

A man that hath friends must show himself friendly

by William MacDonald

Transcript

“A man that hath friends must show himself friendly.” (Prov. 18:24)

Even though all modern versions translate this verse differently, the King James Version enshrines the valuable truth that friendships must be cultivated. They thrive on attention but die through neglect.

An editorial in Decision Magazine said, “Friendships don’t just happen; they have to be cultivated—in short, we have to work at them. They are not built on just taking, they are built on giving. They are not just for the good times, they are for the bad times as well. We do not hide our needs from a true friend. Neither do we hold onto a friend only to have his help.”

A good friend is worth keeping. He stands by you when you are falsely accused. He commends you for whatever is praiseworthy, and is frank to point out areas that need improvement. He keeps in touch over the years, sharing your joys and sorrows.

That is important—keeping in touch. It can be done by letters, cards, phone calls, visits. But friendship is a two-way street. If I consistently fail to answer letters, I am saying that I don’t consider the friendship worth continuing. I am too busy. Or I can’t be bothered. Or I hate writing letters. Few friendships can survive on continued neglect.

Our refusal to communicate is often a form of selfishness. We are thinking of ourselves, of the time, effort and cost involved. True friendship thinks of others—how we can encourage or comfort or cheer or help; how we can minister spiritual food to them.

How much we owe to friends who have come alongside with the Spirit-given word when it was most needed! There was a time in my life when I was feeling very low over a deep disappointment in Christian service. A friend who could not have known of my discouragement wrote a cheery letter in which she quoted Isaiah 49:4, “Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.” It was just the word I needed to pick me up and set me to work again.

Charles Kingsley wrote, “Can we forget one friend,/ can we forget one face,/ which cheered us to the end,/ which nerved us for our race?/ To godlike souls, how deep our debt!/ We would not, if we could, forget.”

Most of us have only a few close friends in life. That being so, we should do all in our power to keep those friendships strong and healthy.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/william-macdonald/a-man-that-hath-friends-must-show-himself-friendly/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net