

FRIENDSHIPS

Definition: Close relationships, People who enjoy spending time together

Synonyms: Camaraderie, Companionship

Since my weekly email goes out on Tuesdays, this devotion begins on Tuesdays and ends on Mondays.

DAY 1 - Tuesday

When I think about all the different attributes of Jesus, I don't think of him as having earthly friendships. At least, not in the way I have friends. But when we look at his life and relationships, I realized he did have friends – even special friends.

Like us he seemed to have work friends and social friends. Peter, James, and John were special to Jesus. They were the three to see the Transfiguration. (Mark 9: 1-10) They also were the only ones allowed in the room when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter. (Mark 5:37) Even at the end when Jesus went to pray in the garden before His crucifixion, it was these three men who he asked to stay and keep watch with him. (Mark 14: 32-34)

Outside of his disciples he spent time with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. They were siblings who welcomed Jesus into their home for friendship and respite. You get the impression there was good food, talk, and companionship.

Jesus trusted these special friends and they brought comfort and joy to his life.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

If Jesus needed special friends for rest, relaxation, and encouragement, we must too.

DAY 2 – Wednesday

Paul depended on friendships to help him through what was a lonely life. He was on the road a lot, but he stayed in touch with those he ministered to by letters. It appears from the epistles that he had friendly relationships in almost all the churches where he preached and taught.

He had a special friendship with Priscilla and Aquila. This married couple became evangelists and provided a special place for Paul to stay and work. The Bible tells us that he lived with them for a while. Paul and Aquila were both tentmakers by trade, so this gave them another common interest.

In Romans 16: 4 Paul tells the church that this couple risk their lives for him. He was thankful to them and appreciated their hospitality. They were not only hospitable to Paul, but also hosted a church in their home - another place where friendships were nurtured.

He often addressed friends in his letters. Do you make sure you stay in touch even when friends are far away?

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"By this, all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35 NKJV).

DAY 3 - Thursday

Of course, David and Jonathan's friendship is probably the most famous of all friendships. If you were in Jonathan's position could you have loved and cared for David? After all, Jonathan could have been resentful that he would not be king.

Jonathan must have been a strong believer, recognizing that God knew what was best and conceding that David should be the next king. Jonathan risked his life and relationship with his father in order to maintain his friendship with David.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13 NIV).

DAY 4 - Friday

Luke 23: 49 tell us that the women who followed Jesus were at the crucifixion. I can picture them standing together, crying together, and offering support to one another at this horrific time.

And it was the women who went early on Sunday morning to the tomb taking spices for the body - only to find the body gone. (Luke 24: 1-10) I imagine they spent the night together probably talking all night about how Jesus affected their lives.

Do you have friends that will sit with you during trials offering comfort through a shared belief in Jesus? Are you a friend who sits with others during trials?

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

We all need friendships that have depth and are bound by Christian faith.

DAYS 5 & 6 - WEEKEND REFLECTIONS (Saturday and Sunday)

Read Proverbs 16: 27-30: What four things does this verse tell us to avoid when choosing friends?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Read: Proverbs: 13:20 17:17; 19:22; 27:17

List at least four things these verses tell us make good friendships. Not only should we seek these in a friend, we should make sure we act this way in our friendships.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Day 7 – Monday

Take this day to focus on your Sunday sermon, spending additional time in prayer to prepare for your week.

