



Best Friends Forever

Jesus Will

Curled up in the corner
Eyes sore from crying,
Who will sit by my side
With open arms, and
hold me tight?

I turn around and no
one's there
They say I'm a tainted
man,
Who will see the scars on
my heart
And stay near, not apart?

Been walking all alone on this endless road — life Tired, worn out and on my knees Carrying the weight of my past Even when I move, it clings close behind,
Who will accept my past and walk with me
Freeing me of this weight
To the brightest star I long to see?

And in the end, who'd
love me still,
Enough to die on
Calvary's hill?
To trade His life and bear
my shame,
So I could rise in His
name?

My best friend "Jesus" will!



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Promoting Eternal Friendship

Best Friends Forever (BFF) symbolizes the eternal bond found in the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As humans created in His image, we reflect this in our relationships within family, community, and society.

A Friendship that Nurtures Mutual Trust and Communication

Friendship begins with initiation and thrives on mutual trust and open communication. True friendship embodies selfless love, respect, loyalty, support, and shared experiences.

A Friendship that Transformed Abraham

God initiated a friendship with Abraham (Js 2:23, Is 41:8), sharing His eternal purposes, plans with Abraham to bless all the communities on this earth through him (Gen 18:17-21 & 22:15-18), and the vision of the city of God (Heb 11:10). Abraham's faith laid the foundation for an intimate, transformative relationship that impacted those around him.

A Friendship that Transformed Jesus' Disciples

Jesus called His disciples "friends" (Jn 15:15) and revealed God's mysteries to them. They impacted communities with the gospel of the eternal friendship, the good news of Jesus, who died on the cross to set right the broken relationship with God and have eternal life. The Bible emphasizes eternal friendship (i.e. agape love—selfless, sacrificial love), urging Jesus' disciples to bear burdens (Gal 6:2), offer encouragement (1 Thess 5:11) and hold one another accountable (Prov 27:17).

A Friendship that Transforms Students

Students often view education as a temporary phase, but the friendships formed during these years can have a lifelong impact. Amid the busyness of campus life and career goals, these relationships are invaluable.

UESI members—students and graduates—are transformed by a lasting friendship with God that influences every aspect of life: campuses, workplaces, homes, and communities. Let us cherish this eternal friendship, become friends of Jesus, and fulfill UESI's vision.

Let us share the good news of Jesus and promote His eternal friendship among our fellow students so that they too become His friends and fulfill the vision of UESI.



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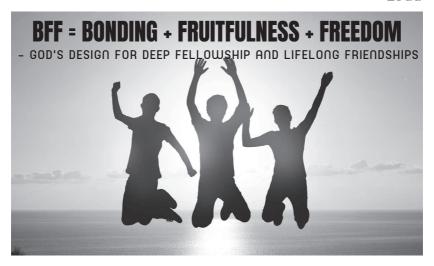
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he phrase "Best Friends Forever" often seems like just another hollow hashtag in a society fixated on filters, followers, and superficial connections. However, what if I revealed that God created a type of friendship that not only endures but also heals, empowers, and transforms lives? This is more than just a passing social media fad — it's fellowship, which is God's intentional design for our mental well-being. In my study titled "The Impact of Christian Religious Fellowship on Social Skills and Psychological Well-Being" involving Christian youth and adults in Ahmedabad, I discovered that fellowship does much more than simply bring people together; it shapes identities, fosters lifelong bonds, and provides profound emotional and social healing.

Let's break it down:

BFF = BONDING + FRUITFULNESS + FREEDOM

Let us understand the above words on the basis of my research:-

BONDING – WHERE HEALING BEGINS

Christian fellowship may initially seem to focus solely on spiritual or biblical discussions, but it goes beyond that by fostering genuine connections. Through EU groups, Bible studies, prayer circles, and two-bytwo mentoring, believers engage in purposeful relationships founded on vulnerability, accountability, and love. In my research, participants who attended fellowship regularly (at least once a week for six months) reported feeling a stronger sense of belonging, emotional safety, and mutual support. Many Indian youths face silent struggles with



Lead

family expectations, social anxiety, or personal challenges, yet fellowship serves as a refuge — a space where they can be recognized, heard, and embraced. This type of connection reflects the biblical concept of *koinonia*, which signifies a spiritual communion among believers characterized by deep care and a shared mission (Acts 2:42–47).

FRUITFULNESS – GROWTH THAT CAN BE MEASURED

Psychological theories characterize flourishing as a state of emotional stability, purposeful existence, and healthy relationships — and this is precisely what Christian fellowship promotes. My research revealed that those who actively participate in fellowship, experience significantly greater life satisfaction, emotional resilience, empathy, cooperation, and communication skills. They also demonstrate strong selfregulation and conflict resolution abilities, reflecting comprehensive social and emotional growth. This effect was particularly notable among young people aged 15 to 30, with young women showing significant improvements their emotional and social skills. essence, fellowship flourishing not only spiritually but also emotionally and relationally. This aligns beautifully with the Scripture: "As iron sharpens iron, so

one person sharpens another" (Prov 27:17). Fellowship not only nurtures the soul but also offers tangible benefits for the mind and overall well-being.

FREEDOM – NO ONE WALKS ALONE

The final fruit of fellowship is freedom.

- ♦ Freedom from Isolation
- Freedom from Loneliness
- Freedom from Depression
- ♦ Freedom from Anxiety

I have endured years of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. During those difficult times, it wasn't self-help books or theories that supported me — it was my EU small group. Their companionship served as my therapy, offering prayer, shared struggles, and loving accountability. I witnessed how God works through people to bring healing — especially for me. It was there that I found my closest friend.

Fellowship allows us to be authentic, to admit our weaknesses without shame, and to experience joy in our shared journey. As Gal 6:2 states, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ." This represents the most beautiful form of freedom — being truly known and loved regardless.



FELLOWSHIP: GOD'S LIVING DESIGN

Although Gen Z typically desires meaningful friendships, many struggle to discover them. My research supports what the Scriptures have consistently taught: community is God's answer to loneliness, emotional wounds, and insecurity.

Through regular fellowship, we:

Heal emotionally Grow socially

Bond spiritually

Discover friendships that last not just for college, but for eternity.

So if you're still asking:

"Do I really need fellowship?" – Yes. You were never meant to grow alone. "Can I just pray by myself?" – Yes, but healing happens in community.

