

## TRUE FRIENDS AND THEIR VALUE

Thelma Rose

Who can do without friends? Would any one wish to if they could?

If we sought information from the dictionary regarding the meaning of "friend," we would gain only a definition something like this: "an intimate acquaintance, one devoted to another by affection, regard or esteem."

From the Bible we gain not only a definition but hints and rules on how to choose, gain and retain friends, as well as the admonition to seek the "Friend of friends," Jesus.

It has been said that generally a person can count his true friends on the fingers of one hand. If that is true one should realize their value and learn the secrets of winning and retaining them.

As to the kind of friends, there are many. Some are of the selfish nature who choose to be friendly as long as that so-called friendship brings personal convenience or gain.

Many have met the "fair-weather" friends, who are "among the missing" when one needs special help in trouble. Not every person has the capacity to be a "true" friend.

There are those who are jealous and over-sensitive. They often become cool unless they are given one's full attention and time. Otherwise they fail at the least seeming offence.

Some have known those who are prone to gain the confidence of an unguarded one, at the time posing as a friend, only to betray that confidence at the first chance. Beware of this type. David was perhaps relating such an experience when he said, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Job had a like experience at a time when he needed a friend, for he says: "My kinfolk and my familiar friends have forgotten me."

Then there are those who may have proved true for months, yea, for years, but at last have listened to the "whisperer who separateth the chief friends." Prov. 16:28.

The foregoing facts teach us that intimate friends should not be chosen hastily but very judiciously. "True friendships consist not in the multitude of friends, but in their worth and choice." Wise Solomon describes a true friend as "one that loveth at all times." It has been well said "a friend in need is a friend indeed." The writer has been blessed by those of such description and wishes to pay tribute to them.

I thank Thee, Lord, for friends upon life's way,

Who walk with me if bright or dark the day;  
My faithful friends whose love stands every test,

Who know my faults yet always see the best.  
Accept my thanks for Thy great gift I pray;  
Bless with Thy joy and peace my friends to-day,

Smile on our fellowship and may we be  
Loyal in all things, to ourselves and Thee.

What makes a true friend? It is not necessarily one who agrees with all our opinions and ideas, though generally close friends are of like minds. Often true friends frankly disagree with one another yet at the same time their love may be mutual. They should respect each other's opinions and tastes though they differ or be opposite. Friends who are the most helpful are those who kindly and tactfully remind one another of their weaknesses and faults. True friends can generally say

almost anything to one another and yet not be misunderstood.

It has often happened that a genuine friend deemed it necessary to take issue against a grave error of another, yet the attitude of the rebuked one was, "faithful are the wounds of a friend." Had the former not taken a definite stand, both friends would have suffered error.

Where should we seek friends, and how? We have known of young people, perhaps older ones too, who have left friendly hometowns or villages to live in a strange city or town. They have complained that the people there are not friendly (we agree most of them are not). But those same individuals acknowledge they did not attend church. Naturally the best friends are not found elsewhere.

Perhaps those who have attended some churches complain of the same trouble. Have they ever tried a Holiness church? Then if they are still friendless we suggest they remember, "He that hath friends must show himself friendly." Prov. 18:24.

Hitherto we have discussed the value of earthly friends. But Solomon says: "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

Earthly friends may prove untrue,  
Doubts and fears assail;  
ONE still loves and cares for you,  
Jesus never fails.

To gain and keep this Friend one must let harmful friends go, and even the best must come second place. It is a blessed thought that not only can we have Jesus as our best Friend but we may be friends of His. To His disciples He says: "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." How wonderful to be trusted with revelation from the Divinity. Abraham, too, was called the friend of God. How may we have this privilege? Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15:14.

THELMA ROSE

## "A DOUBLE HEART" Ps. 12:2

Rev. C. W. Ruth

The "double heart" of which the psalmist complains is not an exceptional, physical biological freak, which may be regarded as a curiosity, but a common spiritual ailment in the lives of Christians who have been "born again." The marginal reading is, "an heart and an heart" which of course would indicate two hearts, or a "double heart." This evidently does not refer to some act of wrong-doing or sinning, which may be pardoned, but to a state, or condition, requiring a different sort of treatment in order to correct the same; nor is this descriptive of an unregenerated sinner of whom it is said: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Not having been "born again," the sinner has just the one heart—and that is to do evil continually.

The Apostle James doubtless refers to this same condition when he says, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways," and exhorts his "brethren" to "Draw nigh to God, . . . and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. The "heart," and "mind," invariably affect the "tongue," hence in the selection of deacons, the Apostle Paul insists care should be taken not to choose one who is "double-tongued."

Hence we see there is a "double heart," a "double mind" and a "double tongue" definitely recognized in Scripture, as an ailment among Christians.

St. Paul doubtless refers to this same condition in Galatians 5:17, when he says: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." This accounts for the inward conflict in the heart of such as have been "born again." It could not be applied to the sinner, seeing a sinner does not have "the Spirit," but here is a person who has the "double heart" and the "double mind"—the mind of the "flesh," and the mind of the "flesh" at times gaining the ascendancy, so that ye cannot [may not, R. V.] do the things that ye would." It is this inward condition that makes the life of the Christian doubly difficult—having to contend with Satan and his temptations from without and this untoward condition from within. Hence David prayed, "Unite my heart to fear thy name."

As previously stated, this condition may not be pardoned, seeing it is nothing we have done—not an act of sin or wrong-doing; nevertheless, there is a cure, and a complete deliverance for this heart condition. In Galatians 5:24 we read, "They that are Christ's [continue to be Christ's] have crucified the flesh [sarx] with the affections and lusts;" so that if we "live in the Spirit," we may "also walk in the Spirit." Sins which we have committed are not "crucified," but pardoned and forgiven: the "flesh" is not forgiven, but crucified—two entirely different experiences. Here is one of the distinguishing factors between the pardon and regeneration of the penitent sinner, and the entire sanctification of the Christian.

When a sinner is converted he is spiritually "quickened"—made spiritually alive, according to Eph. 2:1: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." When a believer is wholly sanctified, "our old man" "crucified"—brought into death; "quickened" and "crucified" never did mean the same thing, and never will. Sanctification means the utter renunciation of the self life, and every carnal affection, so that there is henceforth the "single eye," to the glory of God, and "thy whole body also is full of light." Thus all the ransomed powers of the soul are "united" to do the whole will of God. It is then we can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh [soma] I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And "Now being made [having been made] free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." While there still will be temptations, and conflicts from without, the soul has rest from the inward struggle, and there is joy and victory within. "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Praise God, I know all this to be true, because I have experienced it!

There is no royal road to great achievement and distinction. To be great you must use great means. Life's biggest prizes are awarded to the resolute, valiant and indomitable.—Grenville Kleiser.