

FRIENDSHIP III

“A man who has Friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24 NKJV

STEP 1: ACHIEVED RESULTS

What specific action did you commit to fulfilling last week? What were the results?

STEP 2: REFLECTIONS

Instructions: Take turns Reading with everyone the following paragraphs. As you are Reading underline the ideas that catch your attention.

THE EIGHT TRUTHS OF REAL FRIENDSHIP

6. True Friends celebrate the success of others.

True Friends celebrate victories together. This is essential for a real friendship. Friends don't allow envy or jealousy to harm their friendship, since they seek the well being of each other just as their own. However, true friends don't compete; on the contrary, they are great admirers and cheerleaders for their friendships.

Why wouldn't a true friend celebrate the success of their friendships in a worthy cause? True friends are always proud of the achievements of their friendships. Friends dream together, laugh together, suffer together, lose together, succeed together, and celebrate together. One should be the most enthusiastic cheerleader for the success of their friendships. Even when you have personal difficulties, the individual must communicate to his friends how much he admires their qualities, showing them how grateful he is to be part of their lives. Celebrating with a friend in this way lets you know that your work is not in vain and that your pursuit of excellence makes a difference in the lives of others.

There are two ways to react to the success of friends: admire and emulate; or envy and belittle. A true friend admires and emulates at all times and celebrates the achievements of their friends in the same way he would celebrate his own. This creates strong bonds of loyalty when you show your friends that any hint of jealousy and envy is not tolerable in your heart.

7. Real Friends are trustworthy.

Without trust a person will not open up their heart and will only have superficial relationships. But how can one trust others? The simple answer is to follow the golden rule: Treat others as you wish to be treated. A friend listens, understands and protects the deepest thoughts of his friends. When a person shares his fears, ambitions, challenges or dreams he can trust that a true friend will listen to him without judging him. He will understand you without pitying you and guide you without lecturing you. Trust is built when you listen carefully to another person's problems and offer honest advice when asked.

Real Friends don't abandon their Friends when life gets hard, instead they show loyalty and love, supporting their Friends in moments of crisis. Fake friends, on the other hand, are acquaintances who seek personal gain from the friendship. Fictional friends walk away in the face of trouble. A true friend, however, stands through the storm and suffers when his friends suffer. *"A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity" Prov. 17:17 NKJV*

8. Real Friends are faithful.

A trustworthy friend is loyal to his friends when they are present and especially when they are absent. Martin Luther King Jr. said "In the end, we will not remember the words of our friends, but the silence of our friends." Loyalty doesn't mean being on the side of a friend in every situation; it means that one is a friend through thick and thin. The fundamental principle to follow is loyalty to the absent, protecting the character of those unable to defend themselves due to their absence. John Maxwell wrote "If you are not honest with yourself, you will not be able to be honest with others".

Loyalty towards Friends ends when lies begin. Loyalty and faithfulness and honor are the foundations of longlasting friendships even though they are frequently ignored in our society. In addition to honesty, which is the most important principle, is loyalty, which is the glue that holds friendships together in the storms of life.

Benefits of having and being this kind of friend:

1. **1. You will feel more motivated to achieve success or to fight for your dreams.** *Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. ¹⁰ If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble."* Eccles. 4:9 NLT
2. **Your true friends will stand by you even when trouble comes.**
3. **You will have lasting friendships.** Because loyalty and fidelity keep friendships together.

Steps to follow:

1. **The best way to find friends of good caliber is to be one of them.** *If you are married, your closest friend should be your spouse. Cultivate friendship regularly with your spouse and also with those special people for you.*
2. **Don't just think it, say it and celebrate your friends' success; this is how any hint of jealousy is overcome. Commit to giving in each of your relationships more than you receive.**
3. **Use the Golden rule.** Treat your Friends as you would like to be treated... *(Matt. 7:12 NIV)*
4. **When there are conflicts, if possible, resolve the issues instead of dissolving the friendship.**
5. **Resolve today to extend the fidelity and loyalty of a true friend to others.**

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STEP 3: REFLECT AND RESPONSE

Choose something that you underlined as important to you. Take a minute to share with everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

STEP 4: AUTO EVALUATION

Respond the following section of self-evaluation:

On a scale of 1 to 10: How well do you apply these 3 points as a friend? _____

Why did you give yourself this score?

What benefits would you obtain from improving your score?

What people do you know that are a good example of this quality? What do you admire the most from this person?

What specific action can you take immediately to improve your score?

STEP 5: SHARE YOUR ACTION STEPS

Take a moment to share your responses from the self-evaluation section, include the action that you plan to take to improve in that area. We ask that everyone participates.

Instructions for the host:

- 1. Make the calling:

“Lord Jesus, I recognize that I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and my heart so that you may be my Lord and personal Savior, amen”.

- 2. Impartation: Pray and activate what you have learned today.
- 3. Pray for the offering.