



TRUE FRIENDS IN THE KINGDOM

23 June 2013, Dr Stephen Smith

Am I my brother's keeper?

Genesis 4:9

Friends come and friends go, but a true friend sticks by you like family.

Proverbs 18:24 (Message)

Show me a man's companions, and I'll show you his character. A writer once said: We will usually not have more than 3-5 real close friends in our lifetime.

The next 3 people are the most important in your life, and must receive 80% of your focus.

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|----|------------|---|----------|---|-------------------|
| a. | A Father | - | Paul | - | You learn from |
| b. | A Friend | - | Barnabas | - | A soul mate |
| c. | A Follower | - | Timothy | - | One you invest in |

The Faith of a Friend:

• Daniel's Relationship With His 3 Closest Friends

Each of them had an extraordinary faith, an extraordinary standard of living and together faced some extraordinary tests in their lives. When there was pressure on Daniel, when he was faced with some serious challenges his friends still stood by him. Through the whole ordeal, they stuck together and believed in their God, and were subsequently hailed as heroes.

• Paul and Barnabas

In the difficult times Barnabas had in the Acts period, he held on to his faith in God and a friend and family member.

Barnabas ... was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and faith.

Acts 13:2, 3

But Paul and Barnabas kept on in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of God, with a number of others. And after some days, Paul said to Barnabas, Let us go back and see the brothers in every town where we have given the word of God, and see how they are. And Barnabas had a desire to take with them John, named Mark. But Paul was of the opinion that it was not right to take with them one who had gone away from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone on with the work. And there was a sharp argument between them, so that they were parted from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and went by ship to Cyprus. But Paul took Silas and went away with the blessing of the brothers.

Acts 15:35-39

Was Barnabas's separation from Paul worth it? Was he right or wrong to have faith in his nephew, even after John Mark failed them?

No one on earth can really develop and lead a full life without feeling that there is at least one other person who understood him.

- Paul Tournier

The young John Mark made history.

He interviewed people and recorded the life of Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without his letters, which they believe to be the foundation of the other three Gospels, we probably would not have the books of Matthew, Luke and John. Because of Barnabas, we now have four complete Gospels!

For us to make it through tough times, we must have faith in others. God says: All of us, who identify with Christ, are the body of Christ together. We need to move in unity and flow. God will bring those divine friends into your life to stand with you through the tough times.

God strengthens us through His body!

Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do whatever I command you. I no longer call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

John 15:13-15

Why relationships count every day:

1. **The Main Experiences In Life Involves People.**
2. **You Will Enjoy Life More If you like people.**
3. **You Go Further In Life When People Like You.**

All things being equal, it is the pleasant person who wins. However, when all factors are not equal, the nice person still wins.

4. In Any Organization People Are The Asset Most Appreciated.

Our corporate philosophy is short and to the point: People - Service - Profit! Appreciate your people as your most important assets and their value will continue to increase.

- **Fred Smith (FedEx)**

Make the decision to invest every day in steadfast relationships.

You cannot make the other guy feel important in your presence if you secretly believe he is worthless.

- **Les Giblin**

- a. **Place a high value on people.**
- b. **Learn to understand people.**
 - When friends are insecure ... Give them confidence.
 - Friends want to feel they are special ... Compliment them sincerely.
 - Friends desire a better tomorrow ... Give them hope.
 - Friends want to be understood ... Listen to them.
 - Friends are selfish ... First attend to their needs.
 - Friends get emotional lows ... Encourage them.
 - Friends want to be successful... Help them win.
- c. **Freely show respect, but expect to earn respect from others.**
- d. **Devote yourself to add value to others**

Engrave your name on hearts, not on marble.

- **Charles Spurgeon**

Do this by...

- Search for ability in others;
- Helping others in discovering their ability;
- Helping others in developing their ability.