

# Friends

## **INTRODUCTION:**

**1. Friends are valuable, one of the greatest blessings a man can have. Friends can sometimes be closer to one another than they are to those to whom they are related by blood (physical family).**

**2. What does the Bible have to say about friends?**

## **BODY:**

### **I. Picking friends.**

**A. We ought to seek after genuine, true friends, rather than "fair weather" friends. *"Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbor" (Proverbs 19:4).***

**B. We ought to be aware of the influence our friends have on us. *"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Proverbs 13:20).***

**C. We ought to seek after friends who will make us better people. *"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17).***

**D. We ought to avoid those who will have a negative influence on our character. *"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul" (Proverbs 22:24-25).***

### **II. Producing friendships.**

**A. Friendships must be reciprocal in nature. *"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverb 18:24).***

**B. Don't make a "pest" of yourself. *"Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee" (Proverb 25:17).***

**C. Develop a forgiving attitude toward others. *"He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (Proverb 17:9).***

**D. Help others in time of need. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Proverb 17:17).**

### **III. Preserving friendships.**

**A. Don't gossip about your friends. "A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends" (Proverb 16:28).**

**B. Don't betray your friend's trust. "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint" (Proverb 25:19).**

**C. Avoid hurtful conduct. "As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?" (Proverb 26:18-19).**

**D. Don't become involved in your friend's financial affairs. "My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth" (Proverb 6:1-2).**

### **CONCLUSION:**

**1. When friendships are properly picked, produced, and preserved, friends can be one of the most valuable of all blessings a man can have.**

**2. What kind of friend are you? Would you want *yourself* as a friend?**

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A British publication once offered a prize for the best definition of a friend. Among the thousands of answers received were the following:

"One who multiplies joys, divides grief, and whose honesty is inviolable."

"One who understands our silence."

"A volume of sympathy bound in cloth."

"A watch that beats true for all time and never runs down."

The winning definition read: "A friend is the one who comes in when the whole world has gone out."

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