

CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS WISELY

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John 15:15; 1Cor. 15:33

Friend: Webster; *One attached to another by esteem, respect and affection; an intimate.*

American Heritage Dictionary; *A person with whom one is allied in a struggle or cause.*

Choosing your friends wisely is key to fulfilling your destiny.

Over the course of your lives you will meet many people and consider some of them your friends.

Remember, you will rise or fall to the level of your associations.

We become like the people we associate with! People transfer spirits and attitudes to each other.

Your friends in life will be either a help or a hindrance. So choose them wisely.

Obtaining great friends is great gain.

You must learn to discern and distinguish between mere acquaintances and true friends. You'll need both.

We need to be very careful about the kind of people we allow to become our friends. Our friends should be those who inspire us and bring out the best in us.

It is better to be alone than to be with the wrong friends.

Amateurs teach amateurs to be amateurs.

You must associate with those who are going to positively influence your life and stand faithfully with you in the times of battle.

Take a moment and look at your friends. Are they helping you to serve Christ in a greater way or do they weaken your walk with Him?

Their influence on your present is their contribution to your future.

I. False Friends.

A. The advantageous.

Prov. 14:20 *The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.*

1. People that only desire to promote themselves at your expense.

a. These types of friends are bought and sold to the highest bidder.

2. Only seek to avail themselves of your power, assets or influence.

They're users.

Prov. 19:6 *Many will entreat the favour of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.*

3. These types of friends will desert you when you no longer are able to assist them.

a. They'll patronize and publicly exploit you.

Prov. 27:14 *He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.*

Luke 6:26 *Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!...*

- b. The betrayal of a perceived friend is painful.
 Ps. 55:12-13 *For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: :13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.*
 Ps. 41:9 *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*

B. Beware of bad choices.

1. Rebellious people.

Prov. 22:24-25 *Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: :25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.*

- a. You'll become like the rebellious angry people that you have befriended.

2. Those who reject God and embrace the world system.

James 4:4 *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

- a. Put their faith exclusively in the world system.

[1.] We should learn to work righteously within the world system without becoming consumed by it.

Luke 16:9-13 *And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. :10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. :11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? :12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? :13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

John 17:15 *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*

II. True Friends.

True friends minister and sacrifice. They become covenant partners and love their friend as themselves.

1Sam. 18:1 *And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.*

- A. Their relationship is unchanged regardless of situation, season or circumstance in either theirs or your life.

Prov. 17:17 *A friend loveth at all times,...*

- B. Are willing to sacrifice their agendas for you.
John 15:13 *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*
- C. Will always be honest with you.
Prov. 27:9 *Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.*
 - 1. Their honesty will produce joyful counsel if heeded.
- D. Will be an encouragement.
Prov. 27:17 *Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*
- E. Are dependable and can be counted on.
American Heritage Dictionary; *A person with whom one is allied in a struggle or cause.*
 - 1. Is faithful.
Prov. 27:6 *Faithful are the wounds of a friend;*
 - 2. Will stick with you.
Prov. 18:24 *...there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*
- F. Are loyal. Ex. 20:17 *"Thy neighbor's wife."* Ps. 55:12-13; 41:9
- G. Are forgiving.
- H. Are unintrusive. Prov. 25:17
- I. Friends transcend generations. (So do enemies.)
Prov. 27:10 *Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not;*

III. God Is Your Best Friend.

God possess all of the true friend qualities.

- A. Abraham was God's friend.
James 2:23 *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*
 - 1. He believed God.
- B. Obedience is required to maintain a friendly relationship with God.
Gen. 18:19 *For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*
John 15:14 *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*
- C. Abraham and Lot were both called, "Righteous." But Abraham knew of the future demise of Sodom and Gomorah but Lot didn't have a clue.
 - 1. God and Abraham confer about it over lunch.
 - 2. God wants a Father/child relationship with us, but He also wants to your friend.

IV. Choosing Friends.

- A. Be the type of friend that you would like to have.
Prov. 18:24 *A man that hath friends must show himself friendly:...*
 - 1. Don't expect to have quality friends if you are not a quality friend yourself.
 - a. Remember, you reap what you sow. If you are a good friend you'll reap good friends. If you're a bad one, don't be surprised when your friends desert and betray you.
- B. Realize that relationships are cultivated over the course of time.
 - 1. Be cautious with who you reveal your innermost secrets.
Prov. 11:13 *A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*
 - a. A friend turned enemy will use the secrets that you have revealed against you.
 - 2. Don't be a fool by telling them everything before you are sure of their faithfulness.
Prov. 29:11 *A fool uttereth all his mind:*
- C. You may be surprised at who will, as well as who won't, stand with you in time of need or trouble.
 - 1. A person's actions will reveal their character.
Luke 6:44 *For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.*
Prov. 20:11 *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*
- D. Count the cost.
- E. Above all, become the friend of God.

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Pastor David Joe May

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