

Love Reaches! Part 7: "Reaching Thru Multi-dimensional Friendships!"

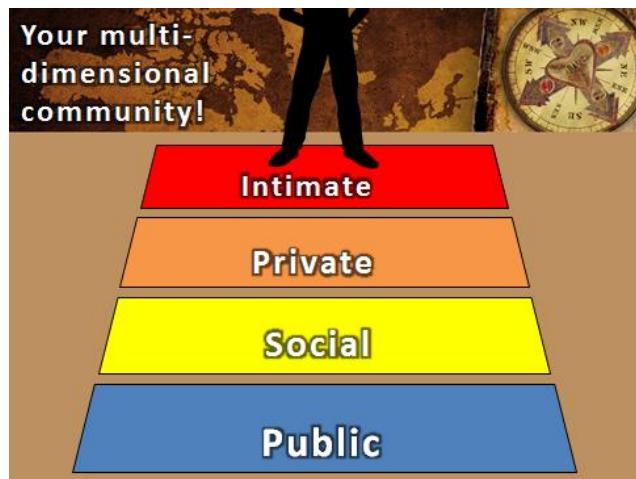
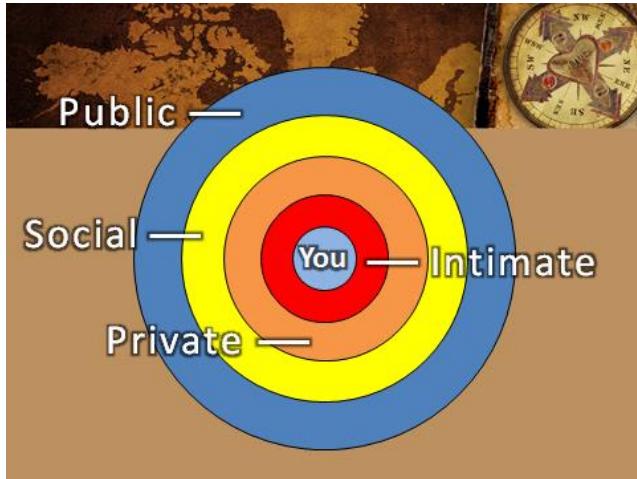
It happens all the time that we "pass right by" people who are hurting, people with needs... Are we willing to presume that "someone else" will catch them? Or are we willing to make the "shift," presuming to be a good friend who loves and reaches to all?

So far... We've reached up to God for resource... For our reach side to side... Reaching first to the far edge where our peers are hard to deal with... Reaching next to the other edge where it's hard to deal with the people we love most! (REAL SIGN OF THE CROSS!)

Reaching to be the friend who helps others follow Jesus more closely! What could be more "friendly" than that? That by our connection an eternal benefit is realized? "I can join you for lots of temporal activity or I can partner with you in eternity!"

Friends... Are those who help us follow Jesus more closely... *Should be our mates, where married!* Where propinquity functions right! *Then "BFF's" (Forever safe)!* Always in our business, always loving, seeing, speaking... sharpening our walk! *And then to as many people as the Lord has placed in the pathway of our lives!* All strata of "friendships!"

Friends... To some degree, are a necessity of life! *Ordinary friendships (public/social) build around "homogeny," like minds/interests...* People you never see outside the football stadium, can be "friends!" I-phone, Droid and Chrome friend circles! People at the market! People at the donut shop/coffee house! People of common faith/public friends! *People w/bumper stickers/social friends!* *Closer relationships (private) are built around mutual admirations and "completing" qualities in the friends...* Many times we are drawn together for what we see lacking in self... Not to say this a "for profit" relationship... But "When I am with them I am better than when I am alone!" Drawn together for strength! *Intimate relationships are built on all the above and more...* Appreciation, confidence, fidelity, deep conversations... *And the most intimate of them all includes faith/sharing God...* Helping them attain to their God given plan and design... "By the power at work in you!"



"A solitary life, whose feelings cling to no one, and around whom no one clings, is truly lost!"

Jonathan and David!

"And it came to pass... that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as he loved his own soul... but Saul wanted David dead... Now, Jonathan, Saul's son delighted in David and told David, "My father wants to kill you. Hide yourself from him and I will find out what's going on. Jonathan went to Saul and reminded him of the good things David had done for him. "He hasn't done anything wrong, why would you shed innocent blood?" And Saul listened to Jonathan and repented. And Jonathan went and got David and all

was well again... for a short time... Then Saul attempted to kill David and he fled. Later, he asked Jonathan, "what have I done that your father wants me dead?" And Jonathan said, "it can't be true, he would have told me about it!" David replied, "It is true and he knows we are dedicated friends and that knowing his plans would grieve you, but as truly as God lives there is only a small gap between me and death!" They set up a plan so that Jonathan would know whether or not it was true and how he would signal David if it was... and it was true... and Jonathan and David took an oath that when he became king he would remember to be kind to Jonathan and his family and Jonathan made him say it again because he loved him, he loved him as he loved his own soul... and he made a way for David to escape. When Saul found out he said, "You are the son of a perverse woman, don't I know you have chosen David over me to your own confusion? For as long as he is alive on the planet you will never be established as king. Go and get him so that we can kill him!" And when Jonathan resisted, the king threw a spear at him to kill him and he knew that Saul was determined to kill David. Jonathan left angry, and with many tears Jonathan and David said good-bye to each other... in the end, Jonathan spoke this to David: "Don't be afraid... my father will not find you and the Lord will appoint you to be king and I will be second to you and this my father knows well! And the two of them made a covenant together before the Lord one last time and David lived in the forest and Jonathan returned to his house." **1Samuel 18.1-23.18**

Aside from Jesus is there a better example of a friend? *Their friendship was founded on nobility!* Not the "station" but the "virtue!" "One in the love and fear of God!" "It's the nobility, humility, and security that makes "you" more important than "me" without making me any less!"

Aside from Jesus is there a better example of laying down your life for your friend? Jonathan was a prince, warrior, hero! Without a shadow of self-preservation! David could do nothing for him he couldn't do/take for himself! But Jonathan's love for God and David caused him to yield to the "will of God!"

Alongside Jesus can we be a friend who lays down our lives for our friends? Can we honestly yield to the will of God for our affections and work? Can we yield rights and boundaries? Do we esteem others, as we do ourselves, making them worthy of our help?

The Grid... The prodigal Son: open arms for those returning from wasted living! **Lk15.11ff** The woman at the well... dissatisfied/ used up! **John 4.4ff** The tax collector... \$\$ monger! **Lk5.27** The prostitute... the exploited/exploiter! **John 8.3ff** The Good Samaritan: open arms to broken, beaten life! **Lk10.30ff** The hungry, stranger, naked, sick, imprisoned! **Matt 25.40**

We are called in love to reach out to be "eternity friends" to them all... That responsibility and "shift" comes with great reward or great loss... Love Reaches!