

Become the Friend in Christ You Want to Have

I spent many years being a very negative person. I have teasingly said that during that time, if I thought two positive thoughts in a row my brain got into a cramp! As you can imagine, I was lonely and had very few friends. At the time, I had no idea why people didn't like me, but eventually, I realized that my sour attitude was one of the reasons.

Did you know that your thoughts and attitudes have a tremendous impact on those around you and they affect your friendships? A positive attitude *attracts* friends whereas someone who is negative will likely find themselves isolated and alone. Like the old saying goes, "You catch more flies with honey than vinegar."

My husband, Dave, has always been a very positive person and a good influence on me in this area. Early in our marriage, I often got irritated because he was always cheery and hopeful when life seemed so dark and dreary to me. Although it was frustrating at the time, eventually his behavior caused me to want to change so I could be more positive and enjoy life too.

However, the greatest change came as a result of my relationship with God and studying His Word. Romans 12:2 (AMPC) literally changed my life. It says, "Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind...."

Becoming a positive person begins with filling your mind with God's Word and learning to think like *He* thinks, and then choosing to allow those faith-filled thoughts to flow through your words and attitudes to the people around you.

I believe many people who think and speak negatively aren't

even aware of how it affects their relationships. Really, the only people who want to be around a negative person are those who are also negative! Anyone who is happy, or wants to be happy, quickly discovers that being with a negative, sour person doesn't bring them joy.

So, let me ask you: Are you the kind of person who others want to be friends with? Are you the kind of person you want to be friends with?

I want to be the kind of person that people are glad to know and call their friend. I want others to be happy when they run into me at the coffee shop and have a few minutes to chat.

When I am at a gathering of people, I would like to be sought out by others because they like my attitude and being with me adds to their joy.

I am sure you feel the same way, but we must realize that if we want to have that kind of positive effect on others, we need to be positive people. I don't think that anyone would say they don't want people to like them, but they must also realize that *nothing good happens accidentally*.

If we want to be well-liked, we can choose to be likable. If we want friends, we can choose to be friendly!

One of the spiritual laws that we are taught in God's Word is that we reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7-8). If you want more friends, then "sow a seed" by choosing to be a good friend to someone else.

I once heard that people may not remember what you say to them, they will remember how you made them feel. For example, my exercise coach is a very enjoyable, positive, encouraging person. He makes me feel like I am strong through his positive comments to me.

On the other hand, I used to have another trainer who wasn't

very positive or encouraging. He actually thought he was helping me, but the truth is he was discouraging me!

If you apply this principle to relationships, it's pretty simple: be the kind of person that other people want to be around—positive, encouraging and uplifting.

If you realize you are negative, or that you have let the disappointments of life sour your attitude, then ask God to start changing you.

Facing truth is the doorway to freedom!

As you renew your mind with God's Word and begin to choose positive thoughts, words and attitudes based on the truth you discover, you will become someone that other people want to be around—someone they want to call a friend.

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