

## **Friendships Essential to Growth (Titus 2:4-8)**

**Introduction:** *The importance of friendships to growth*

### **1. Why do we have few friendships?**

(a) *The influence of our culture that says real men don't need friends.*

(b) *We're not very friendly people ourselves.*

"A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Prov 18:24).

(c) *The estranging, alienating influence of sin.*

"He who repeats a matter separates friends" (Prov 17:9, see Gen 3:12). "Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me" (Ps 41:9, see John 13:18, 26-27).

### **2. Why should we have more friendships?**

There is one alone, without companion: he has neither son nor brother" (Eccl 4:7).

(a) *Friends are stronger and more productive together.*

v. 9, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor."

(b) *Friends help each other when they stumble.*

Verse 10, "For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. but woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up."

(c) *Friends care for each other's needs*

Verse 11, "Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone?"

(d) *Friends are not easily overcome.*

Verse 12, "Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

### **3. What are the essential elements of friendship?**

(a) *Loyalty*

2Sam 16:16, John 19:12, John 15:14, Prov 27:10, "Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend."

(b) *Love*

John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." See Deut 13:6, 1Sam 18:1, 1Sam 20:32-33, Col 2:2).

### **4. What is the fruit of Christian friendship?**

"As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Prov 27:17). "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Prov 27:6, see Prov 28:23)

### **Application**

Prov 12:26, "The righteous should choose his friends carefully."