



Genuine Friends

May 2013

THE INSIDE RUNNING

Most men have few genuine friends. Once we realise our isolation, how do we change the situation?

Often it is easier to have female friends than male. Other men tend to tell it like it is and call us out on issues. Yet having a friend who cares enough to speak into our life is a hallmark of genuine friendship.

Young men often have lots of friends. The drop-off comes when you have a young family (or your friends do) and time and resources are limited. We get into the mindset of being busy. Friendship involves an investment of –

- time
- concern
- resources
- prayer

A men's group is an excellent way to align yourself with others and by regular meeting and activity, build real friendships. I have found some of my best friends in men's groups. I really value my mates and the way we enrich each other's lives.

I hope you too enjoy the fellowship of brothers.

Be blessed



John
John Subritzky

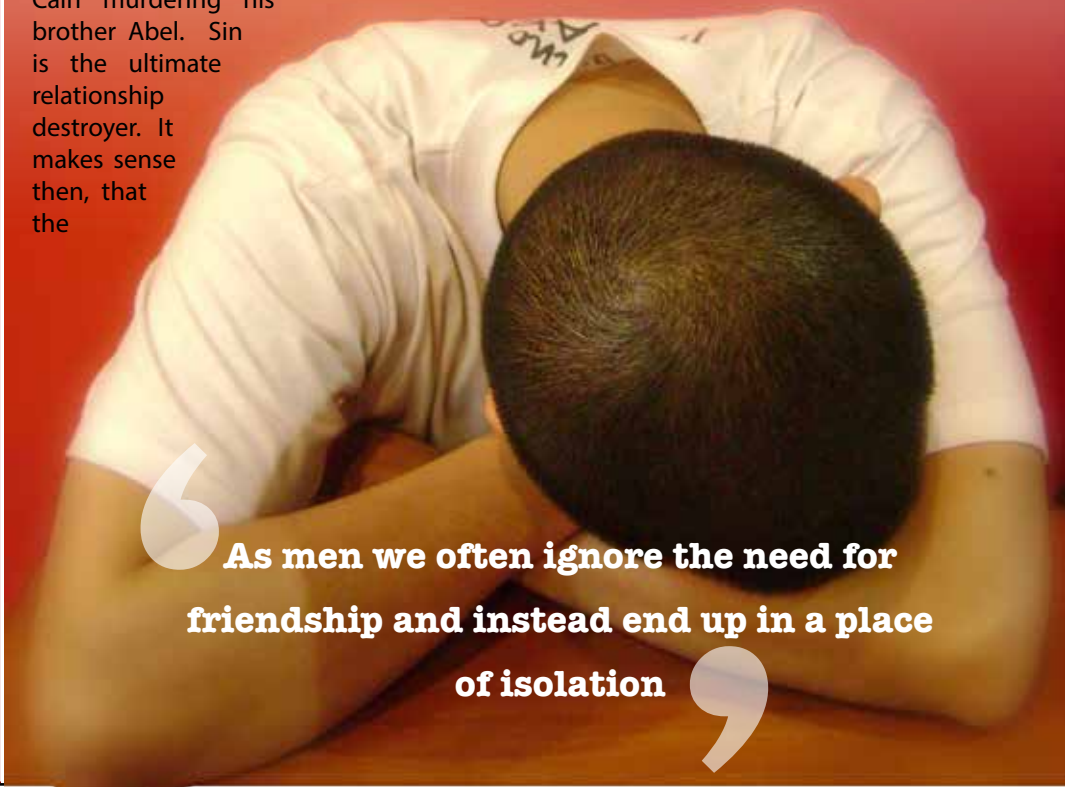
by Aaron More

All the time I hear the statement "all you need is God." It sounds really spiritual, but is it true? In the book of Genesis we read that Adam was living in the Garden of Eden. Everything that God had created was good and Adam had fellowship with God that was yet to be tainted by sin. However in the midst of this utopia something was missing, and God makes a statement that many men still need to hear, "It is not good for man to be alone". With this statement God reveals that we may primarily be created for relationship with Him, but we also have a secondary need for relationship with one another, and unless both these needs are met we will be left feeling alone.

