

THE UNSHAKEABLE WORD

# 70 Bible Verses

## *About Friendship*

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*From Proverbs to the upper room*

• A friend loves at all times •

There is a kind of friendship Scripture describes that most people have only glimpsed. Not the casual kind — the kind maintained by convenience and proximity and mutual benefit — but the kind that sticks closer than a brother, that loves at all times, that lays down its life for the other without keeping score. It is the kind David found in Jonathan. It is the kind Ruth extended to Naomi. It is, above all, the kind that Jesus offered to His disciples the night before He died, when He looked at them and said: I no longer call you servants. I call you friends.

The Bible takes friendship seriously because God takes it seriously. He is described as a friend of Abraham. He spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. The Trinity itself is a relationship — an eternal communion of love between Father, Son, and Spirit — and human friendship, at its best, is a reflection of that divine reality into the ordinary world of two people who choose each other.

These seventy verses trace friendship from its wisest expressions in Proverbs, through the extraordinary covenants of the Old Testament, into the teaching and example of Jesus, and through the life of the early church — where men and women who had nothing in common except Christ found in each other something the world could not give and could not take away.

**Read them slowly. Then think of the person who belongs beside each one.**

## WHAT A TRUE FRIEND IS

*Proverbs has more to say about friendship than almost any other book. It begins with what a friend actually is.*

1

**PROVERBS 17:17**

*“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”*

At all times — not when it is convenient, not when you are at your best, not when the friendship costs nothing. At all times includes the times when you are difficult, when you have failed, when you have nothing to offer in return. The friend who loves only in the good seasons is not a friend. The real friend is the one who shows up in the adversity, who was, in fact, born for it.

2

**PROVERBS 18:24**

*“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*

Must himself be friendly — friendship requires something from you before it gives anything back. But then Proverbs names something rarer: the friend who sticks closer than a brother. Blood does not guarantee proximity of heart. Some friendships, chosen freely and maintained faithfully, go deeper than any family bond.

3

**PROVERBS 27:9**

*“Ointment and perfume delight the heart, and the sweetness of a man’s friend gives delight by hearty counsel.”*

Hearty counsel — not reluctant advice or carefully hedged opinion. The counsel that comes from someone who genuinely loves you has a sweetness that no other counsel can match. A true friend speaks from the heart, and you can taste the difference.

4

**PROVERBS 27:10**

*“Do not forsake your own friend or your father’s friend... better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.”*

Do not forsake the old friendship — the one inherited, the one built over years. Proximity matters. The friend who is actually present, who shows up in the day of calamity, is worth more in that moment than the distant relation.

5

**PROVERBS 27:17**

*“As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.”*

Sharpening requires friction. The friend who only ever agrees with you is not sharpening you. They are leaving you dull. Real friendship includes the uncomfortable conversation, the willingness to push back because they care more about who you are becoming than whether you like them at this moment.

## HONESTY AND FAITHFULNESS IN FRIENDSHIP

*The friend who tells you what you need to hear rather than what you want to hear is the more valuable gift.*

6

**PROVERBS 27:6**

*“Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”*

Faithful wounds — the correction that comes from love can be trusted precisely because it hurts. The friend who is willing to wound you with the truth cares about you more than the comfort of the moment. The enemy who flatters you cares only about themselves. Learn to receive the wound from a faithful friend as the gift it is.

7

**PROVERBS 28:23**

*“He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward than he who flatters with the tongue.”*

Afterward — the rebuke is not appreciated in the moment. Rarely is. But the person willing to speak the hard word earns a deeper trust than the one who always says what pleases.

8

**PROVERBS 16:28**

*“A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.”*

Separates the best of friends — gossip is among the most destructive forces a friendship can encounter. Careless words, half-truths, shared secrets — all of them plant seeds that can undo what years of faithfulness built.

9

**PROVERBS 11:13***“A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.”*

Conceals a matter — the faithful friend is a vault. What you shared in vulnerability stays there. Trustworthiness with private things is one of the defining marks of a true friend, and one of the rarest.

10

**PROVERBS 20:6***“Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, but who can find a faithful man?”*

Who can find a faithful man? The rarity is the point. Many people claim friendship; few sustain it through the years and the seasons and the disappointments. Faithfulness over time is the ultimate test.

## DAVID AND JONATHAN: THE COVENANT FRIENDSHIP

Scripture’s most detailed portrait of friendship. Two men who chose each other at enormous personal cost.