"Will it really help me?" – Research, Scientific Evidence, Scripture, and testimonies say YES.

Today, let us redefine BFF not as a passing trend but as a life-giving truth:

BFF = Bonding + Fruitfulness + Freedom.

God plans to make you whole.

God's method to give you real friendships.

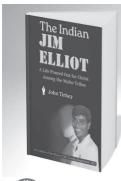
God promises that you never have to walk alone.

Don't wait. Join a small group, attend that Bible study, say yes to the next camp.

Because your best friends forever may just be waiting there — with open arms and an open Bible.



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Bible, a collection of books, written over a span of 1600 years, records many accounts and life histories of individuals. The events and accounts recorded are "...God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" which Paul brings to the young Timothy's attention so that "the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16, 17).

So, to define and have a perfect understanding of what it means to be "Best Friends Forever" (BFF) it is only wise to draw our conclusion(/s) from the Bible.

Friendship lessons can be drawn from multiple relationships recorded in the Bible. Be it Abraham and Lot (Gen 13 & 14), Moses and Aaron (Ex 3, 4 & 7), Jethro and Moses (Ex 18), Jonathan and David (1 & 2

Sam), David and Nathan (2 Sam 12), Elisha and Elijah (1 & 2 Kgs), Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Dan 1-3), Ruth and Naomi (Ruth), Mark and Paul/Barnabas (Acts 15), Paul and Timothy (2 Tim 1 & 1 Cor 4), Paul, Philemon and Onesiumus (Philemon) etc., and Jesus' dealing with His immediate followers, the 12 disciples (The Gospels). However, one pair that portrays a nearly perfect example of BFF is of David and Jonathan. The only perfect example apart from David and Jonathan is of Jesus dealing with His friends in the Bible and beyond the Bible with each of us today, who obey Him, His friends.

A. Knit with the soul/loved him as his own soul:

Jonathan's first close encounter with David resulted in his soul being knit together with the soul



of David which is further explained for us as "Jonathan loved him as his own soul". This was immediately after David slayed the Philistine war hero Goliath. The result of this love was that King Saul's son made a covenant with his new friend, David, and gave his own robe and garments along with his sword, bow and girdle to David (1 Sam 18:1-5, KJV).

Friendship principles:

This relationship was among two individuals who shared common faith in the God of their forefathers. A strong friendship on the rock, Jesus Christ is the very first prerequisite for a long-lasting friendship. People who share a common belief system, have many things in common and above all know that they both are a work in progress and hence accept and forgive each other more often than not.

Here the phrase, "soul-knitting", is equated to "loved as his own soul". Soul indicates the most important part of a human, after his spirit and body. From this inmost and intimate part, Jonathan loved his friend.

True friendship connects two individuals at the most intimate level, i.e. the soul level. *Philia* love should spring forth at such deeper levels rather than from outward factors. It is in these kinds of friendships alone that friends can

find delight in each other even in the most adverse of situations (1 Sam 19:2).

These friends made a "covenant", or a bond, the most accepted meaning of the word in the Old Testament. In order to formalize this covenant, as per the custom of those days, Jonathan gifted David his own royal robe and weapons - armour, sword, bow and belt. The gifting part followed the bonding of Jonathan and David. Many a times, in today's context, the gifting part is the only part emphasized or followed expected. Such a friendship no doubt, stops when the gifts stop coming or a better "gift-giver" is found.

B. Jonathan spoke *good* of David to Saul:

King Saul, troubled by an evil spirit, was jealous and insecure towards David and tried ways to kill him. This was followed by one day instructing his son, Jonathan, and his servants to kill David. However, Jonathan, directed David about the King's plan and instructed him to follow a different course. Jonathan also "communed" with his father about David. This communication was as factual as it could be, reminding King Saul about all the good deeds David had done towards him (1 Sam 19).



Friendship principles:

Friends speak on behalf of their friends even in the face of trials or adversity.

Choosing what is right to do is what keeps a friendship strong. Jonathan standing for David, against the King, encourages us to stand for our friend even when the party is higher than ourselves.

Friends speak the truth in order to defend each other. Holding onto Truth is a very important aspect of any foundation.

Affinity for truth is a desirable trait that results in standing for truth and speaking the truth even in the face of any major threat. In today's world, friendship is maintained at the expense of truth. A BFF is the one who upholds truthfulness above everything else, sometimes even at

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the expense of causing temporary unhappiness towards that friend.

C. "Neither you nor your kingdom will be established"

These are the exact words spoken by King Saul to his son Jonathan, defending his intentions of killing David adding that the benefits for Jonathan, the next heir to Saul's throne would otherwise be lost. A beautiful picture of Jonathan's response to his father is depicted in 1 Sam 20. Followed by a very emotional departure, while David was wandering in the woods, Jonathan once again went to David to '... strengthen his hand in God.' and he acknowledges, "you will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you;" (1 Sam 23: 16-18)

Friendship principles:

Friends value each other more than personal gains.

They withstand the pressure of family, society and personal profit. True friendship emerges out of the knowledge that "... the LORD be between me and you...". The ability to accept a person even when it comes at an expense of worldly gain is indeed an outcome of a renewed mind and a transformed character.

Friends are the ones who strengthen each other.

In the face of calamity, it is a visit from a BFF that makes all the



difference. No doubt, David's son, Solomon, could write multiple things about good friends and bad friends ... probably after listening to his father David talking about his best friend, Jonathan.

D. Friends forever: Death and beyond

"How the mighty have fallen in battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights. I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women. How the mighty have fallen! The weapons of war have perished!" 2 Sam 1:25-27.

When David came to know about the death of his dear friend he lamented and remembered that their friendship had exceeded brotherly bonds, he addressed it as 'very pleasant' and 'wonderful' even surpassing the love from women.

Friendship principles:

Friends will not forget the good times and the emotional bond shared even after one of them departs.

Those who made a connection at a deeper level are more than brothers

and their love even above marital pleasures. Oh, how content are those who keep such a company.

Friends honor promises even after they are gone. David, after becoming King over Israel and establishing himself on the throne, remembered the house of Saul "for the sake of Jonathan". Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul and son of Jonathan, lame in both his feet from 5 years of age, dining at the royal table along with the King of Israel and his family during his whole lifetime is a beautiful conclusion of what it is all about to be "Best Friends Forever".

