

“Do not forsake your own friend, nor the friend of your father.”

QUESTION: What does this line mean?

Proverbs 27:10 says, “Do not forsake your own friend, nor the friend of your father; nor go to your brother’s house in the day of your calamity. Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.” (NKJV)

ANSWER: This verse emphasizes the importance of friendship, particularly in times of need. The wisdom here is that a good friend—one who is close to you—can be more reliable in certain situations than even a family member who is far away.

The first part, “*Do not forsake your own friend,*” reminds us that true friendship is valuable and should not be taken for granted. Friendship, in the biblical sense, is a bond of mutual care, trust, and support. Proverbs 18:24 teaches us,

“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” (NKJV).

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A true friend is someone who supports you not only in good times but also during your difficulties, and this kind of friendship can be even more precious than family.

The verse goes on to say,

“nor the friend of your father.”

This is significant because it points out that even the friends of our parents may be valuable to us in times of crisis. In biblical culture, relationships and friendships extended beyond just bloodlines. Even the friends of our fathers were expected to offer assistance, wisdom, and protection. In some cases, these individuals could be more accessible and practical than distant relatives.

This doesn't mean that family isn't important. Proverbs 17:17 says,

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”
(NKJV).

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Family relationships are foundational, and brothers are especially meant to support us in tough times. But Proverbs 27:10 stresses that relying only on family may not always be enough, especially when they are far away or unable to provide immediate help.

For example, if you are facing an emergency situation, such as a sudden illness, the practical help you need might come from a neighbor who is physically nearby, rather than a family member who lives far away. This idea ties into the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-37, where Jesus teaches that love and mercy toward others should extend beyond family and social boundaries. A neighbor who is near can sometimes be more effective in showing love and compassion than someone far away.

In a broader theological context, the Bible teaches that our ultimate help comes from God. Psalm 121:1-2 says,

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills—From whence comes my help?
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.”
(NKJV).

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This highlights that while we may rely on friends, family, and neighbors, our ultimate source of support and help is God Himself. In times of trouble, God is always near, and His love and presence are constant.

For believers in Christ, our relationship with others takes on a deeper meaning. In the New Testament, Jesus teaches that the love of God should bind believers together in a unique, spiritual way.

In John 15:13, Jesus says, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.” (NKJV).

The bond of friendship between believers should be marked by self-sacrificial love, just as Christ demonstrated.

Are you saved? These teachings point to the importance of being spiritually connected to God and to others in Christ. In the New Testament, Jesus invites us into a personal relationship with Him, which is the foundation for all true relationships (John 14:6). In the last days, as we see in Matthew 24:36,

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“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” (NKJV)

it’s crucial to be prepared for Christ’s return. These are indeed the last days, and we are called to live in a way that reflects our relationship with Him.

If you have not yet repented and accepted Jesus as your Savior, now is the time to do so. The door of grace is closing, and the Bible warns that no one knows the exact moment when Christ will return. The apostle Paul tells us in Romans 10:9,

“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” (NKJV).

God bless you.

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