

THE INSIDE RUNNING

Promise Keepers has helped me realise the importance of strong friendships with other men. Often these are rare or non-existent.

When we meet regularly and are open, something great happens. We have friends who stand with us, challenge us and encourage us. In a Christian context we also should be growing spiritually. This is where real discipleship can happen. That is why I believe the enemy seeks to divide and conquer us, isolating us from powerful friendships.

The years with a young family sometimes don't leave much available time to invest into friends and that's when many men become isolated. Work environments can have a similar effect. Most of my practical work experience has been in farming where you often have to work out ways to complete tasks on your own.

The men I meet with now have become my closest friends. All of us have faced more stress and challenges than ever before over the last few years. Meeting together and upholding each other in prayer is the most significant spiritual thing we do.

God calls us to community, as a functioning part of the Body of Christ.

Who could you call at 2:00am?

With gratitude



John Subritzky



Friendship for Life

September 2014

by Geoff Matthews

In the early 1990s I taught two primary-aged girls whose father was a pastor and whose family had just returned from the US. I remember the girls as being sweet, compliant and happy. About ten years later, I met the same pastor and asked him how his girls were. Sadly, and with deep regret, he said they attended a local and popular high school where they got caught up with friends in the "culture of the school", one girl becoming a solo mother at the age of 17 and the other co-habiting with her boyfriend and addicted to drugs.

The Bible is full of exhortations to wisely choose good friends:

"Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good morals." 1 Corinthians 15:33

"For the company of the godless will be barren... they conceive trouble and give birth to evil." Job 15:34-35

"The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray." Proverbs 12:26

Amos says, *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"* (Amos 3:3 KJV). True friends are those who have similar beliefs and life philosophies – they might, and probably will, have differing personal and family practices and customs, but they agree on the "big picture" things –

trust in God, morality, values, service to others, etc. You can confide in such friends and share your deepest thoughts and aspirations. They won't betray your confidentiality. You respect them and they respect you. Proverbs 17:17 sums it up nicely, *"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."*

My wife and I have been hugely blessed since I took up the role of principal of Hebron Christian College. We have met the most beautiful and God-honouring Christian families and three of them have become our closest friends. We have holidayed together many times, worshipped in church together, prayed for one another and been there in good and tough times. My friends have had ➤



TRANSFORMING MEN!



the courage to speak truth into my life, as I have done into theirs.

King David reminds us that "*the wounds from a friend can be trusted*" (Proverbs 27:6) because a true friend looks past the immediate need for popularity and sees the broader picture of life and consequences.

Another one of the greatest benefits of having godly friends is the support and

protection it offers our children. Apart from attending the same school together, they have "lived in each others' pockets" so to speak, being a blessing to one another instead of a curse. We have all attended the weddings of ten of our seventeen children and rejoiced at the birth of eight grandchildren. Although the eldest is 34 and the youngest 21, the cohesion remains strong; they still continue to befriend each other and rejoice in one another's company.

The fourth Promise Keepers promise is: Building strong marriages and families through love, protection, and biblical values. Husbands and fathers need to take this role seriously and not remain passive with a "que sera, sera; whatever will be, will be" attitude. You only have one shot at raising your children and there is no "undo" button to hit when things go wrong. I encourage fathers to diligently apply this promise in their family life and enjoy the blessing of godly friendships.

Men Need to Talk

"It was a tough week," I said to a friend when we exchanged greetings after our church worship service.

Life is like that - I enjoy my work but there are weeks when things come up that are not as enjoyable.

I'm a college professor. I work with words. It is my job to speak and to write words that help students and others to articulate what is going on in their spiritual lives. My friend is a carpenter. He is not skilled with words, but he knows how to get a job done.

The next day my friend called to invite

me over to his house to watch Monday night football. He said, "It will be men's night, just me and you." I wondered what he wanted to tell me.

We watched a bit of football. After one game was over he apologised that he had not followed up on my comment about having a tough week. "Do you want to talk about it? You don't have to but I thought I'd ask."

I was blown away! Of course I want to

talk about it if someone cares enough to ask! He didn't invite me over to watch sports; he invited me over to talk. A man who works with wood was asking a man who works with words if he wanted to talk! He not only offered to listen to me, he taught me a lesson about man-to-man conversation.

Too often men's interaction is on a surface level. We talk about sports in a bar. We go fishing or golfing where talking is bad etiquette. But what is needed is connection on a deeper emotional level.

Men need to talk. It's easy for me to talk at work when I have a topic but when it comes to my personal life it is more difficult. Some of my best personal conversations with other men have been on hikes, work projects, or watching sports, when we are doing something together, when our bodies are engaged.

This past week it was watching sports that provided the opportunity to have a deep conversation, not only about my tough week, but about the temptations, struggles and joys of being husbands, fathers and brothers.

Excerpt from article by Gareth Brandt on PK Canada website. See October WiseChoices DVD for full article.



PROMISE #2

A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.

Next Issue:
INTEGRITY

**pure
POWER**

IGNITE... ACTIVATE... GO!

Men's Events 2014
WELLINGTON 12-13 September
AUCKLAND 3-4 October



Power up - Register now!