

an age barrier. It really upsets me that our society seems to suggest - friends have to be the same age. Some of the strongest friendships I have ever seen have been between people of vastly different ages. A lady, I would guess in her fifties, used to bring her 100 year old friend to the rabbit shows. It was absolutely amazing to witness that friendship. Seldom if ever have I seen a friendship of same age people any closer than their friendship was.

The second difference in the ladies was that Naomi was a Jewess and the younger ladies were Moabites. So big deal! Bigger deal than you might think on the surface. That meant one was a Jew and two were Gentiles. Now that brings in huge differences. Not the least of which is was a whole gambit of national prejudices and even hatred on both sides.

Finally their relative connection is not one we visualize, in some circumstances, to be conducive to friendship. We joke about the mother-in-law connection but sometimes it is a lot more than a joke. Generous toleration maybe but not intimate friendship as in the case of Ruth and Naomi.

Many causes have a verbal banner. Friendship has a verbal banner. Ruth established that banner many years ago. Ruth 1:16 "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." I hope God is always God Almighty as it was in this case.

When friendships get really tight they will overcome all the differences that might divide us and maintain the wonderful support of being best friends forever. ~ Les Cramp

MEAFORD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday: Worship 10:00 AM
Wednesday: Bible Study 7:00 PM

MEAFORD MESSAGES MEAFORD CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dependable Friendship

God must put importance on human friendships. We recall the friendship between David and Jonathan. Jonathan literally put his life on the line. His Father, Saul, was determined to kill David. Jonathan befriended David and protected him even against his close blood relative. But depending on what slant you put on friendship the commitment to Naomi by her daughter-in-law Ruth may be even greater than between David and Jonathan. Her friendship was a personal sacrifice, putting her own safety in jeopardy to ensure the safety of her mother-in-law. One of the amazing aspects of their friendship is that her mother-in-law, a practical woman, tried to discourage Ruth from sacrificing to protect her.

The story of Ruth, Orpah and Naomi is told much better in the Book of Ruth than I can tell it in this article so I encourage you to read it. Ruth and Orpah were daughters-in-law of Naomi. All three of these ladies' husbands died. Naomi was a Jewess. Orpah and Ruth were both Moabite girls. Naomi being an older widow decided to move back to her people where she could get some support from relatives. Orpah and Ruth decided to leave their homeland and support network and accompany Naomi. Naomi being a practical lady suggested that following her was not in the best interest of her daughters-in-law and Orpah accepted the advice. Ruth on the other-hand could not bring herself to leave her mother-in-law and went back with her to her homeland. If you read the Bible account you will find one of the best loved stories ever written.

In terms of friendship we start with the difference between the ladies. Naomi, being the mother-in-law, was obviously an older lady so right off the top we have the friendship tested by

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CARING & SHARING

Continue to remember Gord Cramp, Joyce Franklin, Jean Gonder, Fern Park, Isabel Petch, June White and Edythe Williams.

SPEAKER THIS MORNING

Brent Flanakin will be bringing us the lesson this morning.

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

Please join us for our Wednesday shuffleboard and Bible study. First shuffleboard at 12:30 followed by a social time (drinks and snacks) at 1:30, then Bible Study at 2 pm.

AREA HYMN SING

There will be an area hymn sing in Owen Sound this evening at 5:00 P.M. Please bring finger foods for the fellowship time afterward.

TRUSTEES MEETING

There will be a trustees meeting this Thursday at 7:00 P.M. at Gayle & Peter's home. If you have items for the meeting please let Dave Ellis know.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Sarah Cox (6)



**Friday morning 8:30 am –
Vision TV**

Rogers cable 21

Bell 64

Star Choice 394

Sunday 2:00 pm – Joy TV

Rogers 173

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Proverbs 17:17 says: “A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for adversity.” True friends have a connection that goes beyond a couple of years. They are committed for life.

Jesus highlighted the importance of friendship in John 15:15. He gathered his disciples together the night before he was going to the cross, and said: “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”

Jesus did not refer to them as disciples, followers or believers. Instead, he called them “friends.” These other terms are important but, in this context, our Lord was demonstrating the strong bond he had with them...and with you!

Consider this: Our Lord showed how important his friends are to him. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Jesus died for you because he considers you as his friend! How are you showing your friendship to him?

Larry Fitzgerald
Woodlawn church of Christ, Abilene, TX

WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS

Week 14: April 2 — April 8 — **Joy**

- 2) Psalm 5:11; 84:1-4
- 3) Psalm 21:6; 51:7-9
- 4) Psalm 63:6-8; 67:3-5
- 5) Psalm 98
- 6) Psalm 30:5
- 7) Proverbs 10:28; 12:20; 17:22
- 8) Isaiah 12:5-6

Questions to consider:

1. How can you summarize this passage in two to three sentences?
2. What does this passage teach you about joy?
3. What is the Lord specifically leading you to do in response to this passage?