In conclusion, pray that the good Lord, help each one of us to define Best Friend Forever, keeping in mind the above 9 pointers drawn from Jonathan-David's friendship. A point worth mentioning here is that all the above are still "now I know in part" and hence we wait for "the perfect to come" so that "then that which is in part shall be done away" and we will not only know the, true and clear definition of BFF but will experience it to the fullest as well.



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riendship is mostly considered be something disparate from or unrelated to love. And that was my understanding too. I thought love is love and friendship is friendship, if you know what I mean. Until I got to know about the four interesting terms storge, philia, eros, and agape. In simple words, these are the four most talked about 'loves' that exist. Now philia, is a term used for friendship love. Ever found it strange why the Bible says in 1 Sam 18:1 that Jonathan loved David as himself? I thought why does the Bible say the word 'loved' here, why couldn't it just say 'liked' or maybe 'cared for' David as himself? Why would a man love another man? Isn't that weird?

It was weird to me until I got to know those four words and what they meant. And then I knew love is not limited to a lover's romance or a mother's affection. Love is much beyond that. And when I got to know *philia*, I understood Jonathan's love for David. So, there is love in friendship too!

Without eros none of us would have been begotten and without affection none of us would have been reared; but we can live and breed without friendship. The species biologically considered has no need of. -C. S. Lewis

The quote above makes friendship look unnecessary. And yet in 1 Sam 19:1-3, Jonathan is ready to put his affection for his father, and his loyalty to his kingship at bay for the sake of friendship. And David refers to his love for Jonathan as. "surpassing the love of women". Friendship, as put by C.S. Lewis in The Four Loves, is the least instinctive and least necessary love. And though friendship is not a necessity, I have not met a single human in the 26 years of my life who has no friends or does not seek one. The strongest and the weakest, the richest and the poorest, the wise and the foolish, all have friends. And



the truth of the matter is not just that they all have friends, it is that they enjoy having friends. In the words of the popular essayist and poet Samuel Johnson, "Life has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of friendship".

And though the human species has no biological need for *philia* (friendship), we definitely have a profound emotional and psychological need for friendship. **And when we start losing our spark, or start becoming dull, friendships are our charging point.** The Bible says, "A sweet friendship refreshes the soul" in Prov 27:9 and in the 17th verse it says, "As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend".

True Friendships are Lifesaving

As we read in 1st Samuel, Jonathan made it his goal to save the life of his friend David and did everything in his power to convince his father Saul to not plot his murder, and warned David of Saul's plans. That is what true friendships are like, they are lifesaving, maybe not always literally, sometimes metaphorically. Our true friends stop us from making the wrong decisions, prevent us from walking on dangerous trails, sometimes even scold us when we act carelessly and correct us when we make mistakes. And not just that, they walk extra miles for us,

with us, so that we don't have to walk those lonely roads on our own, sometimes they give a hand and share our burdens so that we don't have to carry them alone, and at other times, when we have already fallen and are tired, they stretch forth their arms to lift us up so that we don't stay in the dirt. The wisest human says in Prov 18:24(b) "A real friend sticks closer than a brother". Don't you think that's amazing? And does it not make it easier to identify who truly is our friend and who isn't?

A person who constantly puts you down or leaves your hand in difficult situations is not a true friend.

Because a true friend loves you, helps you, cares for you, fights for you, encourages you, does not look down on you, and never gives up on you.

At this point, I believe you are able to picture our "best-est" friend possible, **JESUS**, Who treats us the same way. He openly announces us (even when we did not deserve it) as His friends saying, "I no longer call you servants, ...instead, I have called you friends." (Jn 15:15). And He has saved us not for a day or two, but for eternity.

True Friendships are worth - Sacrificing for

While we are on our journey of understanding what true



friendships look like, and how true friends are always there for each other, it is also crucial to understand how to become a true friend and how difficult it can be sometimes. In general, we all dream of friends who would save our lives, but to be a true friend, also means saving a friend's life, which may at its best cost our own life too, here again, maybe not always literally, sometimes metaphorically. To be saved feels good, but to be able to save must feel great. Lk 6:31 says, "And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them."

Jonathan was the eldest son of Saul, before David appeared as the anointed one. It must have been assumed that Jonathan would be the next king, and even after David's public appearance and victories during Saul's rule, if David was killed, Jonathan had all the possibilities of reigning. But his love for his friend

was so deep that he did not once think of what he could've been, and he risked his life to save him and willingly accepted David as his king even before he was crowned.

Jesus could have definitely saved us staying the Lord, the King, and the son of God that He is, yet He chose to save us as a friend, He left His throne, and all His Glory to die for us, and hence showing the ultimate expression of love for us, His friends. As written in Jn 15:13, "No one has greater love than this, that someone would lay down his life for his friends". And in doing this, that is the standard for Friendship that Jesus has set for us, to lay down our lives, to sacrifice ourselves, for our friends.

Today, are we able to see ourselves as a selfless friend as Jonathan and as a sacrificing friend like Jesus?

Friendship is not a necessity but a luxurious opportunity to show Christ-like love to another human.



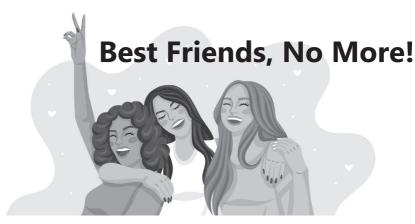
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Chapters cannot confine them, pages cannot hold them, pens cannot ink them, full stops cannot stop them, commas cannot commemorate them, such are the stories of friendships that are bound by deep connections. Love in action, help in times of need, strength in weakness, call of hope, open ears, laughter and pain to share, friendship is an unending and unfathomably beautiful relationship.

A baby girl was born to a family like a rose that blossoms among the thorny surroundings. Growing up, she became a joy to her family. She surprised her family, when she learnt to write English alphabets all by herself, before her parents or teachers taught them to her. Her parents, no doubt, believed that she is not an ordinary kid yet they decided to keep her name Ruhi, meaning soul.

With each passing day, Ruhi grew smarter and more clever. She

topped her class every year and was well known as the most intelligent girl.

The irony is this, Ruhi's character has no connection with her name. She was good at everything she did but she was haughty. Always considered herself superior over others except her two best friends, Shreya and Swati. They were her soul.

