



REFLECTIONS

February 3, 2013

**Greater love has no one than this, that he lay
down his life for his friends.**

John 15:13

Friends

The show ran for ten full seasons. Its 236 episodes captured the fancy of the American TV audience, and they are still running today in syndication. *F·R·I·E·N·D·S* portrayed the lives of six young adults in search of meaning in their individual lives while living together in close quarters. The episodes were cast in humor, but the events that confronted the characters were familiar to the lives of the devoted audience that watched each week.

There were new love interests, broken relationships, job disappointments, misunderstandings, and practical jokes gone awry all revealing the human frailties that possess life in this world. The characters witnessed the good and the beautiful in each other; but also the bad and the ugly. And they loved each other anyway. That's what friends do.

God blesses life with people whose lives cross paths for a time to share the joys and pains that come along the way. Companions are plentiful during the journey, but friends are few. Friends stick closer than a brother, the scripture says¹. Friends know each other from the inside out—and they love each other anyway. That's what friends do.

Friends are those who come alongside during times when others may stand in judgment. Friends are there to give warning when a wrong path has been chosen, and to encourage when disappointment rears its head. They are there to grieve in times of sorrow and they are there to celebrate when victories come. Friends walk the path with one another, in good times and through troubled ones.

Friends have enriched my life. They are witnesses who have seen beyond the façade I portray and into the frailties I try to hide. And they love me anyway. Friends are blessings to have, and a calling to be. And there is one friend who set the standard.

Jesus is a friend to all who seek him. He knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows the motives behind our actions when we can't admit them even to ourselves. He hears our thoughts even if we don't speak them. He feels our emotions even when conceal them. He told us this about friends, "*Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*" And even with all our frailties—

That's what Jesus did.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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¹ Proverbs 18:24

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