

REAL Koinonia FRIENDSHIP

“No! I won’t do it!” I insisted while sitting out the outside steps pouting. I still remember how mad I was at her. My mom told me I had to go outside and play. “All little kids play outside. You’re four years old now and you have to learn to play outside.” I tried to sneak into my room to play and all of a sudden she grabbed me up and sat me on the steps outside the front door. Then, she shut the door and locked it! Well… here I sat for a long time chanting, “No, I won’t do it.” After awhile the neighbor boy came over. He let me his name was Joey and asked if I wanted to play? Begrudgingly, I followed him to the play yard next door. We sat on the swing for awhile and then went to the sandbox area. Joey was funny and made me laugh. Then, he said, “Close your eyes and open your mouth! I have a surprise for you.” Ohhhhhh! That sounded exciting. So, I closed my eyes and opened my mouth. Joey then stuffed a big handful of dirt in my mouth and ran away laughing. I ran home totally disillusioned – mud dripping down my face and onto my newest shirt. I banged on the door and screamed. Distressed, my mom let me back in the house and she never made me go outside again.----- I wonder how many Christians have had friends that have disappointed them like this? Have you longed to find someone who won’t disillusion your hopes? And when they do, is there a forgiveness and an ability to press toward continuing with them? How many of us go home and resist venturing out into the place of trusting someone again? How many people have you shut the door on and just quit seeing, saying, “That’s it! I won’t be hurt again.” Truth is, we will get hurt again and again. Still, we have to remain vulnerable and open. God has a plan for us WITH them… We MUST allow ourselves to continue to hope in Koinonea. Scripture says that “Greater love (agape, the God kind of love) has no man (or woman, a demonstrative word without defined gender) than this, that he (or she) lay down his (or her) life for his (or her) friends (philos)” (Jn. 15:13). My friend, do you know this kind of love? Will you STAND as a friend, even through great disappointment? The test will surely come… Ask yourself, who will YOU die for? No matter what happens between the two of you? And then ask, WHO will die for you? Does TRUE Godly agape friendship and koinonea relationship mean that much to you? Do you understand that loving one another NO MATTER WHAT -- is the irreducible minimum? The bottom line is, if we don’t love each other, we DON’T know God (1 Jn. 4:7-8). Having Love for one another is the Gospel. We have no message to preach if we harbor unresolved conflicts and hold ourselves apart. This is the hour to address our disappointments, get out of our house, and to go back outside – back to those whom we have shut the door upon – back to the sandbox of life – and into the hope of God manifesting His GLORY in US (plural). The Glory won’t happen by ourselves.

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