They walked, sat, learnt, ate, and played together. From exchanging their food, sharing their heart, their bond grew stronger and deeper, emotionally. There was no day that existed, without them being together.

Ruhi didn't love to paint, unlike other kids, yet she loved drawing the three of them and painting everywhere on the page, "my best friends".

One day, a shocking news shook them. Shreya's mother was diagnosed with a deadly disease. It now



became hard for her to go to school every day. Nothing is harder for a friend to see her friend weeping more as each day passes. Ruhi stood strong with Shreya. She fed her with her own hands and wiped her tears away, saying repeatedly, all will be well.

The reason for Ruhi's happiness wasn't her achievements but her best friends. Her love for them was immeasurable.

One morning, their school announced a school trip. She didn't want to miss the fun and hence decided to go on the trip along with her friends. She also made efforts to make sure her closest ones were also part of it.

She was excited till Monday morning when she arrived at the school bus stop. The excitement turned to despair as she got onto the bus. All her best friends screamed, "Don't sit beside me". Despite being hurt, she took it easy and went to sit at the back, hoping that her friends would join her when she got down. But the story became more tragic. All were asked to walk in twos. The little girl's heart fell as there was no one to hold her hands and walk with her around the tourist city.

Everyone whispered, "Don't hold my hands".

She walked silently, her heart was grieving, questioning, "Am I not hu-

man? Do I look different? Are my hands not good enough to be held just to walk around? No one to hold my hands, then who will hold my life? Aren't they my best friends? Didn't I hold their hands when they were crying? Aren't they my friends anymore?"

The previous day, there was no one as excited as she was and the next day there was no one as annoyed as she was. A complete silence. No one to talk with. She cried hard, no one listened. All she heard was the bullying voice from those same people who once said, they loved her.

Can friendship exist forever? Can best friends become enemies? Can they bully the person who stood by them in times of trouble? Were her hands too dirty to hold?

Not only the friendship, Ruhi's heart too broke to pieces. She couldn't tolerate their hurtful words anymore.

"Fear not, I am with you." Ruhi's heart melted when she heard this voice from above. It was none other than God, Who had created her. He spoke to her from the Bible, Is 43:5. That changed her life and her perspective of love and friendship forever. It was unbelievable for her, as she was left out completely and had faced loneliness deeply in her childhood.



The voice she heard, unlike every other voice, was so different. It was filled with unconditional love and immense peace that she hadn't experienced before. No one loved her, even when she begged for it. Despite her arrogance and cruel behaviour, her saviour's voice found her in her loneliness. Now she became the real Ruhi, the soul.

Though being the King of kings and the Lord of lords, God still calls you His friend. He is near to the broken hearted, He sets the captive free. He sees your tears when no one else sees it. He is for you. He wants to be with you and walk with you.

Worldly friendship demands perfection and will never be satisfied with how good you are but God's friendship does not ask for perfection. He knows your weakness yet loves you with His perfect love and that's why it's unconditional. God's hands are always stretched forth for you to rely on and He will never let you down. Even when the world has rejected you, He still accepts you.

In the deepest valleys, God is closer like no other. Friends might fail to remain faithful, they'll hurt you, they'll break you but there's only one true best friend forever. The deepest cry, the drained mind, the broken pieces of your heart, He can fix them all.

Ruhi found her true best friend in her deepest loneliness. The forever, unshakable and inseparable love.

Friendship is forever when it's bound to the love of the eternal God, Who calls you His friend.



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n a world where "BFF" is a term casually typed in Instagram posts and text messages, the Bible offers a richer understanding of what it means to be "Best Friends Forever." Friendship isn't just a human idea — it's rooted in the very nature of God.

1. Friendship Begins with the Trinity

The meaning of true friendship needs to be obtained from its source. Before time began and the world was created, the Triune God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — was in a selfless, loving fellowship.

"The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands." Jn 3:35

"Jesus gave them this answer: 'Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."" Jn 5:19

"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father —

the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father — he will testify about me." Jn 15:26

These verses provide a glimpse of the mutual love, unity, and cooperation within the Trinity. This perfect, eternal fellowship reveals the standards for Godly relationships. So, what does this mean for us?

We are made in the image of God, which means we are created for relationships. God didn't create us to be isolated individuals. From Adam in the garden (Gen 2:18) to the establishment of the church as the body of Christ (Rom 12:5), Scripture emphasizes the importance of relationship and community. When we build friendships based on selfless love, truth, and unity, we mirror the nature of God.

2. God's Friendship with Abraham: A Covenant Bond

The Bible provides examples of God demonstrating genuine friendship with humans. In Is 41:8, God refers to Abraham as "my friend," and Jam 2:23 says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend."

This friendship was based on God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:2-3), and Abraham's faith in accepting it. What stands out most is God's



active role in it. **God initiated the** relationship — not Abraham. It was God Who called Abraham out of Ur and established an everlasting covenant with him. **God also** sustained the relationship. When Abraham feared, doubted, or failed, God did not withdraw His covenant. Instead, He remained faithful despite Abraham's failures. This shows that God's friendship is not based on our flawless performance but on His unchanging character.

Friendship with God involves faith and obedience. Abraham trusted God even when it was hard — leaving his homeland, believing he would become a father in old age, and being willing to sacrifice Isaac. Jn 15:14 says, "You are my friends if you do what I command." Abraham showed his friendship by his actions, even when the commands were difficult.

Just as God made a covenant with Abraham, God has made a new covenant with all who believe in Jesus. The same God Who called Abraham "friend" now calls us friends through Jesus. He invites us into a relationship with Him — to know Him and obey His commands.

Am I responding to God's invitation to walk with Him like Abraham did?

– In what ways am I trusting God,

even when I don't understand His plans?

What does my friendship with God look like right now?

– Am I willing to listen, obey, and walk closely with Him as His disciple and friend?

3. Jesus: The Ultimate Best Friend Forever

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. 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." Jn 15:13-15

Jesus showed that the ultimate test of friendship is sacrifice. He didn't just say, "I love you." He proved it by laying down His life. This redefines friendship. It's not merely about enjoying each other's company, but about a willingness to give, even at great cost.

