

Intro: How do you deal with friends that “go crazy?” What do you do when someone you love, someone you consider a friend, someone you have a relationship does something crazy? Most of us know how to deal with the strangers in our life that do something hurtful...but when it is someone that you care about...someone you consider a friend...someone that you have trusted, opened your heart to...What do you do?

Sometimes it is a friend at church...one of the very people that you SHOULD be able to trust the most...that has said, or done or acted in such a way that your heart is broken!

Today finish “People Be Crazy” series, I want to talk with you about what to do when a Friends Be Crazy.

A number of years ago I returned from a mission trip to a previously planned meeting with the board of Elders that was supposed to be about finances, only to be presented with a demand for my resignation. It was a plan that I later learned had been in the making for months...including men that I considered my closest friends in the world...men I had ministered with, served with, ordained...and entrusted the ministry of this church to. When I refused to do what they wanted...they left...and most of them have never spoken to me even once...even after repeated attempts on my part to reconcile. Of the ones that did speak to me...most blatantly lied to my face...one said, “It’s too painful to talk about...I don’t want to deal with it...and one...my dearest friend of all...has reconciled.

What do you do when friend acts “Crazy” and hurts you? I want to look with you at 3 biblical examples of what to do

1. The Circumstantial Friend: Paul and Peter Galatians 2:11-14

First, I want you to notice that there is no deep personal relationship with these two men. They are what I would call friends of convenience...or circumstantial friends. They are friends because life and ministry brought them together. They are both early followers of Jesus...both primary leaders in the early church, and both being used by God in amazing ways. That said, they were friends!

- They served together: See this in Acts: Paul came on scene...incorporated into leadership of Church.
- Spoke well of each other in their letters *Paul in Gal, (God used Peter) Peter in 2 Peter (dear brother Paul)*
- Complementary leadership roles: Peter to Jews Paul to Gentiles: Two pillars of early church

But, there is nowhere in Scripture where you see anything to indicate they were “buddies” or close

We all have friends like this. Friends at work, Neighbors, Sports Team, Bus Stop, School, Hobbies...Friends...not close

But Then: A Problem Came up Between Them 2:11-14

- Not a personal Problem: This wasn’t, I don’t like what you said...You hurt my feelings, Left me out...
- A theological/Spiritual Problem: Let me clarify here...A REAL problem. We all have differences of opinion on things in the bible with our friends...but this isn’t one of the minor issues. A real issue that strikes right at the heart of the Gospel message: Can you be a Christian: Follower of Jesus, without keeping Jewish Law Peter said no...but in practice acted like yes! Because of that he was compromising the message of Gospel Is this something that compromises the unity and integrity of the Church? Cause weaker brother stumble?
>We all have differences: Predestination/Free will: Spiritual Gifts Active: Music sing, Dress...Movies See
>But when it affects major doctrine: Who is God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Necessary for Salvation)?

Love Them Anyway!

- A. Have a Biblical Position, not a Personal Preference. Gal 2:11 *“Clearly in the wrong!”*
- B. Speak the truth in love Gal 2:14 *“Not acting in line w Gospel I said to Peter in front of them all...”*
- C. Keep the right motivation (Not from anger, Not from Hurt, Not from personal agenda)
 - >Protect the church: Gal 2:12 *“he began to separate himself from the Gentiles”*
 - >Protect vulnerable people: Gal 2:13 *“the other Jews and Barnabas joined him!”*
- D. Remind them of the truth: Gal 2:16 *“we are justified by faith, not by observing the Law!”*
- E. Restore when the issue is resolved: Once resolved, never a word about it in any other letter

Key Principle: The extent of the correction should be in keeping with the extent of the problem. It happened in Antioch...and was confronted there. When that SAME problem surfaced in Galatia...Paul wrote of it to address it biblically and point the church to the truth. You don’t see it in ANY other NT letter!

2. A Close Friend: Paul and Barnabas Acts 15:36-39

The bible talks about having a friend that is “closer than a brother.” I think that is what you see in the relationship between Paul and Barnabas. While Peter appears to be a friend of circumstance, Barnabas is MUCH more to Paul.