11

**1 SAMUEL 18:1***“Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.”*

The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David — the language is of weaving, of two things bound together at their very core. This is not the casual affection of proximity. It is a deep, soul-level recognition. Jonathan, heir to the throne, chose the shepherd boy who would one day displace him. The friendship cost him everything. He gave it anyway.

12

**1 SAMUEL 18:3–4***“Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.”*

The robe, the armour, the sword, the bow, the belt — everything that identified Jonathan as a prince, he stripped off and gave to David. He was saying: what I am, I place in service of who you are. This is covenant friendship.

13

**1 SAMUEL 20:17***“Now Jonathan again caused David to vow, because he loved him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul.”*

Again — the covenant was renewed, reaffirmed. Great friendships are not assumed to be secure. They are deliberately tended, the promises rehearsed, the loyalty declared again.

14

1 SAMUEL 20:42

*“Then Jonathan said to David, ‘Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the Lord... May the Lord be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever.’”*

May the Lord be between you and me — God is invoked as the third party, the witness, the one who holds the friendship together even when the friends are separated. The covenant extends beyond their own lives.

15

2 SAMUEL 1:26

*“I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; you have been very pleasant to me; your love to me was wonderful, surpassing the love of women.”*

David’s lament over Jonathan is among the most tender expressions of grief in all of Scripture. Wonderful — the Hebrew suggests something extraordinary, beyond ordinary categories. Some friendships are simply in a category of their own.

## RUTH AND NAOMI: LOYALTY THAT WOULD NOT LET GO

*The most famous declaration of loyalty in the Bible was spoken by a daughter-in-law to a bereaved mother-in-law.*

16

RUTH 1:16–17

*“But Ruth said: ‘Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried.’”*

Ruth had every reason to leave. Naomi had told her to leave. There was nothing in it for Ruth. She chose to stay because of love. The friend who stays when they could go is the friend worth having. And what Ruth chose — your God will be my God — means that faithful friendship can be the door through which people enter faith.

17

RUTH 1:14

*“Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.”*

Orpah kissed her — and left. Ruth clung. The contrast is not a judgment on Orpah. It is a description of something exceptional in Ruth. Clinging is what true friendship looks like when the moment of choice comes.

18

RUTH 2:11

*“It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth.”*

Fully reported — the community noticed. Acts of loyal friendship do not pass unseen. What Ruth did for Naomi was spoken of, known, and eventually rewarded by God through the very structure of the story He was writing around them.

19

RUTH 4:15

*“And may he be to you a restorer of life... for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him.”*

Better to you than seven sons — the community’s final verdict on Ruth’s friendship with Naomi. In a culture where sons were the highest possible inheritance, this is the supreme compliment. A loyal friend can be worth more than a household full of family.

## JESUS: THE FRIEND ABOVE ALL FRIENDS

*The night before He died, Jesus redefined the relationship. You are no longer servants. You are friends.*

20

JOHN 15:13–15

*“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants... but I have called you friends.”*

Jesus defines the greatest love as self-giving — laying down your life. And then He does precisely that. But first He gives them the word that changes everything: friend. A servant is kept at a distance. A friend is brought inside — given the reasons, the plans, the heart of the master. Jesus called His disciples friends and then showed them everything.

21

JOHN 15:12

*“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”*

As I have loved you — the standard for how friends are to love one another is the love of Christ. Not the love of mutual benefit or shared comfort, but the love that goes all the way to the cross.

22

JAMES 2:23

*“Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And he was called the friend of God.”*

Friend of God — the title given to Abraham, and given because of faith. The friendship that God offers to human beings through Christ is the ultimate expression of this — the God of the universe extending the relationship of friendship to dust.

23

EXODUS 33:11

*“So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.”*

Face to face, as a man speaks to his friend — not through a dream, not at a careful distance, but in the direct, personal, open way that friendship makes possible. Prayer, at its best, is friendship with God.

24

MATTHEW 11:19

*“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’”*

His enemies meant it as an accusation. He wore it as a description. Jesus was a friend of tax collectors and sinners — the people everyone else had written off. The friendship of Jesus went exactly where respectable friendship did not.

25

JOHN 11:11

*“Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.”*

Our friend Lazarus — Jesus speaks of him with the tenderness of genuine affection. And then He acts. He goes to wake him up. The friendship of Jesus is not merely a warm feeling; it moves, it intervenes, it brings the dead back to life.

