

Spiritual Friendship

Spiritual Friendship

Not ends but means to an end
Not only a tool for our wellness

A mean to grow in intimacy with God
We don't seek to master a practice but to be mastered by the Holy Spirit
through our practices

Awareness - stillness - noticing - response

Spiritual Friendship

A friend is a gift, but a spiritual friend is a sacred gift.

- Rick Anderson

Spiritual Friendship

A spiritual friend is someone who not only challenges you in your spiritual journey but who also treats you just as Jesus would in your fallen state, grace before truth; friendship over formula. A spiritual friend is someone you know very well, but more importantly, who you've allowed to know you. You've granted them access to your inner life of joy and despair, desire and fear, giftedness and struggle, competence and insecurity.

- Rick Anderson

Spiritual Friendship

We were not designed to live our spirituality alone. Solitude, friendship, community, and ministry. Innate in us are desires to know and to be known. We can't see ourselves clearly. We need others. We need the light of Christ to see ourselves. God makes this light sometimes available through others.

After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond between them, for Jonathan loved David... And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself. Jonathan sealed the pact by taking off his robe and giving it to David, together with his tunic, sword, bow, and belt. - 1

Sam 18:1,3-4 NLT

So Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, saying, "May the Lord destroy all your enemies!" And Jonathan made David reaffirm his vow of friendship again, for Jonathan loved David as he loved himself. - 1 Sam 20:16-17 NLT

"I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. - John 15:9-15 NLT

Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." - Mat 26:36-38 NLT

This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. - 1 John 1:5-7 NLT

Spiritual Friendship

Challenges:

- Wounds - we have been hurt.
- Pride - we don't want to ask for help.
- Lack of wisdom - we don't know how to discern.

Autopilot of fear and resistance.

Spiritual Friendship

Characteristics that distinguish from other kinds of friendships:

- Intentional in action and prayer.
- Grace (no judgment or condemnation).
- Truth (able to say what is so in love).
- True Center (God, Scripture, Spirit, growth).

Anam Cara - Spiritual Direction

Spiritual Friendship

Content and outcome of spiritual friendships:

1. What is the state of your soul? How is your prayer?
2. What is the work of God in you? What is God invitation?
3. Vision.
4. Encouragement.
5. Challenge.
6. Celebration.
7. Lament.
8. Confession.

Spiritual Friendship

“What happiness, what security, what joy to have someone to whom you dare to speak on terms of equality...one to whom you need have no fear to confess your failings; one to whom you can unblushingly make known what progress you have made in the spiritual life!”

- 12th C. English monk, Aelred of Rievaulx

Spiritual Friendship - A Word About Confession

Grace incarnates in your life through confession.
Your soul is protected through confession.

