

Text: Are your friends helping or hindering you?



Christian Friendship

For this lesson, I want to discuss the topic of **friendship**. In particular, I am going to focus on the notion that having friends in Christ is important to our spirituality.

If you were to take an inventory of the friends you have, you may be surprised that many of them don't share the thirst that you have for a deeper relationship with the Lord. All of us have people who are important to us who do not have an active relationship with Christ. Biblically speaking, we have a responsibility to examine our friendships and the impact they are having on us.

It is my hope that this lesson will inspire you to examine your friendships and determine which ones are beneficial and which ones may be harmful. If you don't have enough friendships that are helpful, it may be time to add a couple of Christian friends in your life.

Wise Sayings about Friendship

- Proverbs 12:26
 - We are reminded that if trying to be righteous that we must be cautious in who we choose as friends. Being close to the wrong person can cause us to go astray.
- Proverbs 17:17
 - If you want to know who your real friends are, just ask yourself if they have loved you “at all times” in your life. Have they stood by you even when it was tough? Tough times have a way of bringing real friends even closer together. Friendship can be elevated to a “brotherhood or sisterhood” when adversity comes.

Wise Sayings about Friendship

- Proverbs 27:6
 - This scripture is saying the sometimes a real friend has to tell the truth—and the truth can hurt. The Word is telling us that eventhough the truth can wound us, that if it’s coming from a real friend, we can trust them.
 - The scripture goes on to say that there are people who tell us what we want to hear and who try to be near us for the wrong reasons. Though they may seem friendly, they actually could not have your best interest at heart.

Name 5 people who you consider to be your “true friends” ...

A true friend is someone who you can count on and confide in...

A true friend is someone who can count on you and can confide in you...

Naming 5 friends might be difficult because true friends are hard to find...

How many of your true friends are trying to live a Godly life?

Why should you seek to have friends who are in Christ?

There are Benefits in Christian Friendship

Support
Encouragement
Good, Godly Advice
Like-Minded Fellowship
Enhanced Spiritual Growth

The Benefits of Christian Friendship

Christian friends can give us support, encouragement and advice from a Godly perspective. For example, let's say that a married couple is contemplating divorce. A Christian friend's advice may be that the couple should seek counseling and try to work it out. Conversely, a friend who doesn't have a strong relationship with God may advise the couple to divorce. We must make sure that we are getting the right kind of counsel from our friends.

*We need **friends** who are also our
brothers and sisters in Christ...*

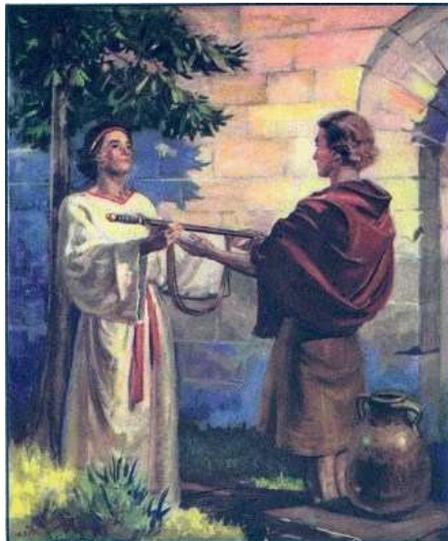
*We need **brothers and sisters in
Christ** who are also our **friends...***

Why is there a Divide?

- **OUR FRIENDS** on one side in our lives
- **OUR BROTHERS and SISTERS in CHRIST** on another side in our lives

Bridging the Divide:
Examination a Christian
Friendship
The story of David and Jonathan

David and Jonathan



David and Jonathan

A Look at True, Godly Friendship

- I Samuel 19: 1-7
 - King Saul, who was once fond of David, has now become jealous because of all the attention David is receiving for having conquered Goliath, the giant. Saul plots to kill David, but Saul's son, Jonathan, supports his friend, David, during this scary, stressful time in David's life. Jonathan petitions his father, King Saul, on David's behalf.
 - *A true friend intervenes and steps in when appropriate*

David and Jonathan

A Look at True, Godly Friendship

- I Samuel 20: 1-4
 - Jonathan wants to do whatever is in his power to help David. David, a young man, is being violently pursued by a powerful king. David needs Jonathan's friendship and Jonathan is there for him.
 - *A true friend is someone you can count on in times of trouble*

David and Jonathan

A Look at True, Godly Friendship

- I Samuel 20: 5-7, 9-11
 - Jonathan has made a vow to warn David if it appears that his father, Saul wants to kill him. Eventhough Jonathan may be risking his own relationship with his father, he is willing to help David.
 - ***A true friend is someone who warns you when they see trouble coming your way. A true friend is willing to sacrifice to help you.***
- I Samuel 20: 17
 - It is evident that Jonathan loved his friend, David. A true friend loves at all times—even when times are tough.
 - ***A true friend really loves you***

Want a Christian Friend?

- ***Show yourself to be “friendly”***
 - We must be approachable so that others will want to befriend us
- ***Show yourself to be human***
 - Everybody has flaws. It can be intimidating if people think you're perfect. True friendship is about taking our masks off and being willing to be our true selves with others.
- ***Take action and carefully identify a person who loves God and who you think would be a good friend and reach out to them***
 - Ask a potential friend to go to lunch, a sporting event or other appropriate activity. Getting to know each other outside of a Church function could be the beginning of a great friendship.

Remember that you do have a True Friend in God...

- **He listens** to us through prayer
- **He gives** to us daily through blessings. He gave us His only Son.
- **He shares** with us. When we diligently seek Him, He rewards us.
- **He forgives** us and doesn't condemn
- **He rescues** us in our toughest times