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SS Voice



Editorial

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The students of DBA Sunday School 2006 batch proudly presents their first newsletter "SS Voice".

Many years have passed since we left Sunday school. We have been far apart from each other for so long, yet we cared to keep in touch.

It was close friendship that made our boats sail steady through the rough sea of life. A message, a call or a post online from a friend was enough to make our day when we were all gloomy and dry.

The Bible says in Proverbs 27:9 ***"The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense"***. A friend truly shapes our character through the times we spend

with him. We often tend to change for the good or the bad through our friendship. It is often said that a person is known by the friends he keeps. True friends are a rarity. There may be many with us when we have money or when we are in good spirits but often they tend to forget us when we are down. It's true that the friends of the world change but there is a friend who promised us He never will. Jesus Christ said ***"I will never leave you nor forsake you"***. He is there for you always and ready to carry all your burdens even to the end.

All praise to Almighty God who helped us with this project and thanks to Ancy, Lisa, Bejoy, Steffi, Abel, Josephine, Sherly, Paul who have contributed to

make this a success and Sheeba and Justin who helped with the editing and the designing of this newsletter.



Friendship

- What is friendship?
- Friendship in the word of God
- Friendship for gain
- Boy-Girl Friendship
- Online Friendship
- Believers standard for friendship



Your suggestions/articles can be mailed to ss2006@groups.facebook.com

My best friend

It really feels good when old Sunday school friends could tie their hands up to come up with this Newsletter. The best part is no matter which part of the world we are, we did stay connected. I guess that is what true friendship is all about. As believers and as friends the bond just gets better as days go by.

And the best part of having Christian friends is the climax that we will stay together for eternity. Is that not an awesome feeling that we all can share?

Often when we hear about friendship we think about people around our same age

or close. What about our friendship with God? I will tell you when I frankly felt that God is my friend. As the final days of school was over and I set forth my newly grown wings to fly freely into this world far from my parents watch. My aspirations and dreams were so big and the initial days of college was a grand hit. But those feelings were all short lived as I saw how I couldn't trust everyone around me. There were cheats and back bites, and sometimes friends of this world weren't true friends at all. Parents were far. So were my siblings. And all had their

limitations to help and protect me from the evil side. Those were the days when songs like ***"I have found a friend in Jesus..."*** really made sense. Those were times when I realised the meaning of all those verses I had memorised. Yes that was a time when I first found a Friend who had no limitations to help and protect me "My God". Till then He was God, a Father seated up on high. But from then on I knew I had a Companion who walked right beside me.

Have you found that Friend whose name is Jesus?

Sheeba Stanley
Bangalore

Best friends from the Bible....

We all have friends, don't we? Some might have a lot, some a few. Then there are some people we call best friends. They stick by us at all times and we put our trust in them.

The Bible talks about two such friends, David and Jonathan. David was a shepherd boy who had just rose to fame after killing the giant Goliath. Jonathan was the son of Saul, the Kings' son. How could people who were so different become the best of friends? When we read 1Samuel 18:1,

we see that the *"..the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."*

Jonathan and David loved each other more than brothers. They were concerned about each other's safety. They looked after each other. They were ready to do anything for each other (20:4). They made covenants in the presence of the Lord, covenants that would be kept not only among them, but among their descendants too. Jonathan acts as an informer on the inside

for David, telling him news from the palace. David in turn fears for the life of Jonathan. When it is time for them to depart, we see that they were in great sorrow and weep bitterly (20:41). The most interesting part of their friendship was that even after Jonathan's death, his son Mephibosheth was remembered by David.

How are our friendships? Do we make friends with bad intentions? Do we talk bad about them behind their backs? How much are we willing to sacrifice for them? **May all our friendships be firmly planted in the covenants of God!**



Bejoy Thomas

UK

Testimony

Praise be to God's most holy name. It's indeed a great privilege to share with you all about my small testimony which happened a few months back. Being a college student, it was always the best days of my life.

I came down to Coimbatore soon after completing my under graduation. Coming down to Coimbatore was really a great thrill for me. Coming into a new culture with new friends and a whole new style of studying. Those were the times when I felt that I was at the peak of my spiritual life. I often used to be confident that, having a good experience in U.G life, Satan no more can mess around with my life, or bring me down anymore. The first few months went on really smooth, by reading the Bible, praying daily to God, active at church etc. But as time passed, things started to change.

