

Friends

Part 2

Cornelius And His Friends

1. Cornelius was a great man and Luke records this about him. (Acts 10:1-2).

Acts 10:1 Now {there was} a man at Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort,

Acts 10:2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the {Jewish} people and prayed to God continually.

2. Though Cornelius was an excellent moral man and a very prayerful man, he was still lost.

3. Peter went to his home to teach him words by which he could be saved. (Acts 11:13-17).

Acts 11:13 "And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here;

Acts 11:14 and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.'

Acts 11:15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as {He did} upon us at the beginning.

Acts 11:16 "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

Acts 11:17 "Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as {He gave} to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

Cornelius A True Friend

1. When Peter came to his home, he had invited his friends [philous, plural] to come and hear Peter. (Acts 10:24).

Acts 10:24 On the following day he [Peter] entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

2. Peter preached to Cornelius, his family and friends the gospel of Christ knowing **the gospel is the power of God unto salvation**. (Rom. 1:16).

Peter's Inspired Statement At Home Of Cornelius

Acts 10:47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we {did,} can he?"

Acts 10:48 And he ordered them [Cornelius, Cornelius' family and friends] to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days. "them" refers to all who had assembled in Cornelius' home. (Acts 10:44).

1. It would be good for us to emulate Cornelius and invite our friends into our homes and other places to hear and study God's word.
2. Some may refuse to come, but some will come.

3. A true friend does not want his friend or friends to die lost.

Other References To “Philos”

1. James warned against being “a friend” of the world. (Jas. 4:4).

James 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that **friendship with the world** is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

2. We cannot be a friend of God and His Son and be a friend of the world, that is, adopt the sinful ways of the world.

a. We must live transformed lives. (Rom. 6:3,4;12:1-2).

Rom 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

Rom 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, {which is} your spiritual service of worship.

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

b. We must keep ourselves “unstained from the world.” (Jas. 1:27).

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of {our} God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, {and} to keep oneself unstained by the world.

1) “Unstained” does not mean we are to isolate ourselves from the world and have no contact with it.

2) It means we do not participate in its evil or even condone it.

3) Jesus taught we are “the light of the world.” (Matt. 5:14-16). See also Phil. 2:15; Eph. 5:8

Apostle John

1. In the book of 3rd John, John instructed Christian friends to “greet” one another “by name.” (3 Jn. 15).

3 John 1:15 Peace {be} to you [Gaius]. The friends [with me] greet you. Greet the friends [with you] by name.

a. Gaius was instructed to greet the Christian friends with him “by name.”

b. The meaning is “Please give our greetings to each one of the friends there.” IEB

2. Jesus warned His friends [philous, His disciples] that they would be hated by the world. (Jn. 15:15,19).

John 15:15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; **but I have called you friends**, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."

John 15:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

The Warning Of Jesus

1. Jesus also gave this warning in regard to the parents, brothers, relatives and friends of those who would follow Him. (Lk. 21:16-17).

Luke 21:16 "But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put {some} of you to death,

Luke 21:17 and you will be hated by all because of My name.

2. It is sad but even family and friends may betray us and seek our imprisonment or death.

3. Jesus will never betray us! (Heb. 13:5).

Friends Share God's Word

1. Friends share God's word with each other and imitate Jesus who called His disciples [learners] "friends." (Jn. 15:15).

John 15:15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; **but I have called you friends**, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

2. We need to make known the things we have learned from God and His Son to our friends and others.

Here Is What Happened To Some Of The Friends Of Jesus.

1. **Stephen** was stoned to death in Jerusalem. (Acts 7:59)..

Acts 7:59 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on {the Lord} and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

2. The **Christians in Jerusalem were persecuted and driven from their homes** because they were friends of Jesus. (Acts 8:1-4).

3. **Many Christians were imprisoned** because they trusted in Jesus. (Acts 9:1-2).

4. **James**, the son of Zebedee, was killed with a sword. (Acts 12:1-2).

Acts 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them.

Acts 12:2 And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.

5. **Paul** suffered much because he was a friend of Jesus who devoted himself to Christ and the preaching of the gospel.

a. He penned these words of himself in 2 Corinthians.

