

Spirituality Vs. Friendship

Over the years I have gained and lost friends. I am sure we have all been on the same boat before where we have gained friendship and we have also lost friends. It can be an emotional roller coaster at times, but we need to be watchful of all things. Especially when we talk about being a Christian. Over the years because of our spiritual life, we have lost friends and even sometimes family over such issues.

Paul gives clear directions about such things. We do need to be watchful of whom we associate with and call our friends as a Christian (**I Corinthians 15:33**). Our company and those we surround ourselves with can and will corrupt our good habits. It was never a matter of if it ever happens it is a matter of when it will happen. This is what Paul was trying to warn us about happening. The reason is that even though we may be a good and morally right person, a person that we associate with having sinful habits will rub off on a person if we continue to be around them. It is a dangerous path to be walking, and we must be leery about walking down this road.

We as a Christian must decide what the more important thing is: Is it a life of having friends that may be living in sin and influencing us to sin **or** is our soul the most valuable thing? What are we willing to give in exchange for our soul (**Matthew 16:24-27**)? Is there anything that has a higher value than our soul? If there is then we must come back to reality and notice that there should be nothing we are willing to exchange for our soul. Our soul is eternal! It is everlasting and will dwell eternally with God or in flaming fire! Let us ask the question again, will we exchange our soul for anything? Are having friends the most important and primary thing that we are to focus on?

We must decipher friendship and spirituality! God has blessed us with our brethren who are here to be working for the hope of heaven and to live a righteous and godly life. These are people we need to surround ourselves with. We need people to encourage and help us in our path of following and obeying God not hindering it in any way.

Our brethren are here to rejoice and weep with us (**Romans 12:15**). They are to help and encourage when we rejoice and sorrow. That is a great blessing that God has given us to work with. Those who are not Christians may not always help us. Sadly, some take the role of wanting to blame God like in the case of Job's wife (**Job 2:9**). Instead of helping draw closer to God many try to and encourage pushing further away from God. How will this help our spiritual state?

We must take on the responsibility of drawing closer to God and resist the devil and his sinful ways (**James 4:7-10**). We must cleanse our hearts and rid ourselves of living a life of sin. Sin is what keeps us from obedience to God and His will (**Romans 6:23**).

Our association must be with those of light and not of darkness (**I John 1:5-7**). We cannot mix both because our light will not shine its brightest because of the darkness of sin. We

must be watchful of all things and be careful that we do not allow darkness and sin to dwell within our hearts.

However, even though we are not to follow those who practice worldly things we are to live in the world (**John 15:19**). What this means is that we do have the responsibility of living in the world, but we must be able to not partake of things in the world. We should not give in to sin; we should still be able to live a godly and righteous life in the world but not sin.

This is how we can know the difference between spiritual life and sin. We can know that friends are not the most important thing in this life (**James 4:4**). Yes, I will admit they are genuinely nice to have but we can survive with or without them. If friendships interfere or threaten our spiritual life, then we must be able to withdraw and not give in to such temptations. It is then that we know that God will take care and will be our friend eternally just like Abraham (**James 2:23**). What is the most important thing in your life? **Daniel Sanders**