

Five Friends



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NASWI Navs

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DEFINE FRIEND.

Proverbs 18:24 [NASB] *“A man of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*

The Bible teaches us to have 5 types of friends.

Webster gives five *definitions* of the noun - *friend*. Among them, two tell us that a *friend* is someone who is “attached to another by affection or esteem” and someone who is “a favored companion.” Now I ask myself, “What *activities* are associated with being a friend? What do I expect from my friend? What does my friend expect from me?” [discuss] I can think of a few things:

1. INVEST. Friends invest time, money and emotional energy in each other’s lives because they value each other’s company and they value each other’s person.

2. SERVE. Friends enjoy serving each other and sharing things with each other; they do not manipulate to get, nor do they use guilt trips to maintain the friendship – this service is an act of selfless love.
3. LOYAL. Friends are loyal and they protect each other, including protecting each other’s reputation. They have an alliance. They don’t give up on each other.
4. INITIATE. Friends initiate all these things – they are not merely responses, although friends also allow their friends initiate these things in their lives, too. Friends are active, not passive.
5. COMMUNICATE. Friends communicate honestly and openly with each other – they are actively engaged in growing this relationship through regular sharing and listening. This communication is two-way.
6. ENCOURAGE. Friends encourage each other to finish well. When Jesus sent out His disciples, He sent them out in pairs to ensure their success and encouragement. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 [NASB] *“Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.”* Friends also show empathy by entering the other person’s grief and sorrow with the objective being to bring encouragement and comfort to the other person.

How do I remember these duties? Try “I-SLICE” and the way to remember that is Prov 27:17 [NASB] *“Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*

Q: What is the natural outcome of doing these six activities with another human being?

A: You get to know them and they get to know you.

It's interesting that after approximately 21 months on the roads and trails of Israel together, on the very night before He was murdered, Jesus gathered His disciples to Himself on the rooftop of the upper room, after their last supper, and told them:

John 15:12-15 [NASB] *“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”*

The Son of God, the Creator of the Universe, the One Who walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve, calls His appointed disciples, “friends.” And what was the proof Jesus offered to His disciples that they really were His friends?

Simply this: that everything the Father had told Jesus, Jesus had told the disciples.

In the New Testament, the word used for friend is *philos [fee-loss]*, which Strong says is a *companion*. A companion – someone you WANT to spend time with. Someone you want to travel with...as in, a *traveling companion*.

Tonight I wanted to make a departure from our regular study of the Book of Acts and Marriage to build the case for why I believe God wants us to have five specific friends.

[Pray]

1. Jesus.

The first friend and most important friend we need is Jesus. All other relationships flow out of first having a vibrant friendship with Jesus. We are called to EMULATE Jesus.

1 Pet 2:21 [NASB] *“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you **an example** for you to follow in His steps...”*

One of the names given to the Son of God is Emmanuel.

Does anyone know what it means? God With Us. An amazing fact is that God became a Man and lived among us and let us touch Him, He let us get real close and He became vulnerable with us – He laid aside His heavenly glory and walked in our moccasins. Jesus beloved Disciple, John, wrote in 1 John 1:1-3 [NASB] *“What was from the beginning, what we have **heard**, what we have **seen** with our eyes, what we have looked at and **touched** with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, **so that you too may have fellowship with us; and***

indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

What was John saying? He was saying that since God Himself made Himself available for a friendship, that John was then inviting his readers to enjoy that same friendship with them. The word “fellowship,” is *koinonia*, which means one who is a *partner, associate, comrade and companion*. A friend.

It’s important to remember Who Jesus is. He is God, in the flesh. He is how you and I relate to the God-Head. **Looking at the verses on the back of your handout under the title FIRST FRIEND, write out one or two truths from each passage which relates to this idea that Jesus seeks our friendship.**

John 17:3 [NASB] *“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”*

James 2:23 [NASB] *“...and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS,” and he was called the friend of God.”*

2 Chron 20:7 [NASB] *“Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?”*

Isa 41:8-10 [NASB] *“But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend, You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts And said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you. ‘Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’”*

John 1:14,18 [NASB] *“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth...No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”*

Gen 5:24 [NASB] *“Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”*

Mar 3:14 [NASB] *“And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach...”*

Acts 4:13 [NASB] *“Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.”*

Luke 10:38-42 [NASB] *“Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word. But Martha was distracted*

*with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.” But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for **Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.**””*

And what was Jesus’s mindset when it came to people? He was here to SERVE them. If we are to emulate our Friend Jesus, then we must step in line behind Him and serve others, too.

