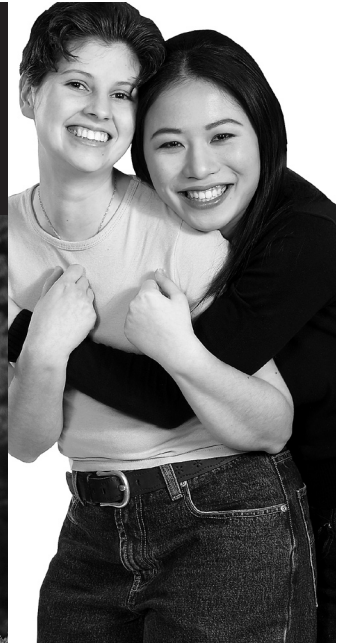


# Friends – God’s Way of Taking Care of Us

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## Welcome & Introduction

### Quote

*“It is a good thing to be rich,  
And a good thing to be strong,  
But is a better thing  
To be loved by many friends.”*

### What is a Friend?

- A friend is someone who goes with you in the “good times and bad times”.
- A friend is a person who comes and won’t judge a flower by its color.
- A person who will never give up on you.
- A person who will comfort you when storms of tears are in your mind.
- A person who will just have some fun with you and give you a good laugh.
- A person that doesn’t mind expressing their happy or sad feelings to you.

**Song:** SASB 645/TB 451 or 438 *What A Friend We Have In Jesus*

## Poem: New Friends and Old Friends

*Make new friends, but keep the old;  
Those are silver, these are gold.  
New-made friendships, like new wine,  
Age will mellow and refine.  
Friendships that have stood the test —  
Time and change — are surely best;  
Brow may wrinkle, hair grow grey;  
Friendship never knows decay.  
For ‘mid old friends, tried and true,  
Once more we reach and youth renew’.  
But old friends, alas! May die;  
New friends must their place supply;  
Cherish friendships in your breast —  
New is good, but old is best;  
Make new friends, but keep the old;  
Those are silver, these are gold.*

## Friendship

The dictionary says is: A person whom one knows, likes and trusts. A person with whom one is allied in a struggle or cause; comrade. One who supports, sympathizes with, or

patronizes a group. An acquaintance.

### *So then what is this magic called Friendship?*

Is there a magic wand that silently transforms you and those special people on a journey into, what sometimes can be a lifelong relationship? Is it mutual admiration, common interests, the need to be a friend? Or is it just an enduring tie that bonds you together, allows you to almost think as one and gives you one of life's greatest joys.

Friendships are precious jewels. Treat them as such. Enjoy them! Celebrate them! And never take them for granted. (Source – Internet)

### **Scripture Reading**

Promise box – each lady selects a promise to read. Ask if anyone would like to share from their “promise”.

### **Who is my neighbour?**

Our friends are the people whom we choose; usually friends are the same sort of people as ourselves. My neighbor is the woman whom I do not choose; she is the woman whom God gives to me. She is a woman who happens to sit opposite to me in church; she is the clerk who works at the grocery store. I have no right to say that she is no concern of mine, because, if I am a Christian, I know that she is the woman whom God has given me.

**Song:** SASB 709/TB 84 *A Friend of Jesus*

### **Famous Words on Friends**

- Go often to the house of thy friend, for weeds choke the unused path. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- If we build on a sure foundation in friendship, we must love our friends for their sakes rather than our own. (Charlotte Bronte)
- So long as we love, we serve; so long as

we are loved by others, I would almost say we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend. (Robert Louis Stevenson)

- As old wood is best to burn, old horses to ride, old books to read, so are old friends always most trusty to use. (Leonard Wright)



- A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere, before him I may think aloud. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- Stay, is a charming word in a friend's vocabulary. (Amos B. Alcott)

### **Devotional: Recipe for Friendship**

Friendships are wonderful gifts to our lives straight from God. There are several references to friendship in the Bible. The relationship of David and Jonathan stands out (1 Samuel 18-20, 2 Samuel 1). Those chapters in Samuel are great reading. Jonathan and David had a great love and respect for each other, in their friendship.

