"WISDOM ABOUT FRIENDSHIPS"

A Study of the Proverbs, Part 2

INTRODUCTION:

What is friendship?A mutual commitment between believers to companionship, to love, and to spiritual growth.

I. Why do I need friends?

1. Advice
   Prov. 15:22 - "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established."
2. Encouragement
   Prov. 12:25 - "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad."
3. Help
   Prov. 27:17 - "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."
4. Companionship
   Prov. 18:24 - "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

II. Who is not really my friend?

A false friend is one who:

1. Is not sincere with you (27:6)
2. Is only interested in what he can get from you (14:20; 19:4, 6-7)
3. Is hot-tempered and easily angered (22:24)
4. Is always getting you into trouble (13:20; 16:17-19)
5. Is always looking for trouble (1:10-19; 4:14-19)
   a.They lead you astray (1:10)
   b.They band for evil (1:11-14)
   c.They steal for sport (1:13, 19)
   d.They reap what they sow (1:17-18)
   e.They love mischief (4:16-17)
   f.They stumble in darkness (4:18-19)

*Types of "Friendships":

1)Spiritual Friendships (develops relationships for mutual edification - a church)
2)Social Friendships (develops relationships for emotional needs - a night club, bar)
3)Superficial Friendships (develops relationships for business reasons - a business deal, bank/store)
4)Selfish Friendships (develops relationships for lustful gratification - a sexual/money manipulation)
5)Sinister Friendships (develops relationships for sinful exploits - a street gang)

III. Who is a true spiritual friend?

A true friend is one who:

1. Sticks to his friend faithfully (18:24; cp. Jn. 15:13-15)
   (The principle of loyalty)

2. Edifies his friend verbally (27:5-6, 9, 17; 28:23)
   (The principle of honesty)
   a. Honest rebuke (27:5-6; cp. 28:23)
      1)Is verbal (v. 5)
      2)Is reliable (v. 6a)
      3)Is painful (v. 6b)
      4)Is helpful (v. 6c)
   b. Honest advice (27:9)
   c. Honest encouragement (27:17)

3. Loves his friend continually (17:17)
   (The principle of fidelity)

   a .A friend loves through "thick and thin"
   b. A friend loves you the way you are

4. Forgives his friend cheerfully (17:9; cp. 10:12)
   (The principle of mercy)

5. Trusts his friend confidently (10:12; 11:13)
   (The principle of confidentiality)

6. Treats his friend respectfully (27:14)
   (The principle of dignity)

IV.How do I gain friends?

1. Be friendly

Prov. 18:24 - "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

2. Be sincere
Prov. 22:11 - "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend."

3. Be graceful with your tongue (22:11)

4. Be faithful to your friends
Prov. 27:10 - "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off."

*Basically, be what you should be, and you will meet and become friends with those who are like you.

V. Who do I look for to be my friend?

1. Someone who is saved (II Cor. 6:14-17)
2. Someone who evidences Godly wisdom
Prov. 13:20 - "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

3. Someone who is not worldly
James 4:4 - "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

4. Someone who will build me up, not tear me down

Prov. 27:17 - "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

*Basically, someone who knows, loves, and obeys Jesus Christ.