

INTRODUCTION

1. King David was blessed with a Circle of loyal friends

- a) David and Jonathan 1 Samuel
- b) David had a list of "Mighty Men" 2 Samuel 23:8-39
- c) The list ended up with 37 names 2 Samuel 23:39b
- d) They were mentioned for their:
 - i) Courage
 - ii) Commitment
 - iii) Loyalty
 - iv) Devotion to David as their king and friend

2. The Apostle Paul had a strong Circle of Friends too

a) Phoebe

- i) A deaconess of the Church in Cenchrea Romans 16:1
- ii) She was a worthy saint Romans 16:2
- iii) She was a helper to many, including Paul Romans 16:2d

b) Priscilla and Aquilla

- i) Fellow-workers
- ii) They risked their lives to help Paul
- iii) Their home was a house-church Romans 16:4-5a

c) Epaenetus

Described as "the firstfruits of Achaia"

Romans 16:5b

d) Mary

Described as one who laboured much for Paul and team Romans 16:6a

e) Adronicus and Junia

- i) Countrymen of Paul
- ii) Fellow prisoners
- iii) Of note to the apostles
- iv) They were first known to the apostles in Jerusalem
- v) They became good friends of the Apostle Paul

LESSONS FOR US TO CONSIDER

1. To cultivate a strong circle of friends

- a) Good friends do not grow on trees
- b) Friendship is not easy to build
- c) It takes a lot to build a strong circle of friends

2. Building friendships on solid principles

- a) A common faith in the Lord Jesus
- b) Serving the Lord together
- c) Building bonds of love for each other
- d) Being faithful and true to the Lord's cause and to each other
- e) Daring to make sacrifices
- f) To be committed to being friends for life

3. To have faithful friends is a special blessing from God

*A friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.*

Proverbs 17:17