

“You’ve Got A Friend!”

I. INTRO:

- A. **Wed. 6/29** - Don Stewart & Pastors Perspective Live, 3-4pm in Sanct. (not Brian)
1. Then 7pm Don Stewart will be fielding questions for our Wed night study.
 2. **The following Wed July 6th** I will be showing ***Taking The Hill***. Raul Ries’ new film
- B. In 1971 James Taylor sang, *When you're down and troubled and you need a helping hand, and nothing, whoa nothing is going right. Close your eyes and think of me and soon I will be there to brighten up even your darkest nights. You just call out my name, and you know wherever I am I'll come running, oh yeah baby to see you again. Winter, spring, summer, or fall, all you got to do is call and I'll be there, yeah, yeah, yeah. You've got a friend. Released in April of that year, it had reached #1 by late July.*
1. The words **friends, friendly & friendship** appear **over 100 x's** in the Scriptures.
 - a) **God says a lot about friends.**
 2. C. S. Lewis said, **Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, “What! You, too? I thought I was the only one.”**
 3. A friend has been aptly defined as **“one who comes in, when the whole world has gone out.”**
 - a) This is the group of David’s friends we meet today.
 - b) **David needed the shelter & support of friendship for 3 reasons:**
 - [1] **Personally**, he was still flooded in guilt from his adultery/murder.
 - [2] **Domestically**, his family was devastated by death, rape, revenge & rebellion.
 - [3] **Politically**, he was losing control of his kingdom as his ambitious son Absalom maneuvered himself into power.
 - c) Before we meet David’s friends, we must 1st deal with **A Disloyal Son**; **then** his **Loyal Friends!** [\[Outline\]](#)

II. **A DISLOYAL SON! (1-12)**

- A. **ABSALOM!** (1-12)
- B. (1) Wow, **read** vs.1 with 14:33!
1. He regains his status & immediately takes steps to replace David as king off Israel.
 2. He acquires **horses & chariots...his private little militia.**

3. Then, positions himself as the **highest legal authority** in Israel...*If I were made judge in the land.* (4) [politicking at its finest!]
- C. (5) See how self may seem to expel self; when in reality it's but *entering deeper* into our heart!¹
 1. No, no don't bow to me!
 2. **David** had won the hearts of the people through **sacrifice & service**; but **Absalom** did it the easy way, *the modern way*, by manufacturing an image of himself that the people couldn't resist.
 - a) Absalom was a **hero**; Absalom was only a **celebrity**.²
- D. (9) Ironically, David's last words to his son were, [לֵךְ בְּשָׁלוֹם] "Go in peace!"
- E. (10) **At the sound of the trumpet** - They used *a shofar blast* to spread the conspiracy & topple a kingdom. Village by village they *swung their support* behind him.
 1. Today they use *a Twitter blast* to accomplish the same thing.
- F. (12) **He offered sacrifices** - Under the mask of religion, Absalom still further matured his plans.

III. LOYAL FRIENDS! (13-37)

- A. **THE KINGS SERVANTS!** (13-18)
 - B. (13) An old Jewish proverb says, "A friend is one who warns you." (& thats what this man did!)
 - C. (14) To avoid a bloody civil war, David abandons Jerusalem to his rebel son & run for his life.
 1. And this is his 2nd time to run (1st time from Saul).
 2. But, though the **pruning was sharp**, it led to **greater fruitfulness!**
 - D. (15) His royal bodyguards (the Kerethites & Pelethites)
 1. Listen to their vow...Should we not vow the same to our King?
- E. **ITTAI (& 600 soldiers from Gath)!** (19-23)
 - F. (19) A Philistine official from Gath who had recently defected to Israel.
 1. A true friend...when everyone has turned away, there will be a few who will say, "I'm with you. Count on me. I'm here to the end." [Ps: w/their families also!]
 2. That one might even be a person from **Gath!** A person who **had been your enemy**, but who has come **full circle** to become **your friend**.
 - a) Blood ties don't always guarantee friendship.
 - b) **David's son** became his enemy *while* a **Philistine** proved to be his friend!
 - G. (21) **Prosperity** begets friends, **adversity** proves them!
 1. Is this not the greatest verse! *This is how loyal hearts should address Christ!*

¹ F.B.Meyer, Joshua-2nd Kings, pg.134.

² Warren Wiersbe, Be Restored, pg.94.

2. It sounds similar to...

- a) Jn.12:26 **If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.**
- b) 1 Thes.5:10 **whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.**

H. **ZADOK & ABIATHAR (& a company of Levites; w/the ark of cov)!** (24-29)

- l. The ark symbolized God's favor, which surely was w/David & not Absalom.
 - 1. David, however, wasn't comfortable making that assumption.
 - 2. Return w/the ark & I'll wait for God to act. [oh, & you can act as spies for me]
 - 3. **A man after God's heart by *surrendering himself completely* to God's will.**
 - a) David determined to let God have His way with him.
 - b) Like Job who said, **"Though He *slay* me, yet will I *trust* Him."** (13:15)

J. **DAVID'S PRAYER & STRATEGY!** (30,31)

K. (30) **What a heart wrenching scene.** David's Son, Jesus, would lead another procession through this very **valley**, to this very **mount**.

