from your friend’s hand, you shall not wrong one another.

The encouragement: Friends often step in to help each other out practically, and at times, financially.

The warning: Borrowing and lending can ruin relationships like almost nothing else. Avoid it if you can!

Proverbs 18:19

¹⁹A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a citadel.

The encouragement: Real friendships have real fights. Though it’s hard, fight for your friendship!

The warning: Don’t be too easily offended. Easy offense will sabotage any and every relationship in your life.

Proverbs 19:11

¹¹A man’s discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

2 Corinthians 5:19

¹⁹namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Commission:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

⁹Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. ¹⁰For 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