- Acts 9:27: Barnabas was the “link” between Paul and the Apostles. He vouched for Paul in their doubt
- Acts 11:26: Barnabas was a Co-worker in Antioch for at least a year in sharing the gospel, planting church
- Acts 11:30: Together Barnabas and Paul delivered financial relief to Judean church in need
- Acts 13:1 Called by the HS to go on first missionary trip in church...together!
- Acts 13:50 Suffered persecution together in Antioch
- Acts 14:23 Appointed Elders for all the churches they established together
Then...There was a Problem: John Mark!
- Acts 15:36-39 Let’s go back to visit the churches...check in on them...Gathered a Group...Barnabas wanted to include John Mark...but Paul disagreed because John had started the first missionary journey with them...and then deserted them to return to Jerusalem. Luke’s term. Had a HEATED discussion...Sharp, Divisive disagreement, to the point where their relationship was broken. Split two groups...different directions.

Quote: AT Robertson: “One’s judgment may go with Paul, but one’s heart goes with Barnabas”

How To Love Them Anyway!

- A. Don’t try to force agreement: Acts 15:37-38 “Barnabas wanted to take John, Paul did not think it wise”
- B. Agree to disagree: Acts:15:39 “they had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company”
- C. Part as friends: Never see any disparaging remarks in any NT book
- D. Speak well of them: 1Cor 6:9 Only thing you DO see is Paul referencing Barnabas as being worth support
- E. Admit when you are wrong! Paul Later referenced John Mark on two occasions in NT
 1. Col 4:10 Told the Colossian Church to receive him in love
 2. 2Tim 4:11 Asked for John Mark to be sent to him as “profitable!”

Illus: When one of my daughters was about 15: Falling out w best friend: Since 2nd grade. Boy
Do you want to be “right” or do you want a relationship. Been at this a week...no movement: Can’t have both!

3. A False Friend: Judas and Jesus

Prov 18:24 talks about a friend that is “closer than a brother” If we are blessed we have a couple of those people in our life. The “my world just fell apart” kind of friend. These are the 3am I have to talk to SOMEONE people. These are the friends that we bare our heart and soul to. And because they are so close...when they betray us...hurts most.

Judas was NEVER a True Friend To Jesus: The relationship was about Judas...Not about Jesus!

- In it for the money: John 12:6 *Thief stealing from ministry money* Mt 26:14 *What will you give me?*
- Never indicated TRUE faith: Always referenced Jesus as “Rabbi”, NEVER as Lord!
- Wanted a Political Deliverer, not a Spiritual One: When it became clear Jesus wasn’t overthrowing Romans (If there was EVER a message to our country about politics...this is it! DON’T look to government salvation)

QUOTE: Look at this quote from Jon Bloom

How Do You Love A False Friend?

- A. Love them unconditionally: Jn 13:11 Jesus KNEW: Still....Jesus washed Judas’ feet: SKIP????
- B. Speak Truth in Love: Call them out Mt 26:23-25 One of you betray me: Judas: Not me! Jesus: Yes You!
Earlier story: Only two met with me...When I called them out...showed deceit: No one else will meet Out temptation is to avoid it, let it go...white wash it, ignore it. Hurts Us...and THEM!
- C. Hold them Loosely: Jn 13:27 “What you are going to do...do quickly: Let them go...On them...not you
- D. Trust God has a plan. Jn 13:3 “Jesus knew the he had come from Father...was returning to Father”

Concl: We all have to deal with the pain of a friendship that goes wrong:

- Circumstantial friend that hurts us
- True Friend we disagree with
- False Friend that has been using us

Here is what I want to leave you with.

Temptation: Not let someone close: If don’t love them, close to me, Open up...Cant hurt me WRONG!!!

Choice: If the cost of love is occasional pain. Be willing to pay that price. Don’t closed off, suspicious, cynical LOVE ANYWAY! And WHEN You get hurt...Not IF...Accept that as the price of love. Deal with it. Love Anyway