Being a little enthusiastic at college, I was awarded with posts to lead my class in various activities of the college. Day by day, God started to bless me and my academic life. On one side I started to grow high, by being famous in college, I was asked to

do various activities and organizing a lot of things, but on the other hand I kept forgetting the fact that I was slipping spiritually. As days went by, things started to become worse.

My interest towards God or godly activities came down completely. Sunday worships became a traditional routine. Fear did strike my mind, but I was in no position or mood to get back to normal life. That was when in between my semester exams, friends called me out for a small drive. It was to relieve us from our exam stress. At first I said a no, but then later decided to go and come.

As it was a Saturday, I decided to take my Bible along with me to go to church the next day, as I won't be able to get back to my hostel. The ride went on smooth, but it ended up in a very major accident. There also my God was very gracious and compassionate towards me. I broke my knee cap bone. And as I lie down on the bed for almost two months, God showed mercy to talk to me and made me realize all the mistakes I had been committing.

I was able to realize many facts in

life. I realized who true friends were. The same people who came with me on the drive turned up against me. And that day my eyes opened to find my real true friends. My friends who through my pain and sorrow stood by me.

Dear brothers and sisters, my life had a great come back. ***Being born in a Christian family or being brought up in a good assembly, you always will be trained well with the Christian armor. But if there is any time in your life where you will have to remove this armor, that's where you will fall down.*** May the name of our Lord be glorified. Amen



Paul Gaius

Coimbatore

Boy Vs Girl

We have heard countless number of messages about relationships. I don't know if there's anything new that you might find here as you read on, but I'm sure you'll agree that a revision is sometimes very helpful...

Now let's suppose your friend is an unbeliever.. How do you go about with such a relationship? You could have started out with all good intentions.. For discussion sake, let's take evangelization as an example. You know quite well that sharing the gospel is what the Lord has called you for. But sharing the gospel with a friend of the opposite sex is not as easy as handing out a tract on the street to a total stranger. It means sharing a lot of things other than the gospel too. Now such a situation can (It's a possibility) lead to emotional attachment. This is based on a message that I've heard in one of our college fellowship meetings. It's not a commandment but it's something that we do back in college. We hold firmly to this idea that. Only sisters should guide other unbeliever girls in the faith, be their strongest encouragement and source of support. And

the brothers likewise for other brothers. What about a believer friend from the opposite sex? Well, if you can't see him / her as your fellow brother / sister in the Lord, then there's seriously something wrong in the way you look.. Remember we ought to treat older men as fathers, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity. (1Timothy5:1-2) Are we able to grow more in the Lord and fulfil His purpose in such a relationship? And Hebrews 3:13 says- ***But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*** Don't forget that Issac was meditating in the field while Rebecca was brought to him by Abraham's servant.. He didn't go out looking for her.. Song of Solomon 2:7b says ***"Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires."*** God has given a set time in every individual when love should be awakened. That's an obvious biblical principle. We might not be in as

much danger as the new believers who have come out from their homes to serve the Lord in their youth. Such people have no family to guide or support them and so are easily led astray in the pursuit of a suitable believer partner from within the fellowship/church. It is then our responsibility to guide those who are weaker in faith, to make sure they do not fall away.

I've been blessed to have awesome brothers in the Lord both in Sunday school and college, who have always guided and rebuked me as their own sister.. Let's thank our Lord for this fellowship that we share because we know although we are not related by blood, God knit us together in love for each person's spiritual growth and edification...

Any relationship, whether it be with the opposite or same sex has to be for the ultimate glory of our God. Amen..

Steffi Johns

Doha



True Friend

We have friends in our everyday lives. They are people we turn to in times of need, trouble, sorrow, joy, stress and many other reasons. One question we should keep asking ourselves is whether we are being true friends as the Scripture tells us to. Let us look into some of the traits that we should follow as Christian friends.