Jesus' friendship with His disciples was also marked by shared truth. Jesus revealed the things that were closest to His heart — the will of the Father, the truth of God's Kingdom, and His mission on earth. Jesus shared life, truth, and purpose with His disciples, turning ordinary men into bold proclaimers of the gospel.



True friendship doesn't leave you the same. It sharpens your character and draws you closer to Christ.

4. Friendship for Christ

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." 1 Jn 4:7-11

The world may define BFFs as those who share laughs and selfies, but the Bible invites us to something deeper:friendships that reflect God's love and point us toward Christ. In a world where relationships can be shallow, self-serving, or short-lived, the friendship offered by Jesus was sacrificial and transformational.

So, as you build friendships, ask:

- In what ways can I reflect Christlike friendship in my relationships — with consistency, truth, love, and grace?
- Do I encourage my friends to live for Christ?
- Do I speak the truth in love, even when it's uncomfortable?
- Do I see friendship as an opportunity to serve or to be served?

 Am I willing to lay aside my time or convenience to care for a friend in need?

While we are called to love everyone, our closest friendships matter. Prov 13:20 says, "Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm." This doesn't mean we avoid those who are struggling or lost — Jesus certainly didn't. But it does mean that we must be discerning about who has the most influence in our lives. Ask yourself:

- Do my closest friends encourage me to become more like Christ?
- Do they speak truth into my life
 even when it's hard to hear?
- Are there friendships in my life that encourage compromise with sin or draw me away from God?
- Do I stay in certain relationships out of fear, guilt, or social pressure?

5. Conclusion

As we pursue deeper friendships, let us first look to God — the origin and model of genuine relationship. May we be the kind of friends who reflect His love and surround ourselves with those who help us follow Him.



Stefna Silas did her Master's degree at Manipal, where she was actively involved in the Manipal EU. She is currently working as a science teacher at a school in Bangalore. You can reach her at s.stefna@gmail.com



Errata

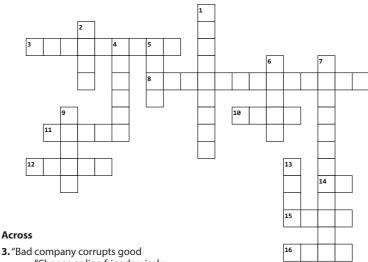
In the previous issue of Campus Link, Vol. 27, No. 23, May-Jun 2025, the puzzle titled "Students & Digital Age" contained the following error on page 2: it had mismatched clues and answers. The correct set of clues is provided below:

We apologize for the oversight and appreciate your understanding.

- The Editorial Team

Puzzle - Students & Digital Age

Last Issue, CL May-June 2025



Across

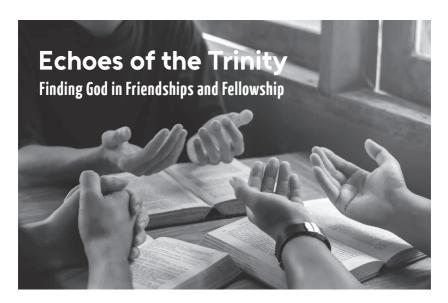
- _."Choose online friends wisely.
- (1 Corinthians 15:33)
- 8. 2 Timothy 2:22 says to flee youthful passions and pursue
- 10. Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the !
- 11. What should a student guard above all else?(Proverbs 4:23)
- 12. Romans 12:2 says, "Do not conform to the pattern of this _
- 14. In the digital world, honesty still matters —"Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No.' be_____." (Matthew 5:37)
- 15. Philippians 4:8 encourages us to think about things that are true, noble, and

16. Digital pride can be a	trap. Proverbs
savs"Pride goes before a	"
savs riide does belole a	

Down

- 1. Psalm 101:3 (NASB) "I will set no _ thing before my eyes."
- 2. Jesus often withdrew to do this (Luke 5:16);a digital detox principle.
- 4. "I can do all things (use technology wisely)through who strengthens me."(Philippians 4:13)
- **5.** Be guick to listen and slow to speak use your _____ wisely. (James 1:19)
- **6.** "____ your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Proverbs 4:23).
- 7. This fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) helps us control our screen time.
- 9. "Above all else, guard your _."(Proverbs 4:23)
- 13. "Your word is a ____ to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)





et Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness..." (Gen 1:26). The very nature of the Triune God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — is a relationship of perfect love, unity, and mutual submission. In creating us in His image, God invites us into the same kind of relationship — one that is self-giving, deeply connected, and rooted in love. For me, this divine relationship wasn't just a theological concept I read about: it became real through the community I found in the Evangelical Union. Through friendships, discipleship, prayer, and shared mission, I slowly began to see glimpses of how the Triune God relates — reflected in how we relate to one another. In the most unexpected moments a quiet tea, a campfire prayer, a tearful cell group — I've seen this

divine pattern reflected in my relationships through UESI. These weren't just human friendships; they were echoes of trinity.

In my second year, I met this wonderful person who simply chose to be present in my life not as someone who claimed out loud, a mentor in the traditional sense, but as someone who quietly, consistently reflected the love and care of Christ. He would check on me constantly, asking not just if I was okay, but celebrating when I was doing well and sharing my sadness when I wasn't. When I was anxious or afraid, he wouldn't always ask for details. Instead, he would say, "I'll pray," and somehow I'd feel a little more at peace. He never pried, explanations demanded never — just offered his presence and prayer. Often, at times when I was silently struggling, he'd pop up and suggest we go for tea. What began as a simple invitation would turn into hours of deep sharing and silent understanding. Those tea times became sacred spaces of healing, friendship, and grace.

This kind of companionship reminded me of how Jesus walks alongside His disciples — not always solving everything immediately, but always being present, always loving, always interceding. It's a relationship that mirrors the very heart of the Trinity — deeply relational, attentive, and healing.

It was within EU that I truly learned how to share. Our cell group became a place where vulnerability wasn't feared but welcomed. Everyone knew each other not just the superficial details, but the brokenness, the doubts, the weaknesses. And yet, never once did I feel judged. In fact, it was the opposite — we would sit together, listen, encourage, and most importantly, pray. Some days, that circle of prayer and support was the only thing that gave me the strength to keep going. Just as the Trinity is three distinct persons united in love and truth, our cell was a reflection of that same unity — diverse hearts, open to each other, and bound together by grace. That space taught me that community isn't just about meeting — it's about knowing and carrying each other.