When Adam and Eve sinned the first impact was that they had broken their relationship with God. However we don't have to turn too many pages to find that relationship also broke down with one another, evidenced through Cain murdering his brother Abel. Sin is the ultimate relationship destroyer. It makes sense then, that the

redemptive work of Christ was first to restore relationship with God and then to restore relationship with one another. God's will for us as men is that we have a strong relationship with Christ and strong friendships with our wife and other Christian men.

The tragedy is that as men we often ignore the need for friendship and instead end up in a place of isolation. One of the main causes for this is that we think if others saw who we really are and the things we struggle with then they would reject us. So we decide that we will distance ourselves so we don't have to face the pain of rejection. The ironic thing is that 1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us the temptations we face are common to all men. This means if you are struggling in an area, chances are the other men around you are either struggling with the same thing or have done so in the past. The shame and subsequent isolation is keeping us >



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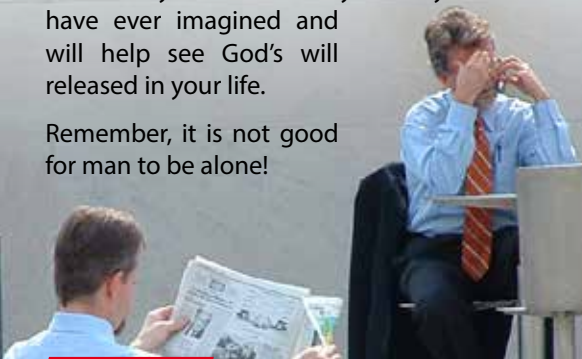


> from the very people who would understand and be able to support us through life's trials. When we allow our busyness, insecurities and sin to separate us from one another everything may appear ok on the outside, but our inner life will experience the reality that "it is not good for man to be alone".

The truth is that none of us will become all that God wants us to be if we try and live the Christian walk in isolation. We need friendships with other Christian men that extend beyond talking about rugby and fishing. Friendships where we can encourage each other, confess our sins to one another, pray for one another and journey through life together. When we make a decision to have meaningful friendships with other trustworthy Christian men, we will find that shame will be broken off our lives because authenticity always defeats shame.

If you are reading this and you don't have at least two Christian brothers who you can talk to about the serious issues of life, then you need to make a decision today that you are no longer going to live in isolation. Ask God to help you find the right people, and when you find them, commit to building a friendship that goes past the superficial. You will find that committing to such friendships will bless you in more ways than you would have ever imagined and will help see God's will released in your life.

Remember, it is not good for man to be alone!



Cultivate Vital Friendships

When it comes to trying to keep our promises to the Lord and to the significant others in our lives, we are too often alone and on our own. But that is not the way God intends for us to follow His Son. That is not the way He desires us to live.

In spite of the Adam-like tendency to wear the Lone Ranger mask, there is another force within us. It is a drive deep within us that seeks companionship, community, unconditional love, acceptance, assistance, and the freedom to admit the need for help. It's a value system that precedes the Fall. Its roots are in the Garden itself. God declared, "It is not good for man to be alone," and that declaration of dependence is indelibly inked on each

of our personalities.

Friendship is a priceless gift. God gives us friendship to serve our relational needs. But that is not all. He gives us friendship for our spiritual well-being as well.

Friends can steer us away from "moral icebergs" that would tear a Titanic-size hole in the hull of our soul. Friends are willing to hurt our feelings to save our reputations. Friends listen when we are confused about what to do, where to go, how to trust God. Friends dare to challenge us with truth. True friends accept our imperfections and forgive us. True friends fuel our hopes and dreams with their undiminished expectations.

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Excerpt from article by Rev Greg Asimakopoulos © 2007 Promise Keepers

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: MISSION

THE CALL

Men's Events 2013 - book early!
0800 PROMISE (77 66 47)

Christchurch 23-24 August
Wellington 13-14 September
Auckland 4-5 October



Tama Tane Malosi

Mighty Men of Valour

Auckland - 28-29 June

This Promise Keepers Men's Event in the Samoan language has been designed to inspire Samoan men to live as mighty men of valour - "Tama Tane Malosi".

More info and video:
www.promisekeepers.org.nz