2 Cor 11:23 Are they servants of Christ?--I speak as if insane--I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.

2 Cor 11:24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine {lashes.}

2 Cor 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.

2 Cor 11:26 {I have been} on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from {my} countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;

2 Cor 11:27 {I have been} in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often

without food, in cold and exposure.

2 Cor 11:28 Apart from {such} external things, there is the daily pressure on me {of} concern for all the churches.

b. Tradition says Paul's head was cut off in Rome in 68 A.D.

6. Jesus warned **Peter** would suffer a violent death.

a. Jesus foretold Peter's death. (Jn. 21:18-19).

John 21:18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to {go.}"

John 21:19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"

b. Tradition says Peter was crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy to die in the same way Jesus did.

7. Christians, the friends of Jesus, were warned they would suffer much persecution. (Jn. 15:20-23).

John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

John 15:21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

John 15:22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

John 15:23 "He who hates Me hates My Father also."

a. Many Christians in the world today are suffering great persecution and even being put to death.

b. We must prepare ourselves for it. (2 Tim. 3:12).

c. God will greatly bless those who suffer persecution for righteousness sake. (Matt. 5:10-12).

Matt 5:10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 5:11 "Blessed are you when {people} insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

Matt 5:12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Marks of A True Friend

1. A true friend is one who is always ready to forgive and refuses to hold grudges.

a. No one is perfect.

b. No one should expect his friends to be perfect.

c. Sadly some do and this has ended many friendships.

2. A true friend is one who encourages his friends to be better and seeks to build his/her friend up.

3. A true friend is not super critical, but he may cautiously [in love] suggest ways to improve.
4. A true friend is not envious, but rejoices in a friend's success.
5. A true friend is one who always shows respect and never seeks to humiliate.
6. A true friend avoids the companion of fools and bad company. (Prov. 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33).
Prov 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm.
1 Cor 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."
7. True friends make sacrifices for one another.
 - a. Fellowship is good, but it is not the real test of friendship.
 - b. Friendship is tested by what kind of sacrifices friends are willing to make for one another.
8. True and honorable friends do not gossip about one another or slander one another.
9. True friends seek to have a **positive influence on one another** and seek to **bring out the best in one another**.
10. True and faithful friends are tolerant with one another's shortcomings, but never encourage bad behavior.
11. True friendships are built on trust - not fame, wealth, material possessions.
12. True friends are honest with one another.
 - a. Let one another know if the other has hurt them.
 - b. Let you know when you are acting foolish.
 - c. They do not hide behind "I did not want to hurt your feelings."
13. True friends listen to one another.
 - a. It is not "me, me, me."
 - b. Being an excellent listener is a sign of really caring.
14. True friends are respectful of one another.
 - a. They are respectful of one another's time.
 - b. They are respectful when a mistake is made.
 - c. Respectful of the things the other fears and chooses to avoid.
15. True friends are happy for one another.
 - a. They do not resent the success of the other.
 - b. They find joy in the success of their friend or friends.

16. True friends do not seek to dominate one another.
 - a. They do not become angry if a friend turns down their request.
 - b. They do not seek to make their friend or friends feel guilty.
17. True friends are comfortable in asking a favor.
 - a. They are eager to help one another.
 - b. They do not, however, become angry if the friend is unable or uncomfortable in granting the favor.
 - c. They do not seek to make their friend feel guilty if the favor is not granted.

Conclusion.

1. What a friend we have in Jesus! (Jn. 15:13).

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

2. Jesus taught if we do what He commands us we are His friends. (Jn. 15:14).

John 15:14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you.

- a. Friendship with Jesus is conditional.
 - b. The true friends of Jesus obey His commandments.
 - c. When they fail to keep His commandments, they humbly confess their sins and keep on following Jesus.
3. Abraham is called "the friend of God" because of his unwavering faith in God. (Jas. 2:21-23).

James 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?
James 2:22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected;
James 2:23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God.
 4. May all of us trust and obey God and the Lord Jesus Christ that God and His Son will call us "friends."
 5. One must be a friend of Jesus to be saved!
 6. Jesus laid down His life for us, and we must totally commit ourselves to Him to be His friend. (Matt. 16:24-26).

Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

Matt 16:25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matt 16:26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?