One of my most treasured memories was from a particular EU camp. A group of five of us - complete strangers from across India were thrown together by chance, but drawn together by something deeper. We jokingly called ourselves the "MCC gang," even though most of us weren't from that college. What bonded us wasn't geography or background, but a shared desire to grow in Christ. Even after the camp ended, we stayed in touch, encouraging each other through messages and prayer. On birthdays, while others would call to wish and celebrate, we'd call to pray. In moments of weakness, it was their prayers that sustained me.

Those friendships weren't just emotionally strong — they were spiritually anchored. It was a glimpse of what it means to be in relationship that reflects the Triune God: choosing prayer over performance, intercession over interaction, and spiritual intimacy over surface-level connection.

I never knew how important a prayer partner could be until I had one — without even realizing it at first. Through every dark season and difficult moment, I found I could



walk forward with confidence, simply because I knew someone was lifting me up in prayer. Especially during my final year, when I held a particularly challenging post in college, there were moments I felt I might break under the pressure. But my prayer partner and their family stood in the gap for me, covering me in prayer, and that's what kept me from being completely lost. If the Holy Spirit is the One who groans for us in prayer and reminds us we are not alone, then a faithful prayer partner is a tangible reflection of that love. It was one of the most sacred ways I experienced

the reality of God's presence through someone else's quiet commitment to pray for me.

Serving on a committee taught me something beautiful about working for God's kingdom. At first, I barely knew the others in the team — and as the only second-year student among seniors, I carried a quiet fear that I wouldn't be accepted, that I wouldn't fit in. But those walls crumbled the moment we began working together. They embraced me like a younger sibling, never once making me feel out of place. We bonded over shared zeal

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and commitment to God's work. What began as just a task became a fellowship of purpose — a team that mirrored the unity-indiversity of the Trinity. Each of us with different roles, different gifts, but one heart for God. That shared mission and acceptance reminded me that working for the Kingdom is never about status or age — it's about love in action.

Looking back, these aren't just fragments of nostalgia. They are sacred threads in a much larger tapestry — one that reflects the beauty and intimacy of the Triune God. In UESI, I found friendships that didn't just support me — they revealed God to me. Discipleship, vulnerability, prayer partnerships, shared mission — all of these are echoes of the eternal relationship that exists within the Trinity.

In a world where loneliness and independence are often celebrated, these relationships reminded me that **I was made for communion**— not just with people, but with a

God Who exists in relationship and calls us to reflect that in the way we love, serve, and journey with each other. True community is not built on common interests or personality types, but on Christ. It's not perfect people coming together — it is imperfect people loving each other through grace.

Each encounter I've had through UESI — whether in discipleship, mentoring, prayer partnerships, or shared mission — has revealed something sacred. In our laughter, tears, intercessions, and service, I saw glimpses of the Trinity: a God Who is never alone, never passive, and never distant. I carry these relationships with me not just as memories, but as sacred imprints of how heaven touches earth — through us, when we dare to live in love, prayer, and mission together.

May our friendships never be shallow. May our faith never be private. And may our fellowships always whisper the mystery of the Triune God.



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rue friendship is more than shared laughter, memories, and mutual interests – it is a sacred bond that shapes character, strengthens faith, and promotes growth. Prov 27:17 beautifully captures the essence of this transformative relationship: "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." In this simple yet powerful verse, Scripture reveals profound а truth about the importance of accountability and the role of close friends in our spiritual and moral development.

Iron Sharpening Iron: A Biblical Blueprint for Growth

Iron sharpening iron implies friction, intentional contact, and the purpose of refinement. In the same way that a blade becomes sharper through contact with another piece of iron, people grow stronger and wiser through meaningful and honest interactions. This is not a passive

process – it involves constructive criticism, encouragement, truth-telling, and mutual commitment.

Accountability is at the heart of this. It means being open to correction, willing to confess weaknesses, and ready to help others overcome theirs. A true friend doesn't just stand beside you in success but walks with you in weakness, calling out sin with love and pointing you back to God.

Why Accountability Matters in Friendship

1. Keeps Us Grounded in Truth

Left to ourselves, we often drift. Our hearts are prone to self-deception or compromise. Godly friends remind us of God's Word and help keep our feet on the path of righteousness. They challenge us to align our lives with biblical truth and not the shifting values of the world.



2. Encourages Spiritual Growth

Best friends often witness each other's journey closely. Through prayer, study, and conversation, they become catalysts for spiritual maturity. They rejoice in growth and grieve over sin – not to judge, but to restore.

3. Strengthens Resistance to Temptation

Accountability partners provide a safe space to confess struggles and receive wise counsel. Knowing someone is walking with us and asking the hard questions helps us resist temptation more effectively.

4. Fosters Humility and Teachable Hearts

Being sharpened requires humility. True friendship teaches us to receive correction graciously and grow through it. It humbles us to know we need others to reflect Christ more clearly.

How to Be an Accountable, Sharpening Friend

1. Be Honest and Speak in Love

Truth without love can wound, and love without truth can mislead. Eph 4:15 reminds us to "speak the truth in love." A sharpening friend speaks honestly with compassion, always aiming to build up.

2. Be a Listener and Intercessor

Effective accountability begins with

listening. Understand your friend's heart and struggles. Then, take them to God in prayer. Spiritual growth is a joint effort between faithful friends and the Holy Spirit.

3. Check In Regularly

Sharpening happens over time. Schedule regular times to talk, pray, and reflect. This builds trust and deepens the relationship.

4. Lead by Example

Accountability isn't just about pointing things out in others – it's also about being transparent with your own life. When you model vulnerability, it invites the same in return.

I would like to share about a friendship that has truly been unforgettable where we were truly accountable and sharpened one another. During my 11th & 12th classes and over the years, I had a friend named S. Ujwal Manoj. We shared not only our personal matters but also our spiritual journey with each other. We strengthened and equipped one another, corrected each other with love, and grew together in spiritual maturity and in our walk with Christ. He stood by my side through all circumstances. Even today, whenever we speak over phone, we fondly remember those days - how we shared our hearts and how God used that



season to train and prepare us for His purpose.

Conclusion

In a world that often values comfort over conviction, true friendship – marked by accountability – is a gift. Prov 27:17 reminds us that we are not meant to walk this journey alone. Through intentional, godly friendships, we become more like Christ. Our sharp edges are refined, our dullness removed, and our lives more aligned with His purposes.