## FRIENDSHIP AND ENCOURAGEMENT

*The friend who sees what is possible in you when you cannot see it yourself is one of God’s greatest gifts.*

26

1 SAMUEL 23:16

*“Then Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God.”*

Strengthened his hand in God — the most important thing a friend can do. Jonathan found David hiding in the woods, running for his life. He went to where David was and pointed him back to God. This is what the best friends do: they do not merely make you feel better. They strengthen your grip on the One who holds everything together.

27

HEBREWS 10:24–25

*“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together... but exhorting one another.”*

Consider one another — think carefully about your friends and what they need. Stir up love and good works — provoke them toward better things. This is the active, intentional friendship Scripture describes.

28

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

*“Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.”*

Edify — to build up. The friend who builds you up over years, who adds to your life rather than subtracting from it, who leaves you stronger every time you have been together, is one of God’s most deliberate gifts to you.

29

ECCLESIASTES 4:9–10

*“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls.”*

Woe to him who is alone when he falls. The person with no one to call when things fall apart is in genuine danger. Friendship is one of God’s practical provisions against the fragility of human life.

30

ECCLESIASTES 4:12

*“Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”*

The threefold cord — the friendship that includes God is the most resilient of all. Two people committed to each other and to Christ are bound by something stronger than affection or history.

## FRIENDSHIP AND COUNSEL

*Wisdom knows that no one sees their own life clearly. The friend who sees clearly and speaks honestly is worth more than they know.*

31

PROVERBS 15:22

*“Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.”*

Without counsel, plans go awry — not sometimes. Without counsel. The person who makes every significant decision alone is operating with a fraction of the available wisdom. Friendship that includes the freedom to ask for counsel and the willingness to give it is among the most practically valuable relationships a person can have.

32

PROVERBS 12:15

*“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.”*

Right in his own eyes — the fool does not lack confidence. He lacks the humility that makes counsel possible. A true friend gives you their honest view, unfiltered by the fear of your reaction.

33

PROVERBS 24:6

*“For by wise counsel you will wage your own war, and in a multitude of counselors there is safety.”*

Safety in a multitude of counselors — not in a multitude of yes-people, but in counselors: people willing to think carefully, speak honestly, and care more about your wellbeing than their own comfort in the conversation.

34

PROVERBS 13:20

*“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.”*

Your friendships are forming you. The people you walk with, habitually and over time, shape the person you are becoming. Choose friends who are wiser than you find comfortable, and you will grow into someone you could not have become alone.

35

PROVERBS 19:20

*“Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days.”*

In your latter days — wisdom is a long-term investment. The person who spends a lifetime listening to counsel and receiving instruction does not arrive at old age regretting it.

## FRIENDSHIP IN THE EARLY CHURCH

*The church was built on friendship — specific people, named and loved, carrying the gospel together.*

36

ACTS 2:44–46

*“Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common... breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.”*

Breaking bread from house to house — the early church was not primarily an institution with occasional moments of community. It was a community shaped by shared meals and daily encounter. Gladness and simplicity of heart are the signature of friendship that has nothing to prove.

37

ROMANS 16:3–4

*“Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life.”*

Risked their own necks — Paul’s friendship with Priscilla and Aquila was the kind you die for. The greatest friendships in the New Testament were forged not in comfort but in the shared risk of carrying the gospel into a hostile world.

38

PHILIPPIANS 1:3–5

*“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.”*

Every remembrance of you. Paul’s friendship with the Philippians was one of the great joys of his life — he thanks God every time he thinks of them. The friendship that makes you thank God when you remember it is the kind worth building.

39

**PHILEMON 1:1***“Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker.”*

Dear friend and fellow worker — the combination is significant. The deepest Christian friendships are not merely personal; they are also purposeful. Friends who share a mission carry each other through what neither could endure alone.

40

**3 JOHN 1:14***“But I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.”*

Greet the friends by name. The early church knew one another personally — not as a crowd but as named individuals who mattered. The community that greets by name is the community that truly sees.

## FRIENDSHIP AND BEARING ONE ANOTHER’S BURDENS

*The friend who enters your suffering with you — not to fix it but to be present in it — is doing one of the most Christlike things a person can do.*

41

**GALATIANS 6:2***“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”*

Fulfill the law of Christ — the law of Christ is love. Bearing one another’s burdens is the practical expression of that love in friendship. Not merely sympathising from a safe distance, but reaching out and actually taking hold of the weight the other person is carrying. When you do this for a friend, you are doing what Christ did for you.

42

**ROMANS 12:15***“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”*

Both require something from you. Weeping with those who weep is empathy, presence in grief. Rejoicing with those who rejoice requires the death of envy. The friend who can genuinely celebrate your good news without any shadow of jealousy is a friend worth keeping.