I think of how God called Abraham, “friend” (James 2:23). Moses also comes to mind. Remember how God spoke to him, “face to face, as a man speaks with his friend” (Exodus 33:11)

When it comes to our friends in Christ, friendship takes on a special quality. Friendship between Christians is especially sweet because

of the bond of Christ. We are enhanced by those special friendships. Building those friendships is a wonderful way to encourage and lift up others in the Lord.

Friends are one of the ways God takes care of us. We need all the things friendship entails from other human contact such as encouragement, companionship, love, honesty, loyalty, understanding, and so much more.

Friendships are like recipes, they bake us something special. You may have heard that saying, "In the cookies of life, friends are the chocolate chips". Friends are that sweet extra in life and even sweeter is friendship among believers in Christ.

### **Friendship Recipe**

- **Shortening** - Provides texture. Our fellowship and friendship can add much depth and texture to our lives. We blend together in unity as part of the body of Christ.
- **Sugar** - Adds sweetness. Our fellowship with our friends adds such a sweet taste to our lives. If we didn't have sugar in our cookies, we'd sure miss it. The same is with our fellowship with our friends. We can't leave it out of our lives.
- **Eggs** - Holds ingredients together. Friends are someone to lean on. We are held together by fellowship with them. We are stronger because of them, their prayers, and their love in the Lord. We have a special bond in Christ.
- **Vanilla** - Adds flavor. Friends add that flavor we need. They give us that extra sensation. Without friends and fellowship we become kind of bland.
- **Flour** - Adds substance. We need the substance a friend can add. They give us many things by way of mentoring us when we don't even know it. Their shared testimonies, and the way they live their

lives has an impact on us.

- **Baking Soda** - Leavens. Leavening agents in baking helps to lighten the dough. Friendship lightens our burdens through their prayers and encouragement.
- **Salt** - Enhances flavor. We know that friendships add flavor and just when we need it, they help improve the tastefulness and quality of our lives. Friends are the type of people that know just what we are going through and are there when we need them.
- **Semi Sweet Chocolate Chips** - The kind of chocolate chips usually added to cookies is semi sweet. Our friends tell us what they feel and think and that's okay. They can be honest and truthful to us. "Iron sharpens iron" (Proverbs 27:17).
- **Nuts...Optional** - Just a little craziness in a friend is great! Sometimes a little craziness in our friends can be just the ingredient we need.



## Conclusion

Friendships take a lot of time, the same with recipes that take a lot of effort to bake but the end result is worth it and we sense the sweet aroma and special bond they bring to our lives. Friends that have Jesus in common will have lasting relationships, not just here on earth, but will dwell with Christ together throughout eternity. "A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24. NIV)

I wonder if I'm the type of friend that I should be to others. Am I doing all those things that I should be doing, like lifting burdens, adding flavor, helping hold things together with my prayers, and all those other things? I hope I can improve in this area.

Is your life a good recipe for friendship?



### Game: Know Your Friend

- Is your friend wearing glasses?
- Is she wearing more than one ring?
- What colour are her shoes?
- What is the colour of the purse she has with her?
- Does she come from a large family?
- Does she have children? How many?
- Does she have grandchildren? How many?

- Did she come by car to the luncheon today?
- What is her favorite meal?
- What is her favorite time of the year?
- What is her favorite colour?

**Game:** From the letters found in the word 'FRIENDSHIP' fill in the blanks:

A part of the body	(Hip)
To transmit	(Send)
A coniferous tree	(Pine)
A useful nursery item	(Pin)
To polish	(Shine)
To eat	(Dine)
Conclusion	(End)
To drink slowly	(Sip)
Of good quality	(Fine)
A sacred or hallowed object	(Shrine)

**Game:** Friendship – do you know your friend?

- Name two jobs she has worked at
- Name two places she has lived
- Name two places she has visited
- Name two of her favorite foods
- Name two places she would rather be right now

## Closing

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God." (Philippians 4: 6 )

Ask for prayer requests from the ladies — for friends, family, those who once part of the fellowship, those who are unwell.

**Chorus of Song:** SASB 709/TB 84  
*Friendship with Jesus, fellowship divine,  
O what blessed sweet communion,  
Jesus is a friend of mine!*

**Share** in fellowship with refreshments