



“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.” – Romans 12:9-18

What does it mean to be a good friend? Is it about knowing each other for a long time? Or perhaps it’s about loyalty? Maybe it’s being on the same teams or in the same activities? Whether you have a handful of friends or a wide social circle, you have been called to the vocation of friend and sent to live out that role faithfully- but what does that mean and how do you do it?

In Mark 12, Jesus reminds a pharisee that they are to love their neighbor as they love themselves. Living out your calling as a friend means holding to this instruction tightly. It means ensuring that your love is genuine and not just for show. It means giving honor to your friends- Romans 12 goes so far as to say that we should outdo one another in showing honor. To me, that phrase immediately creates an image of a sort of reverse rap battle where, instead of throwing insults back and forth two people are throwing increasingly complicated compliments at each other. Could you imagine if we were all taking that approach in our relationships?

Furthermore, the vocation of friend also includes celebrating with your friends when they are celebrating and mourning with your friends when they are mourning. Put another way, to live out your vocation as a friend is to fulfill Paul’s instructions in Galatians 6:2 which says to “bear one another’s burdens.” We are called to walk with our friends, pointing them to Jesus and helping them to bear their burdens all while remembering that, as children of God, we do not walk alone- Jesus walks with us, too.

Our vocation as friends is a privilege. It’s amazing to be invited to walk with and encourage someone. Whether you became friends because of shared interests, shared experiences, or something else entirely, as a friend you get the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ through your words and actions. To be a good friend is to follow Paul’s instructions in Romans 12: to love one another, speak well of each other, to rejoice together, to pray together, to be patient together, to help each other, to bless each other, to live in harmony and to do life together.

Journal

- What part(s) of living out my vocation of friend come most naturally? Least naturally?
- What are some ways that I could be intentional about being the hands and feet of Jesus in my friendships? Is there any relationship that I need to focus on? If so, what steps can I take?

Prayer

Jesus, Thank you for calling me to be Your hands and feet to my friends. Please help me to point them to you with my words and actions. In Your Name, amen.