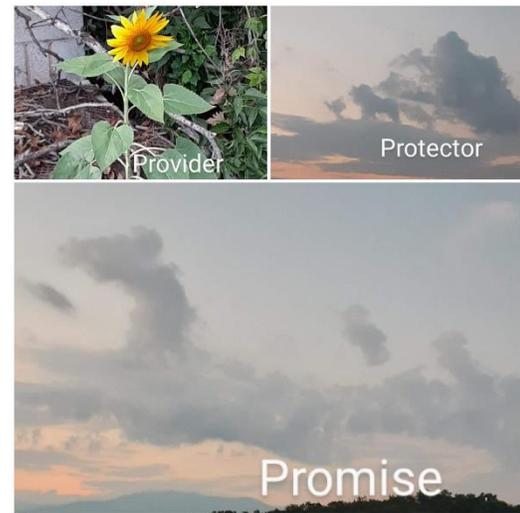


## Who's your best friend?

It has been my privilege to have one of my "best" friends for over 50 years, Linda. She always includes me in the "Heart 2 Heart" women's events at her church. Most recently we enjoyed a "Picnic in the Park" at Codorus State Park near Hanover (PA). We had food, fun and games. And, as always, one of their members presented a short testimony. The speaker was Lorrain Showers. She presented such a moving tribute to friendship, what it means and how Jesus is our truest friend. With her permission, I present you with her words. These are all hers including any **emphasis in bold**. My only edits were for spacing and removing any personal references. Now, without further ado...

### His Provision, His Protection and His Promise.

In the Fall of 2020, my niece gave me a dead Sunflower head to feed the birds. Last July, I was at the store, and I thought about buying a sunflower, but decided not to spend the money. When I arrived home, I looked out my window and there was a lone sunflower from last year's seeds. I was reminded of God's word in Mathew 6:26 that **He Provides** for the birds of the field, and I am more important than they are.

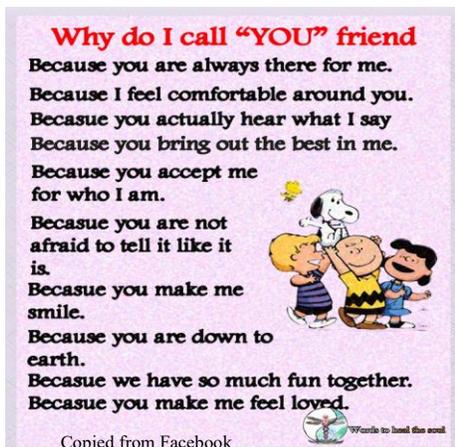


My husband Steven passed away in September last year. In October, during my respite in Tennessee, I was on the deck seeking God and the **Lion of Judah** appeared in a cloud. I was reminded of **His Protection of His People**. Then, those clouds transformed into an angel welcoming an ascending figure. **I had His Promise** of a future with Him for Steven and myself. **His Provision, His Protection and His Promise.**

Our Ladies Sunday School has been studying the book of John. John is all about **relationships**. So, let's talk about **Relationships**:

We all have relationships with Family, Employers, Neighbors, co-workers, classmates, businesses, etc....When we first meet people, we go through a **Probationary** period of sizing each other up, right? We check the commitment or the contract. Then comes **Decision** time. Is this relationship worth keeping? What is the cost to me? What am I signing up for? And finally, do I want to go deeper with this relationship into **friendship** or should I just keep it casual?

Let's talk about **Friendship**: "Why do I call You Friend"



This is **SO GREAT**, because it tells someone how valuable they are.

But do you notice anything consistent? **It's All about ME.**

So, if you **hurt me** or **I hurt you**, if you **let me down** or **I let you down**, **If we don't feel safe and loved .....**, What happens?

We stop **trusting**, we **stop talking**, we **stop being together**. We begin saying, "What if?" and "If only?"



We have all had friendships that have been damaged or broken.

Next step is **Intimate Love**:

Think about your **Best** friend on this earth. It may be your husband, a son or daughter, or maybe a friend.

**Who do you go to first? You just can't wait** to share your joys, your sorrows, your concerns, or a new revelation?

What is **different** about that friendship? Maybe: You have **History**? You have **Built Trust**? You **Know** them? **Communication** is different? You can be **Honest with each other**. **Forgiveness is built in**? **If there** is a hurt or **If** there is anger, it just **crushes** you? **Separation** from them is not an option? **You can't imagine your life without them**?

I want us to think about Our Relationship **with God**.

Salvation, which is our **guarantee of eternal life with God**, starts with a **Relationship**, a Covenant/Contract. When you were born, you were under a **Grace covenant**, a kind of a **probationary** time. Jesus loves the little children.

At some point, you realize that you don't have that **guarantee of Eternal life with Him**. **You've blown it and you have broken your covenant with God**. In Paul's letter to the Church in Rome he says, "For **ALL** have **sinned** and come short of the Glory of God" (3:23) and in 6:23a, he says "the wages of sin is **death**". God says that you need to **take responsibility** for your **relationship with Him**. **Your acceptance** of his covenant/contract with you is a **Personal choice**. The Bible tells us that under the Old Covenant/Contract, made with Adam and Eve "**in the garden**", **forgiveness** of sin and a **restoration** of our **rightness with God** required the blood of animals. Then, a **New Covenant** was signed in the blood of Jesus on the cross. It is **free to all who believe and accept it**.

The price has been paid! It is a **FREE gift**. Romans 6:23b says, "For the **GIFT** of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord".

When you accept Salvation, meaning Eternal Life with God, through **His sacrifice; His shed blood**, you enter into a **NEW** covenant/contract with Him.

Now, you **can** stay in a **causal** relationship with God. He will keep His covenant with you.

**BUT God loves you** and He wants to be **your friend**.

**Salvation as a friendship** is **seeking** what our covenant/contract (the bible) says. It's Learning the **give** and **take** of this friendship with Him. God is all about **His Kingdom, His people, His Promises AND His Purpose** in our lives!

It's like our friendship list. You begin to trust God and depend on Him.

But, **if** you are **hurt**, if you are **let down**, if you are **frightened**, you might stop **talking, listening, trusting, praising** and **hanging out with God**. Maybe you have been there or are there now.



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So my Question is? Where is the “if” in your Life? Is it “If only?” Is it “What If? Or is it, “If God is for me, who can be against me?”

**Bonus: The closer our friendship and trust in God becomes, the safer you and I are with each other. We aren't easily offended and estranged.**

**Salvation as an intimate Love. Starts with Knowing what my covenant/contract says. Ps 119:11  
“Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee” It's Not just knowing the words, but knowing the Person, the Promises and the Purpose of the Your Contract with God.**

**Separation is not an option. You can't imagine life without Jesus.**

If her words inspire you, please let me know. I'll gladly forward your comments to her.

Cindy Lee Nonnemacher  
Author