



**We Swim for Jesus!**

**“There are ‘friends’ who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24**

## **Bible Verse for Week #29**

### **Life Application notes**

1. Loneliness is everywhere – many people feel cut off and alienated from others. Being in a crowd just makes people more aware of their isolation. Everyone needs a friend who will stick close, listen, care, and offer help when it is needed – in good times and bad. It is better to have one such friend than dozens of superficial acquaintances. Instead of wishing you could find a true friend, seek to become one. There are people who need your friendship. Ask God to show you who they are, and then take on the challenge of being a true friend.
2. Some people pretend to be friends and will act friendly when they don’t mean it. Why would someone be a phony friend? The person may want to look good (being seen with the right people) or to gain something through the “friend-ship.” Instead of being a friend, however, that person just uses the other one for his or her own gain. Christians should not be like that – we should show respect and love for others and be honest with them. What kind of friend are you?
3. Some people are fair-weather friends. They stay close during the good times – like groupies for a popular music group or hangers-on during a political campaign – but when tough times come, they can’t be found. The real test of friendship is how people get along during difficulties – sickness, loss of job, family problems – when everyone else leaves. One who sticks close is the king of friend we need and the kind of friend we need to be.
4. How can a person find friends? One way is to be friendly. In other words, don’t wait for potential friends to come to you; go out and meet people and get to know them. Then the way to cement a friendship is to be a great friend yourself, sticking close to that person in good times and bad. To gain a friend, be a friend.

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“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34

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5. What does it mean to “stick-close”? It means being loyal to someone, sticking up for that person when no one else does. It means being with that person when you’re needed. It means standing by your friend with support, encouragement, and help in times of need. Friends who stick close are together. The writer of this verse used the phrase “closer than a brother” to illustrate just how close these friends should be. A true friend is like a family member. What can you do to be that kind of friend?
  
6. If you want to see what true friendship is like look at Jesus and His relationship with us. When we were sinners who had no use for Him Christ died for us (see Rom. 5:8). That’s love! Christ took our place on the cross. No wonder we sing, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” But what about our friendship with Him? Are we loyal and true to Jesus, our friend? What can you do to improve your friendship with Christ?

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