

June 10. Friends commiserate.

"Three of Job's friends heard of all the trouble that had fallen on him. Each traveled from his own country—Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuhah, Zophar from Naamath—and went together to Job to keep him company and comfort him. When they first caught sight of him, they couldn't believe what they saw—they hardly recognized him! They cried out in lament, ripped their robes, and dumped dirt on their heads as a sign of their grief. Then they sat with him on the ground. Seven days and nights they sat there without saying a word. They could see how rotten he felt, how deeply he was suffering."
Job 2:11

Jobs friends travel considerable distance to see him when they heard he was having problems. Once they arrived they shared in his grief.

Take a moment to think about your friends. Is there one who is going through a difficult time? How have you responded? Can you remember a time when a friend of yours responded like Job's friends?

June 11. Friends are nearby.

Don't leave your friends or your parents' friends and run home to your family when things get rough; Better a nearby friend than a distant family.
Prov 27:10

This is interesting advice that's full of meaning for most of us who are far from our families. These days we can communicate over vast distances with phone and email but there are times when we need real human contact to get through difficulties.

Do you live far from your family? Do you have friends closer to you that you rely on when things get rough? Are you the type of friend that a person can come to instead of going to their family who may be far away?

Jun 6. Friends are available.

Then he said, "Imagine what would happen if you went to a friend in the middle of the night and said, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread. An old friend traveling through just showed up, and I don't have a thing on hand.'

"The friend answers from his bed, 'Don't bother me. The door's locked; my children are all down for the night; I can't get up to give you anything.'

"But let me tell you, even if he won't get up because he's a friend, if you stand your ground, knocking and waking all the neighbors, he'll finally get up and get you whatever you need." Luke 11:5-8

Sometime being a friend is difficult. Being available to friends can be inconvenient.

Have you ever found it bothersome to be a friend? Have you ever been a bothersome friend? Would your friends feel comfortable bothering you in the middle of the night? Which of your friends could you rely on day or night?

June 7. Friends make each other better.

*You use steel to sharpen steel,
and one friend sharpens another.
Proverbs 27:17*

Most of us have had the experience of friends who challenge us to be more than we currently are. Friends who push us to excel are good friends indeed.

When was the last time you challenged a friend to excel? To be more than they even see in themselves? Which of your friends is most likely to push you higher?

June 8. Friends love each other.

*Love never gives up.
Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.
Love doesn't strut,
Doesn't have a swelled head,
Doesn't force itself on others,
Isn't always "me first,"
Doesn't fly off the handle,
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn't revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.
1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

Showing true love, as outlined here in 1 Corinthians, toward friends (or anyone) is a real challenge.

Which item on this list is hardest for you? Ask God to help you with this. What can you do today to show true love toward one of your friends?

June 9. Friends are honest with each other.

*Wounds from a friend can be trusted,
but an enemy multiplies kisses.
Proverbs 27:6*

Friends are often the only ones we can trust to be honest with us. They are honest with us because they want us to be all we can be. Honesty is sometimes painful because we don't like facing the truth even if it comes from a trusted friend.

Can you remember a time when a friend's honesty hurt you? Did that honesty lead to a positive change in your life? How can we be honest with our friends and minimize the wounds that our honesty might cause?