L. **David why are you weeping?**

- 1. **Because you have been chased out of your kingdom? Because you lost your throne? No!** What most likely broke David's heart was the evidence of his sin in his children & in his kingdom.

M. **Why did *Ahithophel*, David counselor, defect?** Maybe because David had committed adultery with his granddaughter Bathsheba?

N. **HUSHAI!** (32-37)

O. Hushai was waiting for David at the summit...wearing the clothes of sympathy (a torn robe & dust on this head)

- 1. Hushai - a servant, an advisor, a friend.

P. W/o question & w/o being offended that David chose not to take him along, Hushai returned to join Absalom's court to **give him bad counsel & *act as a spy*. Yes, *espionage!***

- 1. As it turned out, he played a key role in saving David's life & kingdom.
- 2. **Faith in God is *not* inconsistent w/making wise preparations for our defense.**
 - a) As one said, *it's doing our part & asking for the supernatural.*

Q. **All of these men** were ***taking risks*** for the sake of **the Lord & the kingdom...but** they considered it an honor to serve their king, & help restore him to the throne.

1. Friendships always require risks!
2. **Ittai** gave a **vow of loyalty**; **Zadok** & **Abiathar** gave **spiritual support**; **Hushai** worked on David's behalf.

R. **FRIENDSHIP!**

S. The words *friends*, *friendly*, & *friendship* appear **over 100 x's** in the Scriptures. [God says a lot about friends]

1. Friends are **not optional**; they're **essential!**³
 - a) There is no substitute for a friend - someone to care, listen, to feel, to comfort, & yes, occasionally to reprove. True friends do that best [**Faithful are the wounds of a friend** Pr.27.6]
 - b) Some might say, *I only need Jesus!* Well, than you're *more spiritual* than Jesus & Paul, for they needed friends.
 - c) **Some people make enemies** instead of friends, because it is *less trouble*. E.C. McKenzie
 - d) I always find it interesting when you can walk away from a conversation w/someone & they didn't ask anything about you.

2. Friends are **not automatic**; they must be **cultivated!**
 - a) Prov.18:24 **A man who has friends must himself be friendly.**
 - b) Samuel Johnson wrote, "One should keep his friendship in a *constant repair*."
 - (1) Like trees, friendships need constant cultivation.

3. Friends are **not neutral**; they **impact** our lives!
 - a) Those who are close to us *rub off on us*, change us.
 - (1) **Bees example:** When you buy honey, it is classified by **the floral source of the nectar** from which it was made. *i.e. by what flowers they've been rubbing up against!*
 - (2) Their **morals & philosophies, convictions & character** eventually become our own.
 - (3) 1 Cor.15:33 **Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."**
 - (4) Prov.13:20 **He who walks with wise men will be wise.**
 - (a) **Choose your friends carefully & wisely.** **Gossips** usually gravitate to gossips. **Rebels** run with rebels. **You want to be wise? Choose wise friends!**

4. Friends **come in varying degrees**, some of whom play *more significant roles* in our life than others.

³ Adapted from Charles Swindoll, David, pg.250.

- a) **Acquaintances** - those whom we have *superficial interaction* with.
- (1) “How are you?” “Fine” “Great!” (I’m really not fine, but I can’t tell you because you’re only an acquaintance)
- b) **Casual Friends** - are people w/whom we have **more contact**; w/whom we have **common interests**; & w/whom we have **more specific conversations**. Yet, there is still a safe distance.
- c) **Close Friends** - are those people w/whom we share **similar life goals** & w/whom we discuss the **hard questions**.
- (1) We do **projects** together, **exercise** together, **socialize** together, sometimes even **vacation** together.
- (2) C. S. Lewis said, **Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, “What! You, too? I thought I was the only one.”**
- d) **Intimate Friends** - are the people with whom you have **regular contact** & a **deep commitment** to *mutual character development*.
- (1) You have the **fewest number** of intimate friends, but you also enjoy the **highest level** of honesty with them.
- (2) We are open & vulnerable with them.
- (3) With them you share the freedom to **criticize & correct**; **encourage & embrace**. **Why? Because trust & mutual understanding has been established between them.**
- (a) “Friendship is a **single soul dwelling in two bodies.**” - Aristotle

T. Questions to ponder:

1. If you were **another person** would you like to be a friend of yours?
2. **How would you rate your spouse?** As an acquaintance; a casual friend, a close friend, or an intimate friend?
3. **Do you have an intimate friend?**
 - a) **If yes**, maybe its a good time to let them know you are thankful for them.
 - b) **If no**, maybe its a good time to get a shovel & plant a few friends.
 - (1) **You’ll never regret it.** Just ask David!