

# Faithful Friend

By Asher Intrater

One of the most important characteristics of a godly person is to be faithful. That means to be faithful to your friends, a faithful friend. The edition of our book "Covenant Relationships" in Hebrew is called, "Faithful Friend." Yeshua said that the ultimate goal of discipleship was to produce friends for Himself (**John 15:15**).

## **"Pursue love" - I Corinthians 14:1**

To pursue love means to pursue people by means of love. Being a faithful friend demands initiative and effort. It does not just wait for someone to come along. It reaches out to demonstrate faithfulness to others. Saul (Paul) blessed Onisiphorus because he searched and found Paul when he was in prison (**II Timothy 1:17**). Paul also rejoiced to do the same thing; he left a successful ministry opportunity to search out his friend Titus. Finding Titus was considered a greater "triumph" than success in ministry (**II Corinthians 2:14-15**).

## **"He loved them to the end" - John 13:1.**

Yeshua loved His disciples all the way to the end. Being a faithful friend involves a process. It is a series of tests. It has a price to pay. That price increases along the way until it demands faithfulness even unto the death (**Revelation 2:10**). Faithfulness is a long path of dialogue, confrontation, forgiveness, disappointment, pain, and sacrifice. To be faithful is to go all the way with another person.

## **"If your brother sins against you go to him and rebuke him between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have won your brother" - Matthew 18:15.**

This verse more than any other describes the process of covenant dialogue from a faithful friend to another when there is a problem. The purpose is not just moral confrontation but an effort at restoring relationship. To be faithful you must continually enter into honest loving conversations to correct problems and restore relationships. There is no such thing as human relationship without problems.

## **If you love Me, keep My commandments" - John 14:15 (13:34; 15:9; 15:10; 15:12; 15:16).**

Love is something we are commanded to do. It is based on obedience, not on emotions. Love has emotions but is not dependent on them. It is not even dependent on other people. Trust is dependent on others' trustworthiness. However, we can love people before they are trustworthy. Yeshua loved the whole world (**John 3:16**), but He trusted no one (**John 2:25**).

All people are basically unfaithful in their "human" nature, but God is faithful to us in spite of our unfaithfulness to Him (Romans 3:4). Likewise to be faithful to someone is a unilateral decision on our part. Be faithful even if no one else in the world is. Choose to walk in loyalty and integrity; in humility and grace.

A good relationship demands the mutual faithfulness of both sides. However, your being faithful to that relationship is your side alone. A good husband will decide to be a good husband to his wife regardless of what kind of wife she is (and vice versa). We do what is right "as unto the Lord (**Ephesians 5:21, 22; 6:1, 6:7**)."

## **"A brother is born for adversity" - Proverbs 17:17.**

To be faithful is to be aware when a friend is in need or in trouble. That is the time to run to be close. It is hard to demonstrate faithfulness when everything is going well for the other. When the going gets rough is when we get going to help. Those are the choice opportunities.

**"Make for yourself friends through unfaithful mammon..." - Luke 16:9.**

Yeshua emphasizes here the simple point that friends are more important than money. He does not mean to "buy" friends in a manipulative, controlling manner. Rather, money can be a tool in building relationships. Anything you can buy with money is less important than friendship. Everything in this world is temporary. Only faithful relationships are eternal.

Money is not a means to purchase goods for ourselves, but a means to bless people. People are often in financial need. Money can be used to demonstrate faithfulness. When you use money to help others, you raise the opportunity to develop trust.

**"Many a man declares his own loving-kindness, but a man of faithfulness, who can find?" - Proverbs 20:6.**

In this world today, many people speak of love, but a person who is faithful to his friends is a rare commodity. Let's be one of them.

Asher Intrater is the senior leader of a Messianic congregation in Israel. Asher's perspectives and insights are highly valued both in the Holy Land and beyond. He is also personal friend of Pastor Frangipane. Our ministry is very committed both to Israel and especially to the emerging church there. For more information about Asher's ministry, please visit their website: [www.revive-israel.org](http://www.revive-israel.org).