

## Friendship

A friend is more than a companion or a person for whom one feels effecting. Friendship is a love for someone of an eminently spiritual kind. The deepest meaning of friendship is found in sacrificial love. Of true friendship Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down he lay down his life for his friend (John 15:13). The basis of friendship is a delight in another human being as a person. A close friend is a blessing. But I doubt if a rich abiding friendship can be created. I have heard people say, "I would like to be your friend." But friend ship cannot be forced. A friendship can only be entered upon if there are a number of factors, which reveal a soul in tune with our own soul. The Bible speaks of friendship as being "one in spirit" (1 Sam. 18:1).

I wonder if conditions prevailing in our modern society do not make rich rewarding friendships increasingly rare or difficult to develop, especially when so many move around due to a job transfer. Television and other forms of technological entertainment are not helpful either. Not much communication takes place in front of a television. The distinguished psychologist, Dr. Courtney Tall, commented in a paper on Friendships in the Futures, "Stability based on a close relationships with a few people will be ineffective, due to the high mobility, wide interest range, and varying capacity for adaptation and change found among the members of a highly automated society." Or perhaps we are too busy today, going to too many places to take time to cultivate genuine friendships. Yet friendships are still very much on the list of human needs. The book *The Friendship of Women* by Dee Brestins, published by Victor Books, Wheaton, Ill., carefully examines the power and pain of relationships between women. However, men will find this book also a good read. It is practical and to the point with many illustrations from personal experiences. The author develops from Scripture role models for friendships and shows how the relationship between Jonathan and David and the story of Ruth can help modern men and women build lasting friendships. The question is analyzed why women have more intimate friendships than men. Brestin demonstrates why women can more successfully negotiate the loss of a mate than men can. Singles and their needs are not overlooked. Though we rightfully stress the importance of the family, we must remember that our value as human beings does not depend on our marital status. We find our completion and uniqueness in our relationship to the Lord.

Some may not have a close friend; others may enjoy a good circle of friends; whatever the case, you will be enriched by reading Brestin's book.

Johan D. Tangelder