



"I HAVE DIFFICULTY MAKING FRIENDS"

Dear Reader, if you are a Christian, and this is your desire, maybe it would be a worthwhile thing to reconsider.

Yes, friends are a nice thing to have, however there are friends and then there is Christian fellowship. Some Christians have lots of worldly friends, half friends, 'half Christians' but have no **fellowship** with them. Why? Their desire to have friends and not be lonely, has taken precedence over the Lord's concern that they should be witnessing to their lost friends.

Let's take Jesus and Paul for example, the former being in the situation, whereby the Jews, all bar his mother and a couple of others, put him on the cross ... not too many friends there.

Furthermore, Paul had 'everyone' leave him before he was beheaded. In both cases ... where were their friends? Exactly! But they had had plenty of **fellowship** with the right sort of fellows, along the way.

Dear Reader, Paul's and Jesus' prayers were not about getting friends, but about being friendly so that could preach the truth! In fact, the opposite became reality ... they made countless enemies.

So maybe Dear Reader, your prayer to God could be this "Dear God, please make me **friendly** so that I can witness to others." Now that's a prayer worth praying.

Jesus was a man approved of God with signs, wonders and miracles to the common man ... that is ... Jesus was being **friendly**, so that he could open Israel's ears and eyes of understanding, so that he could preach them the truth ... that he was God manifest in the flesh ([1 Timothy 3:16](#)) ... and that he would keep the impossible rules of the Sermon on the Mount perfectly on their behalf. Of course, they stoned him, not for good works, but he being a man, and forgiving sins, made himself God ([John 10:33](#)).

Furthermore, Paul would have proved himself **friendly** as a tentmaker, and not overcharging his clients and so on. Why? To be friendly in order to preach his gospel ([2 Timothy 2:8](#)).

So Dear Reader, you can see the difference between having friends and being friendly ... you can have plenty of friends but be absolutely worthless when it comes to serving the Lord. Put it this way, I guarantee if you get plenty of friends, they will all soon leave you, because they do not want to hear about the fact they are sinners ... and one heart beat from hell.

Look, if you just want to make friends ... there has been 30,000+ books written on the topic, go and get a few of them, study up ... and Hey Presto! You'll have more friends than you can shake a stick at.

But let me give you a lasered version on how to be friendly, as a prelude to asking people two questions in order that they might put on their 'thinking caps' and consider where they will spend eternity. These questions are ...

"If you died tonight, where would be ... heaven or hell?"

"If you thought you would be going to heaven, why would God let you enter?"

I mean you can ask people these questions straight up, but it's probably wiser to relax a person first, so they let down their guard, make them laugh a bit and so on.

1. Look pleasant ... put on a cheerful face ... not too cheerful as there is a lot of heartache, pain and misery out there ... you can put people off before you start if you know what I mean?

2. Start by saying to a complete stranger sitting down at a shopping centre ... remember they are lonely ... they want a friend or someone to be friendly with as well ... just sit down, not too close to them of course and begin with some 'small talk' like ...

(Please!!! Don't start with "I've just had a bowel operation!" ... that is of course the Lord leads you to say this.)

Start with something neutral like ...

"How's it going?"

Wait for some sort of answer, and answer something like

"You got a point there." ... agreeing with them. This is how you start a conversation.

You could say something like ...

"I like your shoes, where did you get them?"

or

"That's a nice jacket. Where did you get that, if you don't mind me asking?"

or

"I've seen you down here before. I come for the coffee. How about yourself?"

or there's the old standard

"It's hot today. Hope we get some rain."

It's called a conversation ... it's two a way thing ... don't talk about yourself too much, or your wonderful kids, or the intricacies of your last bowel operation.

Keep it friendly, keep it light.

3. Above all ... be a good listener... and ask appropriate questions.

Let them impress you!

Say stuff like ...

"OK! That sounds interesting!"

"I didn't know that?"

"Amazing! Where did you learn that!"

"Nice watch! How long have you had that?"

4. Then ask this "By the way, may I ask you a personal question?"

People will generally say "Yes".

Do you now why? They are relaxed.

Then ask "If you died tonight, where would you be ... heaven or hell?"

Then wait for a response, then ask

"And why would God let you into heaven? Why would you go to hell?"

It takes practice. It's like playing sport, the more you kick the ball, the better you get at it. You don't get a fitter body just sitting at home eating chips. No, you get into the gym and put your muscles under strain. It's the same with being friendly.

Stop being so concerned about yourself and self-centered, sins of course, and get out there today and just have a go.

*"For God hath **not given us the spirit of fear**; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* (2 Timothy 1:7)

*"A new heart also will I give you, and **a new spirit will I put within you**: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."* ([Ezekiel 36:26](#))

*"Therefore if any man be **in Christ, he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#))

Your prayer? "Dear Lord, I just don't want friends, but I want to be friendly, so that I can witness to others about the Lord Jesus Christ. Please help me ... I have been so wrapped in the sin of thinking about me, that all I've wanted is friends. Lord, instead of having friends down here, I want to be called a friend of God like Abraham. Please help me. I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. Amen."

Dear Reader, be encouraged with the following:

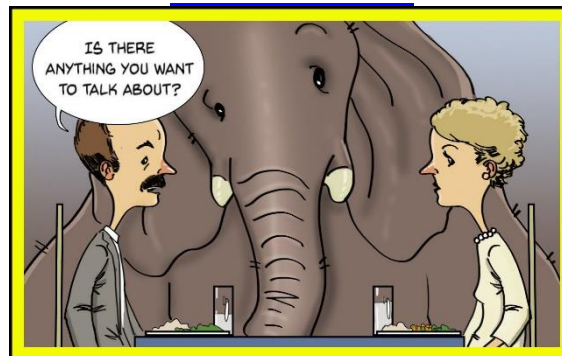
*"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and **he was called the Friend of God**."* ([James 2:23](#))

*"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a **friend of the world is the enemy of God**."* ([James 4:4](#))

Yes, Dear Reader, you can be a friend of God and still be friendly to others.

Harley Hitchcock
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Australian Bible Ministries, PO Box 5058 Mt. Gravatt East 4122 Qld, Australia
www.AustralianBibleMinistries.com