

Majoring on the Majors!
Part 15: A Network of Godly Friends!
Slide Notations

We're dealing with the last of the five issues that can keep us from Kingdom of God fullness! Of all the hindrances to the fullness of our faith, this last one, friends, may be the most significant! With the right set of friends we can survive almost any fall! With a network of Godly friends we can survive almost any fall!

So far... Dealt w/friends topic: "To judge or not?" World says don't judge me – "tolerance!" Word says yes, with specific limitations... Never judge a "conclusion!" But judge one another's actions/words/results for transformation... We let God do the final judgments... We judge one another in hope of a successful final! Athletics/business/ed... and not faith!

So far... Dealt w/friends topic: "To judge or not?" Then we added on to the judgments... We judge according to truth not tastes! "My tastes are different than your tastes, who's tastes are right?" "God's truth is different than your truth, who's truth is right?" We do not disallow the benefits of a friends judgment because they have bigger cracks in their lives than we do! No matter who or what... ask "What?"

Friends that bring fullness: Judge our sin with boldness; fueled by love to deliver us! Judge us with the love and character of God; to help perfect us! Judge us with His truth, not their tastes; to keep from confusing or frustrating us! Speak to us about our health from their own death bed!

Asides: Trying to get... What God's plan and purpose is for friendships!

Are we knocking around like balls on a cosmic pool table? Or are we inserted into our worlds by God to meet and minister to certain people? Jesus birth, timing, place He grew up, the men He met, the people He connected to... Any chance @ that?

We must have friends to be full but they must be Godly friends...

Proverbs 18.24a

KJV: A man that has friends must show himself friendly... [ra 'ah] Certainly true must show a willingness, openness to friends to have friends... And must reciprocate true friendship! *But Hebrew text says: [ra 'a'] "a man having many friends will come to destruction!" (Hebrew maxim) "The man who lays himself out to make friends of good and bad alike does so to his own ruination!" "They will feed upon him and exhaust his resources but will not stand by him in the day of calamity!"*

We need "friends of substance," people who stick closer than a brother; whose wise counsel makes us wise and safe and sharp in warfare!

Proverbs 18.24b

But there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother! KJV But there is a loving one who sticks closer than a brother! Hebrew Bible. People who indiscriminately gather and label people as friends, do so to their own ruin..

People who build right relationships have friends who stick closer than a brother!

Closer than a brother... Ever had a little brother who wouldn't leave you alone? Ever had an older brother who wouldn't let you go? Ever had a brother, familiar borders open, that would fight with you just because you were his brother? Ever had a brother who would fight for you, die for you (but not lie for you), just because you were his brother?

Closer than a brother... Jesus is the perfect model... Never leaves nor forsakes us! Always confronting, all-ways loving! Whichever way is required, He does it! Hardness for the hardened/grace for the repentant! Undaunted by your prominence, position, He walks right in to fight you – for you! Proved His love by fighting and dying for you when you were wrong... to call you to His truth!

So how far does this go? How far do you want to get?

Do you want God's fullness? Then you must have...

Friends like Jesus! *Start with your mate, if married!* Two not only one flesh: Completers! *Define your friends!* "can two walk together w/o agreement?" **Amos 3.3** "Friends lay down their lives for one another!" **J15.13** "You are My friend if you do what I command you!" **J15.14** "Friends share the things that are of God with each other!" **J15.15** "Do not be unequally yoked..." **2C6.14**

Friendly asides... Many times when we come to Christ we begin losing our "friends!" (family too) Word says so! **Mt10.16ff 1P3.16, 4.4** Maybe for the 1st time we are defining... Are they functioning in the role of helping me refine, come to fullness? Maybe, rather than losing a friend we are positioning to bring them to wholeness! Friends, as we see in Jesus, are people knotted together, as a net in His hands!

Friends like Jesus! *Engage your friends!* Empower them by invitation! "I invite you all to speak into my life!" Not, "I invite you... and not you..." And listen for the voice of the Lord alone! Friends may miss it/may not even know why they are saying it... But God never does... and when it's Him it's all-ways profitable!

Do you want God's fullness for others? Then you must be...

Friends like Jesus! *Engage your friends, offer help!* Most will say yes in the beginning... *Be prepared when they say, "no more!"*

"She left the door open for only light and friendly exchanges, but stated any "lecturing" on my part would be received as 'arrogant, presumptuous, and condescending...'"

What do we do? Hurt? Frustrated? Quit? What would Jesus do? What would we want a friend to do if we were ugly?

Friends like Jesus!

"what if we have done everything to correct a friend the Godly way and they still choose to accept the way other than the Christian way? Is there ever a time when we just say it was their choice and let them live their life of sin or do we still continue to "work" on them and eventually lose a friend because they feel like we are "nagging" them?"

What would Jesus do? What would we want a friend to do if we were resisting?

Friends like Jesus! Would our Model... Cave in, guilt-up, get mad, be unforgiving? Does He gloat/chide when we fall? He steps back (God is not mocked)... He lets people follow their own choice until it fails and then He is there taking the next opportunity to encourage them – again, to follow God! *His friendship is defined by His character!* Never compromises and never quits watching, waiting, ready to move! *His response is determined by ours!*

Jesus all-ways confronts! *To some, bluntly:* "She was caught in the very act... Moses said to stone her!" 'OK! Let the one among you without sin cast the first stone...' **J8.7** *To some, mercy & grace:* "Woman, where are your condemners? There are none, Lord. Jesus said, 'And I don't condemn you, now go, and sin no more.'" **J8.10,11** Mercy says, "I love you as you are..." Grace says, "now come up higher!"

To others, severity: "Get behind me Satan, you are an offense to Me for you savor not the things of God!" **Mt16.23** "Get out of my face Peter, you have little taste for the kingdom of God" From the beginning, Jesus friendship w/Peter was about the kingdom! "Come follow Me and I will make you fishers of men!" **Mt4.19**

"Where there is no steerage we are divided, cast down, and fallen: but in abundant and excellent consultations there is help, deliverance and victory!" **Pr 11.14**

"Every intention and plan is fixed and confirmed by prudent advisement and with proper steerage and counsel we advance and accomplish the battle!" **Pr 20.18**

"For by proper steerage and guidance you will enter and fight the battle and in abundant, excellent advice there is safety, deliverance and victory!" **Pr 24.6**

Scriptures that all confirm the value of a Godly friend's network!

Does that sound like... "It's your thing/do what you want to do" "Mr. Bud Weiser is here to help you!" "I have a friend who will help you forget" *Or*, "Can we talk?" "I think the Word says something else!" "I can't stop you from doing what you're doing and I can't go with you... but I will be here when you get back!"