

Title: The Blessing of True Friendship
Pastor: Fred May
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Proverbs 18:24 RSV

²⁴ There are friends who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

A. A friend of God

Religion vs. relationship

James 2:23

²² 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.

Galatians 3:29

²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The covenant standard: all encompassing, never ending

Proverbs 17:17a

¹⁷ A friend loves at all times...

John 15:12-15

¹² This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Psalms 25:14 RSV

¹⁴ The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear Him. And He will show them His covenant.

B. Circles of priority

Proverbs 13:20

²⁰ O He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

- **Jesus' circle** (John 19:26-27 – covenant of the first-born)
1, 3, 12, 70, 500
- **'Bone of my bone' – marriage first**

Genesis 2:23a

²³ And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"

C. The walk of life

1. Value adding, enriching

Proverbs 27:17 RSV

¹⁷ Iron sharpens iron, and one friend sharpens another.

2. Conduits of grace

I John 1:7

⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

3. A work in progress

Amos 3:3

³ Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Matthew 18:18-19

¹⁸ Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

- 'Knitting of souls'

I Samuel 18:1

¹ ...the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David...

- Face-time - the 'face to face' encounters

Exodus 33:11a

¹¹ So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

- Conversation, dialogue; a meeting of minds and hearts and a shared sense of destiny.

4. A shared frame of reference, values & vision

James 4:4

⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

D. Coming into compatibility

II Corinthians 6:14 KJV

¹⁴ Be ... not unequally yoked together

Deuteronomy 22:10

¹⁰ You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

Philippians 2:2 NIV

² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

- like-minded
- shared love
- spiritually synchronized
- partners in purpose