So let us seek to be friends who sharpen, encourage, and uphold one another – not for our own glory, but for the glory of the One who first called us friends (Jn 15:15).



M. Blesson Carey Francis accepted Christ as his personal Savior on Jan 21st 2012 through Personal Evangelism (during 5th Standard). He worked as student representative in SSC for the academic year 2023-2025 and is presently actively participating in the local ministry (Nandyal MC Zone - UESI-AP). You can reach him at mblessoncareyfrancis24@amail.com

Campus Link



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believe you have experienced how friendship enriches one's life and how it is more than just a connection — it is a gift that shapes our lives, weaving together our joys, challenges, and unforgettable moments. When we say "best friends forever," we aren't just expressing a sentiment; we are honouring the bonds that carry us through life's highs and lows.

Think about the people who uplift you when you succeed, stand beside you in difficult times, and share in both the little joys and the big milestones. These are the friends who make life richer — the ones we can truly call *Best Friends Forever*. Having such remarkable people in our lives teaches us about loyalty, sacrifice, and unconditional love. These qualities don't just strengthen friendships; they help build thriving communities that stand the test of time.

As a young adult, I see friendship as one of life's greatest anchors, offering stability in an ever-changing world. When we are far from our biological families, our closest friends become our chosen family — offering love, understanding, and companionship.

Cherishing these connections and nurturing them with kindness and trust makes friendship a lifelong treasure.

The Eternal Friend

Friendship, of course, is not always easy. Misunderstandings, disagreements, and life transitions can test even the strongest bonds. Yet, a true friendship — one built on trust, empathy, and mutual respect — has the strength to endure.

Still, as human beings, we often long for something deeper — a bond that remains unshaken, no matter what.



The reality is that even the most devoted friendships have their limitations. People drift apart, well-meaning intentions falter, and hearts sometimes carry the weight of disappointment.

But for those of us who are saved by grace, we have a Friend whose love never changes — Jesus Christ. He is the truest and most faithful friend we could ever have. His friendship is not seasonal or dependent on circumstances; rather, He is steadfast through every trial, every joy, and every uncertainty of life.

Friendship Through an Academic Lens

Psychologists have long studied the profound impact of friendships on emotional well-being. *Erik Erikson*, a well-known psychologist, emphasized how crucial friendships are during young adulthood, a stage where people often wrestle with intimacy versus isolation. Friendships are essential in navigating this balance.

Similarly, sociologist *Pierre Bourdieu* introduced the concept of social capital, highlighting how relationships enrich our lives. Strong friendships connect us to opportunities, resources, and personal growth. They act as a kind of "social glue," bringing people together and deepening our sense of belonging.

In the same way that psychology underscores the importance of meaningful connections, Jesus meets our deepest need for belonging. He invites us into a friendship that transforms — one that offers hope and purpose far beyond what the world can give.

Just as Bourdieu's idea of social capital shows how friendships provide access to valuable enriches resources. Jesus our with wisdom, lives strenath. and provision. He also connects us to a spiritual family — the Church — where we experience encouragement, accountability, and unwavering love.

Communication: The Heart of Friendship

One of the most vital aspects of friendship is communication. *Deborah Tannen*, a renowned sociolinguist, emphasizes that listening and truly seeking to understand one another is the key to lasting relationships. These qualities not only help us navigate conflict but also deepen bonds.

Just as healthy friendships require intentional communication, our friendship with Jesus is strengthened through prayer. When we pray, we open our hearts to Him, listen for His guidance, and express our thoughts freely. Spending quiet time with Him, studying His Word,



and meditating on His truths allows us to trust Him more deeply.

The Greatest Love in Friendship

Jesus Himself taught us the ultimate expression of love and friendship:

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

— Jn 15:13.

His love is sacrificial. He willingly bore the cross for us, proving that His friendship is unwavering. While human relationships can falter, Jesus never abandons us. He walks beside us in the valleys and rejoices with us on the mountaintops. When loneliness grips our hearts, He whispers peace. When doubts cloud our minds, He strengthens our faith.

Living Out Biblical Friendship

Friendship is more than just shared laughter and good times. It is about walking alongside one another with love, encouragement, and loyalty — just as Jesus does for us. The wisdom of Scripture calls us to model the love of Christ in our friendships, to love unconditionally, support without hesitation, and build relationships that bring true joy and peace.

Jesus is the perfect friend — faithful, present, and loving. When we follow His example, our friendships become stronger, filled with grace and purpose. In a world longing for

meaningful connections, we have the opportunity to cherish those around us and live out the wisdom of God's Word. So, let's embrace the gift of friendship, nurture the relationships we are blessed with, and walk in His footsteps to create a life rooted in love and faith.

How can we practice this and live a life that truly reflects the love of Jesus?

Friendship, at its core, is about being present — showing up for the people who matter most, even in the busiest seasons of life. It's about loyalty and faithfulness, making time for those deep, meaningful connections and ensuring that our friendships remain strong no matter the circumstances.

Loyalty and Faithfulness: (1 Sam 18:1-4, 20:16-17)

In a world that moves fast and demands our attention in countless ways, choosing to prioritize time with friends is an act of love. It's about cherishing those moments of laughter, the deep conversations, and the simple, quiet companionship that reminds us that we are not alone. True friendships stand firm, even when life feels uncertain, offering a sense of stability and unwavering support.

Sacrificial Love: (Jn 15:13)

Friendship isn't just about shared fun — it's about selflessness. It's



choosing to serve others, to listen wholeheartedly, to be there in both the joys and the struggles. Love in its purest form is sacrificial, and the strongest friendships are built on a foundation of putting others before ourselves. Just as Jesus laid down His life for His friends, we are called to reflect that same love — one that is not driven by convenience but by a genuine desire to uplift, support, and care.

Support and Encouragement: (Eccl 4:9-10)

We all need people who remind us of our worth, who encourage us to grow, and who walk beside us even when the road is difficult. Being a true friend means choosing to stand as a pillar of encouragement, speaking life into others, and reminding them of their God-given purpose. A community of support lifts people up, helping each other navigate life's uncertainties with courage and hope.

