

Practical Tips to Grow Deeper in Spiritual Friendships

1. Know one's limit - how many friends do I have the time for to build good spiritual friendships with? Do not over-commit, we cannot give others what we don't have, that includes our inner space to listen and love others well.
2. Friendship takes time and consistency, how much/often should I reach out to care for my spiritual friend? Especially when life gets busy, how do I create a framework in which these spiritual friendships won't be sacrificed because of busyness? A good question to ask is "am I committed to this friendship?" Christ's love to us is faithful and committed.
3. Building and maintaining friendships are about showing our friends that we care. Sometimes it just takes a phone call or a text to show a friend that we are thinking about them. Other times, it means that we spend time together and hang out, e.g. enjoy a meal together.
4. Prioritise the agenda of a friend onto our calendar, e.g. remember to call them and pray for them if they were not well or they were going through some significant events.
5. The foundation of a good spiritual friendship is to try and imitate Christ in how we love our friends. It is about the mind-set of serving the other person rather than expecting a return from them. It is about loving the friend on behalf of Christ. People receive love differently, it's good to find out more from a friend how they feel loved.
6. Good healthy boundaries - there are also limits in terms of how much we could extend our sacrificial love to our friends. It's our spiritual goal to support our friends to depend on God more and more for their life-issues. It's unhealthy and unbiblical to try and be God to our friends' needs. Meanwhile, we serve and love our friends from a place of close connection with God which requires the time and energy from us to build with God, e.g. schedule a good amount of time with God to feel close with Him before spreading ourselves to spend time with friends.