43

**JOB 2:11***“Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place... to mourn with him, and to comfort him.”*

They came. Job’s friends are notorious for their bad theology, but before they opened their mouths they did something right: they showed up. They sat with him in silence for seven days. Sometimes the most important thing a friend can do is simply arrive.

44

**JAMES 5:16***“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”*

Confess to one another — the healing James describes is released through honest friendship. The person who has no one safe enough to confess to carries their burden alone, and it compounds. The friend who can be trusted with your failures is one of God’s primary instruments of healing.

45

**JOHN 11:35***“Jesus wept.”*

The shortest verse in Scripture, and one of the most revealing. Jesus knew He was about to raise Lazarus. He knew the grief would turn to joy in minutes. And He still wept — because the people He loved were weeping, and love refuses to remain unmoved by the pain of a friend.

## LOVE: THE HEART OF ALL TRUE FRIENDSHIP

*Everything Scripture says about friendship flows from love. Not the love that is a feeling, but the love that is a choice.*

46

**JOHN 13:34–35***“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples.”*

By this all will know — the primary evidence that you belong to Christ is not a theological position or a moral record. It is the quality of love visible between His people. Friendship among believers is a form of public witness.

47

**1 CORINTHIANS 13:4–7***“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy... bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”*

Read this as a description of what friendship looks like when love is doing its work. Suffers long — for the friend who is slow to change. Believes all things — extends the most charitable interpretation. Endures all things — outlasts the seasons of distance, difficulty, and disappointment.

48

**1 PETER 4:8***“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins.”*

Love will cover — not pretend there are no sins, but extend enough grace that the friendship is not defined by its worst moments. The friend who keeps no account of wrongs is one of the most powerful expressions of the gospel in ordinary life.

49

ROMANS 12:10

*“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.”*

Giving preference to one another — putting the other first. The friendship that practices mutual preference produces something rare: two people who are each genuinely trying to honour the other, and finding themselves richly honoured in return.

50

COLOSSIANS 3:14

*“But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.”*

The bond that holds everything else in place. Without love, patience becomes resentful endurance, kindness becomes performance, honesty becomes cruelty. Love is what makes every other quality in friendship actually function as a gift.

## THE DANGERS OF BAD FRIENDSHIP

Scripture is as clear about who not to walk with as it is about who to walk with.

51

1 CORINTHIANS 15:33

*“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’”*

Do not be deceived — Paul flags this as a place where self-deception is especially easy. We tell ourselves we are strong enough to be unaffected. Evil company corrupts good habits. Slowly, invisibly, it does. The person who thinks they are the exception is usually the proof of the rule.

52

PROVERBS 22:24–25

*“Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul.”*

Lest you learn his ways — you will. Emotional patterns are among the most contagious things human beings share. The chronically angry person teaches everyone around them to interpret the world through anger.

53

PROVERBS 14:7

*“Go from the presence of a foolish man, when you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.”*

Go — the instruction is not complicated. Wisdom knows which friendships are building you toward God and which are drawing you away, and acts accordingly.

54

**PSALM 1:1**

*“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.”*

Notice the progression: walks, stands, sits. Casual association becomes habitual presence becomes settled belonging. The descent from wise friendship into corrupting company is almost always gradual.

55

**PROVERBS 29:3**

*“Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, but a companion of harlots wastes his wealth.”*

The choice of who you companion yourself with is among the most consequential choices you make. Companionship with what is degrading is always costly, and the cost is always more than money.

## FRIENDSHIP AND FORGIVENESS

*No friendship of any length survives without the willingness to forgive. And to ask for it.*

56

**MATTHEW 18:21–22**

*“Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’”*

Seventy times seven — not a literal count but an unlimited posture. Jesus is not setting a new quota. He is abolishing the quota altogether. The friendship that has decided to forgive whatever comes is the friendship that lasts.

57

**EPHESIANS 4:32**

*“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”*

Tenderhearted — not the clinical tolerance of someone who has managed their feelings, but the warm, genuine compassion of someone who actually cares. The forgiveness that flows from a tender heart does not feel like a grudging release. It feels like grace, because it is.

58

**PROVERBS 10:12**

*“Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.”*

Love covers — not by pretending the sin did not happen, but by refusing to make it the defining fact of the relationship. This is what makes long friendships possible: the daily choice to cover rather than expose.

59

LUKE 17:3-4

*“...and if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”*

The disciples responded to this with ‘Lord, increase our faith.’ Which is the right response. This level of forgiveness is not natural. It is supernatural, produced by the same grace you yourself have received.