Mutual Respect and Accountability: (Prov 27:17)

Friendships thrive in honesty, kindness, and understanding. Open conversations help build trust, and accountability ensures that we walk in integrity. When friends challenge and inspire each other to be better — to grow spiritually, emotionally, and in character — the friendship deepens, becoming a

source of strength rather than just companionship.

Companionship and Fellowship: (Prov 27:9, Heb 10:24-25)

Loneliness can be overwhelming, but genuine friendship offers an antidote. Being intentional about spending time together, showing up, and engaging in fellowship creates a space of belonging. Whether through regular gatherings, heartfelt conversations, or shared experiences, companionship reminds us that we are seen, known, and valued.

Honesty and Truthfulness: (Eph 4:15, Prov 27:6)

At the heart of a lasting friendship is honesty — the willingness to speak truth in love, to be vulnerable, and to build relationships rooted in authenticity. Truth spoken with kindness strengthens bonds, and trust built on honesty allows friendships to weather any storm.

Through all these aspects of friendship, we see echoes of Christ's love — the kind that never wavers, that listens with empathy, and that uplifts with grace. Friendship, when modeled after His example, becomes a testimony of love, faith, and unwavering commitment.

So let us live out this calling — cherishing those around us, serving selflessly, and walking alongside



others just as Jesus walks with us. In doing so, we cultivate friendships that don't just last for a season but remain firm through all of life's highs and lows. This is the beauty of true friendship. This is the love that transforms

A Friend Who Is Always With Us

Friendship is a beautiful gift — a source of strength and joy. Yet, in the ups and downs of life, even our closest human relationships face challenges. People change, circumstances shift, and at times, even the most steadfast friendships can feel uncertain. But there is One Who remains constant through it all — Jesus, the Best Friend Forever.

His love never wavers, His presence never fades. He knows our joys, our sorrows, and every longing of our hearts. Unlike the friendships of this world, His bond with us is unbreakable — grounded in grace, mercy, and an everlasting promise of love.

No matter what you carry—whether it's weariness, doubt, or

loneliness — Jesus stands with open arms, ready to walk beside you. He is not just a companion for good times; He is the Saviour Who holds us through the storms, Who lifts us when we stumble, and Who embraces us when we feel alone.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." — Mt 11:28.

May every heart recognize the treasure of His friendship. It is a relationship beyond circumstances, beyond time, beyond human frailty. To walk with Jesus is to know a love that never fails, a friendship that transforms, and a presence that sustains us always.

Let's cherish this gift, embrace His love, and share the light of His friendship with others. In Him, we have a forever friend — a companion for life and eternity.

How does Jesus' friendship speak to your own experiences?

With faith and friendship, A fellow-traveller on this journey.

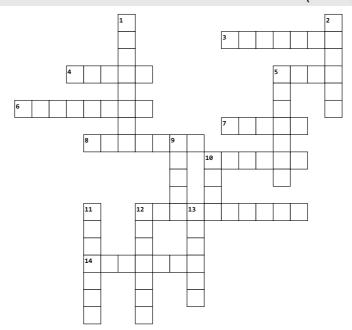


PL Hmangaihtharzeli, is among the first batch of students of Mizoram Christian College, Aizawl, who earned her BA (English) from the institution, where she held the post of EU Secretary for two consecutive years, from the birth of an EU unit there. During this time, her larger ministry across the city included executive

committee membership at Aizawl Inter-Collegiate Evangelical Union. At present, she is working as Associate Analyst at Concentrix, in Manyata Tech Park, Bangalore. You can reach her at plhmangaihtharzeli@gmail.com



PUZZLE - Best Friends Forever (BFF)



Across

- **3.** "There is a friend who sticks closer than a _____." (Proverbs 18:24)
- 4. "A friend loves at all ____." (Proverbs 17:17)
- **5.** True friends offer this Jesus said to love one another as ${\sf He}$ has loved us.
- **6.** The king's son who was David's best friend (1 Samuel 18:1)
- **7.** Friends in prison Paul and ____. (Acts 16:25)
- **8.** Jesus visited this house often home of His close friends in (Luke 10:38–42)
- **10.** Moses' helper and friend who later led Israel (Exodus 33:11)
- 12. "Iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17) a verse about this kind of relationship.
- **14.** Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's ____." (John 15:13)

Down

- 1. David and Jonathan made a ____ before God (1 Samuel 18:3)
- 2. Abraham was called a "___ of God" (James 2:23)
- **5.** Jesus' friends, Mary, Martha, and ___ (John 11:5)
- **9.** Friend of Ruth who stayed loyal to her (Ruth 1:16)
- **10.** This disciple was Jesus' "beloved" friend (John 13:23)
- **11.** True friends offer this seen in Job's companions (though they failed) (Job 2:11)
- **12.** Jesus called His disciples this...... instead of servants (John 15:15)
- **13.** Prophet Elijah's faithful friend and successor (2 Kings 2:2)

Rush, fill up your correct answers in the boxes, take photograph (Pg. 34) and send us along with your details such as name, place, EU/EGF & mobile no. to ruthsimoncollins1997@gmail.com/9841826902 before 25th August 2025. The names of first 10 winners will be published in the upcoming issue and the first 3 winners will get Campus Link Magazine for one year (free subscription).



BEST FRIEND FOREVER

Made many friendships.

Some encouraged me to grow,

Some compelled me to shrink.

Some fade with time, Some last a lifetime.

One friendship.

Moulded out of unconditional love,

And every kind of emotion.

Shared life's joys and pains,

An endless devotion.

Fall back into the shame,

A hundred thousand times.

Yet, I hear You call my name,

Ready to embrace me every time.

A never-ending connection.

My Dear Best Friend, In this journey of life, Let's go till the end.

Walking through every phase of life,

Together hand in hand.



N. Seema is working as a Science Teacher at Don Bosco School, Mission Veng, Aizawl. Besides, she is also practicing counselling sessions privately. After serving as a Coordinator in UESI-Mizoram during 2014-15, she went on to finish Bachelor's Degree in Missiology and MSc. in Psychology. While studying B.Sc. at Government Zirtiri Residential Science College, she held the post of Finance

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W. W.

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- It is vital for our children to grow in the fear and wisdom of the Lord. Our curriculum is designed in such a way so that our children will grow in God's word along with skills, ethics, family bond, knowledge and understanding.
- · Affordable fees, secure way of learning.
- Interesting curriculum that focuses on the overall development of a child's well-being.

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