



You've Got a Friend in Me

Scripture

John 13, 18:12-27

Discern

When thinking about the friendship that might have been between Jesus and Peter, the song "You've Got a Friend in Me," by Randy Newman, comes to mind:

You've got a friend in me/When the road looks rough ahead/And you're miles and miles/From your nice warm bed/You just remember what your old pal said/Yeah, you've got a friend in me.

If you've got troubles, I've got 'em too/There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you/We stick together and can see it through/'Cause you've got a friend in me/Yeah, you've got a friend in me.

Some other folks might be/A little bit smarter than I am/Bigger and stronger too, maybe/But none of them will ever love you/The way I do, it's me and you, boy/And as the years go by/Our friendship will never die/You're gonna see it's our destiny.

In Mark 5:37, Jesus takes Peter, James and John to the home of Jairus to raise his daughter who they believed to be dead. Afterwards, the group of disciples witnessed his transfiguration on the mountain top (Matthew 17:1).

We see that Jesus shared many intimate moments with Peter. These moments ranged from casual everyday situations to formal invitations.

Imagine your best friend. You see each other almost every day and your families know each other well. They are the person you share stories and adventures with. Now imagine knowing that friend would eventually betray you. How does that make you feel? Would you start to harbor resentment towards that person? Could you still depend on their friendship?

Jesus knew that Peter would betray him before he was sent to be crucified. It is hard to imagine the feelings Jesus must have felt about not only his approaching death, but also the betrayal of a close friend. Even though Peter denied his friend, we learn that Jesus still forgives him and tells Peter to follow him (John 21:19).

Peter faltered as a friend just like we all do. We can learn from the example of their friendship, and work towards being a friend like Peter, inquisitive, faithful and a good listener; and like Jesus, forgiving, loyal, and honest.

Discussion Questions

Think about these questions and talk about them with your own friends.

1. What are my best qualities as a friend? How do I share those with others?
2. What is most important to me when I am seeking friendship? Are there qualities that I need to prioritize?
3. Re-read the lyrics to the song. See if you can picture Jesus singing it to Peter, and then Peter singing it to Jesus. How does it change our view of friendship knowing that Jesus sees us this way, just like we can see him as our friend?
4. We know that Jesus met Peter when he was fishing, and that Peter decided to give up his career to be a disciple. This meant not always having a comfortable lifestyle. How does the phrase "*miles and miles from your nice warm bed*" take on a different meaning?
5. Recall a time when you were in a disagreement with a friend. The song mentions "*We stick together and can see it through.*" Are you still friends? Did the disagreement make your friendship stronger?
6. While Jesus forgave Peter, there are some things that are not acceptable in a friendship. Can you name the qualities that would make a friendship unhealthy?
7. What are some ways you could let your friends know that you are thinking about them and that you care for them?

Prayer

God, we thank you for our friends! We know that being in a relationship can be hard and messy, but it can also produce care and support. Help us to find friends who genuinely love us and want the very best for us, just as Jesus cared for Peter. It's in your name we pray, Amen.