Mark 10:45 [NASB] *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, **but to serve**, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

2. Paul.

The second friend we need is a Paul. By this I mean we need a mentor like Paul. Someone spiritually more mature than we are who can disciple us and whom we will allow to train us to obey the Lord Jesus. The best form of training as any student pilot knows is demonstration. Consider what God’s Word has to say on this subject:

1 Cor 11:1 [NASB] *“**Be imitators of me**, just as I also am of Christ.”*

Heb 13:7 [NASB] *“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.”*

We give permission to the Paul God has brought us to point out error in our life as part of their training us to follow Jesus. We call this being teachable.

Prov 27:6a [NASB] *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend...”*

Heb 13:17 [NASB] *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”*

The role of the Paul in our life is to disciple us and teach us to obey the Lord. The friend acting like Paul does this by way of example, but also by sharing God’s Word with us. Often they ask us to co-labor with them. This was the way of the Lord Jesus with His disciples.

In Scripture, we really don’t have too many examples of people walking up to someone and saying “please disciple me.” What we do have is exactly the opposite. Consider what Jesus says to His disciples:

John 15:16 [NASB] *“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.”*

We also have the examples of Paul choosing Timothy and Priscilla and Aquila choosing Apollos. Pray and ask God to bring a Paul into your life and when He does, make yourself available to be trained to follow Jesus.

You say “I’m a grandfather already but I have never had a Paul equip me.” My friend, pray and ask God to bring a man into your life to equip you now.

You say “I don’t have time – I have a full time job and a family and cars and a mortgage and an upcoming deployment.” You make time for the things which are important in your life. Last year CNN issued a *report that the average American spends 74.55 hours a week looking at a screen. If you spend 8 hours a night sleeping and 8 hours a day working, Monday through Friday, then you and I both have 72 hours of free time. This CNN report means that the average American spends all of his or her free time in any given week looking at a screen. It’s kind of hard to make disciples or to get disciplined when we hold onto our free time like it belongs to us. Part of being a disciple of Jesus Christ means making Him Lord of my life and not making me lord of my own life.

Luke 9:23 [NASB] *“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him **deny himself**, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”*

* <http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/30/health/americans-screen-time-nielsen/>

You say, I have the Holy Spirit to teach me – I don't need another person teaching me. You don't know the Scriptures my friend. Christ's command was clear: Make Disciples. And He didn't give this command to everyone on the planet, He only gave to His Disciples. You have to be a disciple before you can make a disciple. **But what did He say?** He said make disciples of *all the nations*. He wouldn't have said that if He didn't mean it. Consider what He said in His prayer the night before He was crucified:

John 17:4 [NASB] *“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”*

What was this work which Jesus said He had already accomplished?

Some think He was talking about the Cross. Maybe, but I don't think so. On the Cross He said *“It is finished.”* But here he prayed and says He has accomplished something *already* – read what He talks to His Father about in the next four verses:

John 17:5-8 [NASB] *“Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and*

truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.”

I believe the work Jesus was referring to was His own Training of the Twelve. That 21-month backpack trip. That daily fellowship, Bible Study, the evangelistic trips when they were sent out in pairs and came back and reported to Jesus what happened, the countless meals eaten together, the nights sleeping in the same house down by the sea, the miles walked together, the thousands of people served, the trips across the lake, the stories shared, the hymns sung, and the hours and hours of prayer. They did **EVERYTHING** together. This was not *“OK Jesus, see you next Sunday at church.”*

Pray and ask God to give you a mentor, a Paul. If you are a Paul, ask God to give you a person to disciple and get at it.

3. Barnabas.

The third friend we need is a Barnabas. We learn from Acts 4:36 that Barnabas’s name means “Son of Encouragement!” He was the one who quickly stood with Saul when everyone else ran in the opposite direction. He started out as Paul’s mentor then became his battle buddy and was his right-hand man for that first long missionary journey. From Acts 4 through his disagreement with Paul over taking John Mark on the Second Missionary journey in Acts 15, Barnabas was everywhere Paul was – they were friends. They were battle buddies. They had each other’s back.

When Jesus sent out His disciples, He sent them out in pairs. In the Book of Acts we see ministry teams made up of pairs and threesomes.

Mark 6:7 [NASB] *“And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out **in pairs**...”*

Luke 10:1 [NASB] *“Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them **in pairs** ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come.”*

Who is your Barnabas? Who is your best friend in the Lord? Who are you a Barnabas to? Seriously? And I'm not talking about your spouse. Your spouse needs you to have a Barnabas of the same gender.

Did you know Peter was married?

Mark 1:29-30 [NASB] *“And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now **Simon's mother-in-law** was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her.”*

1 Cor 9:5 [NASB] *“Do we not have a right to take along **a believing wife**, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and **Cephas**?”*

But who was Peter's Barnabas? It was John. When Jesus was going to have the Passover prepared whom did He send?

