



Friendship

Philippians 2:19-30 | Ryan Pfeiffer | Oct 13, 2024

“Show me your friends and I’ll show you your future.” —Anonymous.

**Our circle of friends profoundly impacts our character and future.
In today’s passage I want to focus on Paul’s model of friendship.**

In vs 25 Paul describes power of Epaphroditus’ friendship in 3 words:

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.

1. Brother. 2. Fellow-soldier. 3. Co-worker.

FOCUS. What do these terms reveal about the power of friendship to help us stay in the mindset of Christ?

BROTHER. (Shared Faith).

Paul uses these familial terms throughout the NT...

- **Vs 22 (underline) Talks about rel. w/ Timothy “as a son with his father...”**
- **Rom 16:1 Speaking of a woman... “I commend to you our sister Phoebe...”**
- **Rom 8:16 when we surrender to Jesus... “we become children of God”**

**Paul recognized that the power in his friendships went deeper than the social bond
There are two levels to our friendships... the social level and spiritual.**

The social level in our friendships:

1. Shared stage of life 2. Shared interests 3. Shared routine 4. Shared history...

These are good and fun... but when we settle here we miss out...

The Invitation is for us to lean into the spiritual level of our friendships.

HOW?

- 1. Opening up spiritual conversation w/ each other...**
- 2. What is God doing in your life?**
- 3. How is God’s word speaking to you?**
- 4. Where do you need prayer?**



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- Talking about Jesus... can bring to light when our mindset has drifted...
- It takes our friendship to a deeper place...
- Deeper honesty

FELLOW-SOLDIER. (Shared Struggle)

The Greek word for this term (systratiōtēs) - fellow struggler... one who struggles along with another.

Epaphroditus was a friend who shared in Paul's struggles...

- V25 Helped take care of Paul's needs
- V27 He was a friend who "almost died" with Paul
- V30 He "risked his life" to struggle alongside him.

(R) Who are the friends you can trust with the struggles in your life?

What's amazing is that despite Paul's closeness to God (visions of heaven, saw the resurrected Christ) ... he still depended on God's help thru friends.

Jesus did as well... he received help from women who supported his work
Jesus took his 3 closest friends w/ him to pray in Gethsemane...

David... who was anointed by God... leader... warrior needed friendship.

1. 1 Samuel 23:16 And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God.

Ultimately our strength isn't in our friends. it's in God.

Our struggle isn't just with outward circumstances ... it's the spiritual forces of evil that wage war against us.

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Spiritual forces of evil wage war on our minds... our future... thru fear... anxiety... addictive desires... lust, greed, and materialism.

(R) Is there a struggle in your life that needs God's strength? Who can you open up to?



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Next Steps...

- Do you need to make more time and room for friendship?
- Do you need to take risks in vulnerability?
- Is there a friend you need to check in on and ask how they're doing?
- Maybe a friendship that has grown distant that needs a fresh touch.

CO-WORKER. (Shared Cause)

The Greek word for Co-worker is (synergōs) where we get the word synergy.

Synergy= two or more things coming together to produce a greater impact.

Friendship gets deeper when we share our faith... we get stronger when we share our struggles...

But when we have a shared cause ... our impact and influence multiplies.
God has created us to make a difference in this world...
Our friendships aren't just for us... they are also for the sake of others.

V. 22 Talking abt Timothy... "served with me in the work of the gospel"

V 29 Talk abt Epaphroditus... "he almost died for the work of Christ"

Heb 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur (motivate, stir-up, provoke, inspire, challenge) one another on toward love and good deeds...

Spiritual friendship brings out the best in one another... calls out our gifts... our ministry our calling from God to the good works he's made us for.

Our friendships are more than a holy huddle—> Missional force!