## THE FRIENDSHIP OF PAUL AND TIMOTHY

*Among the New Testament’s many friendships, the bond between Paul and Timothy shows what mentoring friendship looks like across generations.*

60

2 TIMOTHY 1:2-4

*“To Timothy, a beloved son... I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy.”*

Greatly desiring to see you — Paul, nearing the end of his life, writes with the longing of genuine affection. He remembers Timothy’s tears. The mentoring friendship that grows into something this tender is one of the rarest and most beautiful things in any community of faith.

61

PHILIPPIANS 2:20-22

*“For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character.”*

I have no one like-minded — Paul’s commendation of Timothy is his highest praise. Proven character is the phrase — tested, demonstrated, reliable. This is what the long friendship produces: a person whose character you know because you have watched it under pressure.

62

1 TIMOTHY 1:2

*“To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

A true son in the faith — not a biological son but a son in the most important sense. The friendship that is also a spiritual inheritance, where one person passes on their faith and wisdom to another, has the quality of family.

63

2 TIMOTHY 4:9

*“Be diligent to come to me quickly.”*

Paul, in his last letter, writing from prison with the knowledge that he will die soon, asks for his friend. Not for a theologian, not for a strategist. For Timothy. In the last moments, you want the person who has walked with you, not the one who can fix the situation.

## FRIENDSHIP AND PRAYER

*The friendship that prays together is bound by more than affection. It is bound by the God they are both addressing.*

64

**MATTHEW 18:19-20**

*“If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”*

Two of you — Jesus does not set a large threshold for the gathering He inhabits. When two friends pray together, they are not merely two people in a room. They are two people and the Lord Jesus Christ. The dynamic of that gathering is entirely different from any other kind of meeting.

65

**PHILIPPIANS 1:19**

*“For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”*

Through your prayer — Paul credits part of his expected deliverance to the prayers of the Philippians. Friendship that includes intercession is one of the most powerful things in the universe. When your friend prays for you, they are bringing you before the throne of God.

66

**COLOSSIANS 4:12**

*“Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”*

Always laboring fervently in prayers — this is one of the most selfless expressions of friendship imaginable: to give your energy and attention to God on someone else’s behalf, asking for their wholeness.

67

**1 SAMUEL 12:23**

*“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.”*

To cease praying for a friend is, Samuel says, a sin. Prayer for those we love is not optional — it is one of the primary obligations of loving someone. The friend who carries you before God regularly is doing something for you that nothing else can replace.

## FRIENDSHIP: THE GIFT AND THE CALLING

*To be a good friend is not merely a relational achievement. It is a calling — one of the most Christlike things a person can do.*

68

JOHN 15:13

*“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.”*

The measure of friendship is not how much you receive but how much you are willing to give. Most friendships will never ask for the ultimate sacrifice. But they will ask for something — your time, your honesty, your presence in the hard seasons, your willingness to keep showing up. Friendship measured by what it costs is the friendship that lasts and the friendship that transforms.

69

PROVERBS 17:17

*“A friend loves at all times.”*

We return to where we began, because it is where every meditation on friendship must keep coming back: at all times. Not selectively, not conveniently. At all times. This is the standard. It is also the description of how Christ loves you — which means it is, by grace, the love you are being made capable of giving.

70

JOHN 15:16

*“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.”*

You did not choose Me, but I chose you — the friendship with Christ begins with His initiative, not ours. He chose first. He loved first. He reached out first. The friendships you build in the name of Christ, sustained by His love poured through you, are among the most enduring things you will ever do.

Seventy witnesses — a prince stripping off his royal robe for a shepherd boy, a young widow clinging to a destitute mother-in-law, an apostle in prison asking for his friend, and Jesus himself looking at the men he had chosen and saying the word they had never expected to hear:

**Friends.**

The God who is himself a communion of love created human beings for friendship, models friendship in how He treats us, and calls us to extend to one another the same love He has freely given. A life built on that kind of friendship — faithful, honest, self-giving, and rooted in Christ — is among the most beautiful things a human being can build.

ACLOSINGPRAYER

*Lord, thank You for the friends You have given me.*

*And for the Friend who called me friend*

*before I knew what to call You.*

*Make me the kind of friend worth having —*

*faithful when it costs something,*

*honest when it is uncomfortable,*

*present when it is inconvenient,*

*and always pointing back to You.*

*Bring into my life the friendships I need*

*and make me worthy of the ones I have.*

***Amen.***