Luke 22:8 [NASB] “*And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it.”*”

Our Barnabas is not our mentor, nor is he or she someone that we are trying to mentor. They are simply our friend – that one we can count on to be there by our side, through thick and thin. When we stumble, they lift us up. When they stumble, we lift them up. We share in confidence.

James 5:16 [NASB] “*Therefore, confess your sins to one another...*”

What do you look for in a Barnabas? Someone who is of a like-heart. Someone who has on their heart, what is on your heart, and hopefully what is on God’s heart. Someone who will encourage you to walk with Jesus.

4. Timothy.

The fourth friend we need is a Timothy. When Paul was on his 2nd missionary journey he came across young Timothy.

What are some characteristics of a Timothy?

- a. Spoken well of by the brethren – Acts 16:1-3 [NASB]
“*Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and*”

circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.”

- b. Kindred spirit, seeks after the Lord [not self], he was available – he aligned himself with Paul’s schedule – Phil 2:19-22
- c. Faithful, able to teach others – 2 Tim 2:1-2

Let’s talk about Timothy’s willingness to align his schedule with Paul’s agenda. **Where did he learn that?**

1 Kings 19:19-21 [NASB] *“So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. And Elijah passed over to him and threw his mantle on him. He left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, “Please let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?” So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate. **Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him.**”*

Mat 4:18-22 [NASB] *“Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” **Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.** Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee*

their father, mending their nets; and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.”

Let me be clear: We are **not** called to have other men or women follow **us**. We are called to help other men and women follow Jesus. We do this through a ministry called “making disciples.” This ministry was given to every follower of Jesus in what we call The Great Commission. Let’s look at it very quickly:

Matt 28:19-20 [NASB] *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

5. Lost Friend.

Is it possible to have friends who do not know the Lord?

Consider Jesus’s encounter with some self-righteous Pharisees & lawyers:

Luke 7:33-34 [NASB] *“For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon!’ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’”*

Paul addresses the issue of Church Discipline in his first letter to the church in Corinth – he realizes that what he wrote them might be taken out of context so he take 3 verses in 1

Cor 5:9-11 to clarify something: *“I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.”*

What was God’s plan for His Good News to get into the ears of lost people?

Rom 10:13-15 [NASB] *“...for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!””*

2 Cor 2:14-17 [NASB] *“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.”*

Q: What are people called who are being saved?

A: Lost! We need to have lost friends!

Our example of making friends with lost people is Jesus Himself. Consider the story of the woman at the well.

Q: What country was she from?

A: Samaria.

Q: Was it customary for a Jewish man to hold a dialogue with a Samaritan woman?

A: No. Consider what His disciples thought when they returned with lunch –

John 4:27,39-42 [NASB] *“At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, ‘What do You seek?’ or, ‘Why do You speak with her?’”* Now consider the outcome of Jesus’s friendship toward this woman: *“From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all the things that I have done.’ So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.’”*

If the Lord uses you to win a Lost Friend to Christ, then he or she becomes your Timothy – you then need to follow up and

establish this new believer. Then ask God to give you another Lost Friend.

So let's summarize – we need to have five friends and the Most Important One is Jesus.

All friendship flow out of that one. We are called to:

- Emulate Jesus
- get Equipped by a Paul,
- Encourage a Barnabas,
- Establish a Timothy, and
- Evangelize a Lost Friend

Five Friends - May 3, 2017

Definition

6 Duties of a Friend:

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First Friend for me to E_____

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Second Friend to E_____ me

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Third Friend for me to E_____

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Fourth Friend for me to E_____

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Fifth Friend for me to E_____

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FIRST FRIEND

E_____

- John 17:3
- James 2:23
- 2 Chron 20:7
- Isa 41:8-10
- John 1:14,18
- Gen 5:24
- Mark 3:14
- Acts 4:13
- Luke 10:38-42
- Mark 10:45

SECOND FRIEND

E_____

- Heb 13:7
- Prov 27:6a
- Heb 13:17
- John 15:16
- Luke 9:23
- John 17:4
- John 17:5-8

THIRD FRIEND

E_____

- Mark 6:7
- Luke 10:1
- Mark 1:29-30
- 1 Cor 9:5
- Luke 22:8
- James 5:16

FOURTH FRIEND

E_____

- Acts 16:1-3
- Phil 2:19-22
- 2 Tim 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 19:19-21
- Matt 4:18-22
- Matt 28:19-20

FIFTH FRIEND

E_____

- Luke 7:33-34
- 1 Cor 5:9-11
- Rom 10:13-15
- 2 Cor 2:14-17
- John 4:27, 39-42

Ask God to give you these 5 Friends