

# Choosing Friends

**TEXT:** Ruth 1:6-18

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Proverbs 14:7; 16:19; James 4:4

**KEY VERSE:** Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. — Psalm 37:37

The Book of Ruth relates one of the most down-to-earth examples of true friendship in the Bible. It is a story of choices and the consequences of those choices. Ruth unquestionably felt a deep kinship with her mother-in-law which caused her to forsake all that was familiar and journey to an unknown land where she became an ancestress of Christ.

1. What were some of the attributes Naomi possessed which drew Ruth to her? Ruth 1:8,20,21; 3:1,6,18

2. Ruth made one choice, and Orpah another. Their decisions made a great difference in the future events of their lives. What took place in Ruth's life? What very likely happened to Orpah?

3. Consider these biblical examples of friendship, and write what influence you think each of the people had on their friend.

Moses and Aaron — Exodus 17:10-13

Joshua and Caleb — Numbers 14:6-9

David and Jonathan — 1 Samuel 18:3,4

Elijah and Elisha — 2 Kings 2:2,4,6

Paul and Silas — Acts 16:25

4. What qualities should we look for in friends?

5. Using Proverbs 18:24, how should we go about establishing friendships?

6. An old saying, “Birds of a feather flock together,” might have had its inspiration from Proverbs 13:20. Read this verse and write how you think our associations affect what other people think of us.

7. Why is it important to have godly standards and goals established in our own life while developing friendships?

8. It has been said that every Christian needs a Paul, a Barnabas, and a Timothy in their lives. Paul represents the influence of an older person—a friend who can serve as a spiritual advisor or mentor. Barnabas represents friendship with a peer—someone who holds you accountable and is not afraid to “tell it like it is.” Timothy represents a younger person, or a new Christian who looks to you for spiritual nurturing or example. Why is it important for a Christian to develop friendships on all three levels?