

FRIENDSHIP

(φιλία)

It involves the idea of loving as well as being loved

Unfortunately not many people value lasting relationships, and especially between friends. “Pastor, I don’t know why, but my friend and I are not as close as we were. Is there anything I can do?” Wanting to restore the relationship is a good start, but you will need to value your friendship enough to do whatever it takes to get it back on track. Thomas Aquinas said, “Friendship is the source of the greatest pleasures, and without friends even the most agreeable pursuits become tedious.” This is a wise observation and can be applied to our relationship with God as well.

In John 15:15 Jesus said, **“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”** Not many of us understand the true value of friendship – especially with God! During the reign of Queen Victoria, a London doctor visited a 72-year-old lady named Martha Vincent. Her husband had abandoned her some years earlier. She was very poor and lived in extremely humble surroundings. She was undernourished and had neither warm clothes nor wood for a fire. The doctor couldn’t believe her friends would allow her to live like that. When asked about it, Martha said she had no friends.

Later in the discussion she corrected herself. She admitted that there might be one, but was sure that she had forgotten about her. The doctor pressed her for the identity of the friend. And finally Martha told him that it was the Queen herself. She said that the two of them had been childhood friends. The doctor left, not sure that he believed Martha, but when he got home he wrote the Queen a letter relating the incident. A few days later he received a letter from the Queen. The story was true. The Queen had not forgotten. Enclosed in the letter was enough money to provide for all of Maria’s needs. For the remaining years of her life, Martha Vincent lived comfortably as a friend of the Queen.

You too have a great benefactor, someone who wants to take care of your every need. But have you made your needs known to Him? James 4:2 tells us that we do not have it simply because we did not ask for it! If Martha Vincent had not told the doctor about her friend, he would never have asked on her behalf. Well, we have someone in heaven that has promised to ask on our behalf. His name is Jesus, and He too is a friend! In John 14:14 Jesus said, **“If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.”** In John 16:24 He declared, “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your **joy** may be **full**.” Maybe you have failed in this simple practice, and like the Queen Victoria’s friend Martha, you have forgotten the very person who has the power, authority and ability to reach out and meet your every need. If you have, don’t worry because He is a friend indeed! Just ask and you will receive!