Bible Studies A Question of Friendship



Read John 15v12-15 What does Jesus call us? What is the difference?

What else could he have called us? How did Jesus show us His Friendship?

When Jesus calls us friends, it creates a level of intimacy with us, it suggests that He takes us into His confidence, it defines the kind of relationship Jesus wants with us. Jesus friendship for us was not only in words, it's ultimate expression was found in his death for us.

Jesus is a friend. The way he lived showed friendship. The Pharisees accused Jesus of being the friend of sinners, not the acquaintance of sinners. Three expressions of love v9a The father lovse me v9b J love You v12 Love each other

From this we can see an order of friendship that God has given us; friendship with God, friendship with each other and if we are to follow Jesus example, friendship with sinners. *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.* 1 John 4v7

Why do we need friends?



God made us social creatures.

What happens if you are isolated from other people?

It has been claimed that to maintain mental health you need contact with 8 people every day. We need other people around us. Consequently friendships add stability to life.



Friendship takes away the pain of loneliness.

This is only achieved when people take a genuine interest in other people.



Friendship adds texture to life.

It brings fulfilment, joy, fun, excitement and relaxation.

We need friends for practical, emotional and spiritual reasons.

On a physical level sometimes you needs someone's help. Emotionally you may need a shoulder to cry on or a person to encourage you. Spiritually you may need a mentor or someone who can speak into your life.



Because we are made in God's image.

Friendship is an attribute of God and He made us like him. Job 29v4, Isaiah 41v8

If someone says "I don't need friends". how would you reply? Is it true?



What is a friend?

Someone you trust and love.
Someone you like to be with.
Someone you can talk to.
Someone you can depend on.
Someone you feel comfortable with.
Someone you want to spend time with.
Someone you can be honest &intimate with.
Someone you can laugh and cry with.

Someone you support and stand up for.

We associate love&intimacy with romantic relationships, are they found in friendships?

One of the things that stands in the way of friendship is that everyone has a different view of what a friend should be. This view is based on a persons own needs. A friend is someone who meets my needs.

Is this a realistic view of friendship? What will happen if you hold this view?

There are different levels of friendship. They range from people you say hello to, acquaintances, to best friends who you open your heart to. Strong friendships grow, they do not develop over night. People move from Acquaintances to best friends. If the friendship builds too fast it can create pressure that the new friendship cannot sustain. One of the reasons for a lack of friendship is that people want a best friend, but they cannot be bothered to form acquaintances.

Schom set foot in your neighbour's house—too much of you, and he will hate you. Proverbs 25v17 **How does this relate to friendship?**



How do you make friends?

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Proverbs 18v24 KJV

What does this mean? If you are not friendly what is going to happen? Are you friendly? If you want a friend, be a friend. You have to reach out, don't let fear of rejection or failure inhibit you, just be yourself.

Waiuku AG Ray Moxham www.wag.org.nz WaiukuAG @wag.org.nz



What do you think stops people from making friends? Why is it easy for some people to make friends and not others? How do you become friendly person?



How do you make a tree?

You need a tree seed, like and acorn. Then you care for it, water it, give it sunshine, sing to it, etc.

And then the tree grows all by itself.

The seed is us saying hello to someone & making an acquaintance. We need to nurture that seed, which given time, will grow into a friendship.

In a forest, you are going to plant maybe four seedling for every tree you want to reach maturity. The same is true in friendship. Not all acquaintances are going to be good friends.



You build a repertoire of friends eg.

30 acquaintances, 10 friends, 5 good friends, 2 best friends.

Strangely enough, the top end of this pyramid are going to select themselves.

Why do you think this is?

When you are making friends it is the base of the pyramid that is all important. Why?

Church is a great place to make friends.

In making acquaintance friends, which is the first step, no one wants to make the first move.

Everyone in Church wants to be talked to - no one wants to talk. Everyone wants a friend - no one want s to do anything about it.

We suffer from fear of rejection and suspicion, 'why is this person talking to me?' It's a bit like asking a girl out on a first date - a very traumatic experience.

So if you want friends, do something about it, don't complain "I've got no friends" - be friendly.



Why are we so scared to talk to other people?
How do friendships within the Church benefit the Church?
How do friendships outside the Church benefit the Church?
Will everyone you want to make a friendship with become a good friend? Why?
Can you force someone to be your friend?
What kind of things help a friendship from?

When people say "I have no friends" is it true?

Sometimes it is, most of the time it isn't. What they usually mean is, "*I don't have the kind of friends I want.*" or "*I don't have friends at the level I want.*"

What is the solution to this problem?



- •Ask God for friends.
- •Make a list of the people you get on with.
- •Grow acquaintances into friends.
- Have realistic expectations of people.

Perfect friends do not fall from the sky they need to be grown. Friendship grows between people.

Start talking to people. Talk about them, not yourself. Start finding out who they are, what they like. Don't stalk them. Phone them and say hello. Spend time together. Ask them for lunch after Church. Yes we are all busy so sometimes you need to work at it. Let it grow. Keep in touch.

What damages friendship? Proverbs 16v28, Proverbs 22v24, Proverbs 17v9



Can you have ten best friends?

Should we only make friends for social standing? Romans 12v16 What are the dangers of trying to be friends with just popular people? Should we only make friends for our own benefit or to fill our own needs?

What will happen if:

all you do is talk about yourself? you are only friendly when you want something? you are not trust worthy?

all you do is boast about yourself? you continually take people for granted? you live in your friends back pocket?

you are only a friend because of their material goods? you are not there in their time of need? you get jealous over your friends success or other friendships?

What will happen if you criticise your friends family/house/lifestyle? If you have an 'acid' personality are you likely to make friends? What is the worst thing a friend can do? What is the best thing a friend can do?



Foundations of friendship.

Communication. Reciprocity. Forgiving. Caring. Realism.