One thing we should evaluate is our love for our friends. Is our love a sacrificial love? As John 15:13 says, ***"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends"***. Life of Jesus is a primary example of this love. He demonstrated His love to us by the many miracles He performed, His humble service of washing His disciples feet, His compassion on all the sinners and ultimately offering up HIMSELF as a sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary for all of us, so we can be called His chil-

dren. Sometimes, we choose our friends based on what we can receive from them. When we are more concerned about our friends' needs than our own needs, then we can be more "like Him". As Philipians 2:3 says, ***"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself"***. In doing so, we will be able to gain a real friend.

Other questions to ask yourself in this regard is, "Do you love your friend unconditionally?", "Do you edify each other spiritually?" Sometimes, we should accept our friends in their weaknesses and faults. We should be quick to forgive and ask for forgiveness. Also, we should be readily available to our friends at the right time and be able to impact their lives.

Proverbs 27:17 says, ***"As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend"***. As true Christian friends, we should help build each other emotionally and spiritually. We should be there for our friends during both, good and bad times. More than anything else, we should ensure that our friends are strong spiritually and are encouraged in their faith continually. May the Lord help us to be true Christian friends to one another!

"Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival."- C.S Lewis

Ancy Mathew

U.S.A

@Online Friendship @

Friends are important on social networks just as they are in the real world. How popular you are today is measured by the number of friends you have in your friends list. We are living in a world where nieces are being sold by their own aunts and children are being handled by their own parents. Yet people never cease to trust and befriend people that they have never met on the internet.

We use social networks for recreation and keeping in touch with friends. These friends may consist of people we already know, see a lot, rarely see and that sort. In short it has become a forum to be in touch 24/7. There are however a few who use the online networks to make new friends. When you're in schools or colleges with a lot of people, you may add people who you see once in a while but don't personally know. This may be taken as a form of socializing but then there are some others who befriend good looking girls and boys depending on the profile pictures to meet and approach potential romantic partners.

Why does one feel the need to befriend strangers who they have no idea about? Is it because you find it hard to make friends in real life??

While social networking sites are fun to use and great to keep in touch with your friends, the cases of abuse through such sites are rising every day. People chat with complete

strangers on the internet instead of making 'real' friends and some of these people use the internet to take advantage of others and are dishonest about themselves.

There are people with terrible experiences in their life. Teenagers are more attracted to these sites as they meet different people not really knowing anything about the person on the other side. The worst sort is when they fall in "love" with someone only to find that everything was a big lie and ruin their life and invite depression, despair and disasters.

So how can we be safe online??

DO!!

- Befriend only people who you personally know or have met at least through a friend
- Try your best to strengthen your friendship with your friends in the real world than in the virtual one
- Limit your usage so as to not get addicted
- Be alert to recognize fake accounts of your friends
- Use the easy access of friends to glorify the name of our Lord by posting or sharing inspirational and

comforting thoughts.

DO NOT!!

- Reveal personal information about yourself such as your phone number or residence details
- Let social networks be a running commentary of your life
- Hide yourself from the real world and shy away from making friends personally just because it's easier to do so online
- Trust all that you hear and see online
- Gossip or spread rumors online so as to get back at a friend

The more time we spend on social media, the more we hinder our relationship with God. Abstaining from social media doesn't make our relationships any less official or real. ***Fifty years from now we won't remember the Twitter updates and Facebook status, but will remember the private moments spent with our best friends encouraging each other toward eternity.***

Lisa Mathew

Doha



Prayer Requests

- Gospel Meeting on Oct 7th at DBA

Speaker: John P Thomas

Timing: 5:30-7:00

- Pray for outreach work at Thenmala led by Evg V.S Mathew and team.
- Pray for Joanna baby (Liny chechy's daughter) who is sick in Mumbai.
- Pray for EU, ICPF, Campus Crusade working among campuses in India
- Pray for Doha VBS in November
- Pray for SBS, CEF working among children in India
- Steve, Gladys, Giby, Jeny, Bobby, Jeswy, Justin, Paul, Denzil, Kevin studying in India
- Students in X and XII standards



IF YOU ARE ALONE, I'LL BE YOUR SHADOW.
IF YOU WANT TO CRY, I'LL BE YOUR SHOULDER.
IF YOU NEED TO BE HAPPY, I'LL BE YOUR SMILE.
BUT ANYTIME YOU NEED A FRIEND, I'LL JUST BE ME.