

John 15:12-27: Greater Love For Friends.

i. Friendship

Friendship is a relationship of mutual affection between two or more people. Friendship is a stronger form of interpersonal bond than an association. Friendships exist primarily for social exchange and mutual attachment (**loyalty, commitment and sharing**). A World Happiness Database study found that people with close friendships are happier. Friends tend to share common backgrounds, occupations, and/or interests.

A friend is "**someone you don't have to see every day to still connect with, someone who loves you whether you talk often or not, someone who would drop everything and run to your rescue when you need them. It's someone you just want to be with.**"

The Bible describes true friendship as when one will be honest even when it hurts. **Proverbs 27:6** says, "**Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.**" This means that a true friend of yours will tell you what you need to hear, even if it hurts, instead of flattering you all of the time.

Proverbs 17:17 - *A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*

Jesus Christ loves at all times.

ii. Importance Of Friendships.

Friendships are the most important part of our emotional and social wellbeing throughout our lives. The absence of friends is very damaging and dangerous. A British anthropologist Robin Dunbar theorized that there should be approximately 150 people with whom a human can maintain stable social relationships, however, everyone needs and has at least two closest friends.

Good friends will have a positive influence on you. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** says that "**two are better than one,**" and goes on to tell how life is much better when you have a friend.

In turn, bad friends will have a negative influence on you. The Bible says in **1 Corinthians 15:33** that "**bad company will corrupt someone with good character.**" Many people make the mistake of associating with the wrong crowd, leading them to disaster.

However, we are not just social beings, we are spiritual beings; regardless of the goodness and the closeness of our friendships we will often feel lonely and we'll

fail to be there for one another when most needed. No one can satisfy our emotional, social and spiritual needs and never fail us apart from Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 27:9 - *Ointment and perfume delight the heart, and the sweetness of a man's friend gives delight by hearty counsel.*

Proverbs 27:17 - *As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

Jesus Christ is the ONE most important friend we can ever have.

iii. Making Friends

Friendships are made by repeatedly encountering someone informally or intentionally and having/creating opportunities to share ideas and personal feelings with each other. Some friendships thrive even with distance and extreme personality differences.

Proverbs 18:24a - *A man who has friends must himself be friendly,*

James 2:23 - *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.*

Jesus Christ is always available/close to listen to our hearts and minds, let's informally, formally and intentionally talk to Him.

iv. End of friendships

All friendships end, either by fading quietly away or suddenly (distance, separation, interest changes, betrayal or death). Friendships always end with mutual or individual pain that some people never recover from.

Proverbs 18:24b - *But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

Proverbs 22:11 - *He who loves purity of heart and has grace on his lips, the king will be his friend.*

He's our forever friend, our leave-me-never friend,
From darkest night to rainbow's end He's our forever friend,
Even when we turn away He cares for us, His love no one can shake,
Even when we walk away He's by our side with every breath we take,
And sometimes we forget Him and we fail to shine,
Sometimes we forsake and betray Him, but He is always ours.