

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:46-52

Friends are the sunshine of life. —John Hay

One of the down sides of growing old is that you start to lose your friends. The really cool thing about having a friend is that you know he or she is willing to take risks on your behalf. It is hard to lose them; it's like losing a piece of yourself.

A friend who takes risks is the person who stands beside you in a time of crisis, who makes sure you don't get in harm's way, or, if you do, tries to get you out of it as soon and safely as possible.

In the Bible, the themes of loyalty, faithfulness, kindness and mercy are expressed by one word: *chesed*. What is intriguing about this word is that there often is a risk factor in dispensing this kindness.

Ruth, for example, expressed her faithfulness to her mother-in-law by refusing to leave her. "Whither thou goest, I will go ..." (1:16, KJV). As a Moabite, and a Moabite *woman*, this was a foolhardy decision, even if Naomi was her patroness. In taking on the responsibility of protecting her daughter-in-law, Naomi likewise made a risky choice. In advocating for Ruth's future security, she was even more daring. She proposed a scheme to hook up Ruth with Boaz that would have spelled disaster had it been discovered.

Think, too, of Jonathan's friendship with David at the very time when his father was trying to destroy David. Jonathan was a friend to David when David desperately needed a friend. But expressing kindness and mercy is not without risk and perhaps cost.

Humanitarian gestures, random acts of kindness and doing good things that do not involve courage, daring and risk are certainly important, and no one would say otherwise. But showing *chesed* — loving-kindness and faithfulness — sometimes calls for risk-taking.

This is one reason we value our friends and mourn them when they pass away.

But we ourselves can continue to express the biblical idea of *chesed* by being a faithful friend to those around us.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the friends with whom I have been blessed throughout my life. Help me to be a faithful and supporting friend as you have been to me. Amen.

*Blessings,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Metz*

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Acts 19:11-41,

2 Corinthians 1-3

Monday: Ezra 5-7

Tuesday: Ezra 8-10

Wednesday: Nehemiah 1-3

Thursday: Nehemiah 4-6

Friday: Nehemiah 7-9

Saturday: Psalms 120-124

Verse to Remember

*I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.*

—Psalm 121:1-2



“C” IF YOU CAN COMPLETE THIS BIBLE TRIVIA QUIZ!

All correct answers begin with the letter C. Circle the correct answer.

1. What was Nehemiah’s occupation? centurion, cook, carpenter, cupbearer
2. Who was the Bible’s first murderer? Caleb, Cain, Caiaphas, Cush
3. Where did Jesus perform his first miracle? Caesarea, Capernaum, Cana
4. Which of these books contains the great chapter about love? 2 Chronicles, 1 Corinthians, Colossians, 2 Corinthians
5. A man named Simon was forced to carry the cross to Golgotha for Jesus. Where was he from? Cyrene, Caesarea, Cush, Chicago
6. Which of these “C” words has nothing to do with the crucifixion of Jesus? crown, cross, Calvary, cypress

ON THE RECORD!

Who made the following statements as read in the Bible? Circle the correct answer.

1. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Samuel, John, Cain, Andrew
2. “Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto you.” Peter, James, John, Paul
3. “What is truth?” Herod, Pilate, Simon Magus, Cornelius
4. “Choose you this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!” Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua
5. “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Nathaniel, John, Peter, Paul
6. “Almost you persuade me to become a Christian.” Herod Agrippa, Pilate, Caiaphas, Annas
7. “Entreat me not to leave you for your people will be my people. Where you lodge, I will lodge.” Rebekah, Rachel, Ruth, Rahab
8. “I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.” Paul, Peter, James, Barnabas

ANSWERS TO “C” IF YOU CAN COMPLETE THIS BIBLE TRIVIA QUIZ!: 1. cupbearer; 2. Cain; 3. Cana; 4. 1 Corinthians; 5. Cyrene; 6. cypress.
ANSWERS TO “ON THE RECORD!: 1. Cain; 2. Peter; 3. Pilate; 4. Joshua; 5. Peter; 6. Herod Agrippa; 7. Ruth; 8. Paul.