

FRIEND ARE FRIENDS FOREVER

It's been such an overwhelming day. Most of those in my reading list are my personal friends, so I thought I'd just flash back to my old days.

Actually my license needs to be renewed and since I had taken it in Kumbakonam, the place where I was born and lived till 25 yrs, I had to go there. Going back to this place is both emotionally wrenching at the same time very joyful. As the bus enters inside, I cannot miss the church where my father lies buried. Every time I pass by I think how good it would be if it was all a big dream. As I go through, I remember every road, every shop, every person and also the very spot where daddy used to wait for me to take me home, when I came from Trichy. I would want to close my eyes, yet at that moment I open and wish to see him sitting on his bike waiting to take me home.

Every time I go there I realize some memories of our lives are so real and so soaked in pain, that I wonder whether we will ever get over that, however old we may become.

I really think that God uses all these memories to underline the transience of this life and the eternity of His presence. Even this morning I thought if daddy was alive, I would still be comfortably sleeping in his shadow. It was his loss that made me grow and mature the way I am today. Even this is part of the Big Puzzle of God, which slowly falls into place as we go forward in this journey called life.

Now to the joyful part. One thing I never lack in Kumbakonam is a home and love. As most of you know my mother is visiting my sister in Canada and I am here in Trichy kind of alone. But my mother's friends have made it a point to call me every week to see whether all things are fine with me and that I don't feel alone.

Sherin aunty in whose home I stayed last night had been calling me every week since mummy left, to come over to her place for the weekend. And finally I made it yesterday and it was one of the best days for me in a long time. Jeyadoss Uncle was daddy's friend and colleague and we talked and talked of all those good old golden days. Let me not tell you what I ate, but you could imagine how I'd have been fed.

As I was in their home another aunty from Madurai who was mummy's classmate called me for food if I happened to be in Madurai, for the weekend. I told her I was not. In fact whenever I visited Madurai for the weekend Vijaya aunty cooked for me, though I told her there was a cook at home. I could give her no excuse.

I've never felt so pampered before. Another aunty is visiting her daughter in the US and she never fails to call from there once in a fortnight.

All these friendships with my parents go back more than 40 years and it has spilled over to another generation.

I really feel so privileged and blessed to be surrounded by such a circle of love and remembrance. But in all these relationships the common denominator is the love of Christ. Without that I am sure this relationships would not have endured so long and this strong.

In these days of use and throw, when most relationships are built around use value and utility quotient, it is heartening to see that there is love left which is still unconditional and without expectations.

I love to nurture relationships and I go the extra mile to preserve friendships from my own generation. But these days I am scared to forge new friendships because of the impending hurt that is round the corner. I know it is not a right attitude, but friendships these days are largely built on what solid contribution I can bring to the networking. And I am really mistrustful about that.

Yet I do have good lasting friendships. Many of those who have hurt, have come back and am glad for that. But in some friendships, I still suffer.

But aren't we all such bad friends with God?

We betray him, forget Him after He answers our prayers, ignore Him completely when we don't need Him, but bawl our eyes and heart out when we need something.

Yet He always loves and proves again and again that,

John 15:13 (NASB) ¹³“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

Let us love and cherish friends like Jesus loved us to the point of laying down His very life.

Take a moment and thank God for all the rich relationships, friendships He has blessed you with. All the money cannot buy a caring, loving, remembering heart.

If you have not made that call to a friend take the time to call and rebuild the relationship.

God bless you and I pray that all our relationships reflect the relationship we have with our Great Friend.

Please do take the time to listen to this beautiful song "Friends are friends forever," by Michael W Smith.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ped1jYLFtkA&feature=related>