

Faithfulness (*Definition*): steady in allegiance or affection; loyal; constant

From: <http://www.thoughtsofmotherwifeanddaughter.com/2009/10/faithfulness.html>

Faithfulness is a hallmark of friendship. It takes many forms, but perhaps the most treasured faithfulness in friendship is silence. Not a lack of communication but communication without words. In friendship, there are times when words don't need to be spoken because friends know each other. They hear heart cries as audibly as vocal ones. And, even when need is unspoken, they faithfully respond.

Many things can mute our cries for help, support, or encouragement. Shame, regret, and fear are silencers. Yet true friends respond faithfully, enabled by special sensors that are alerted at the smallest telltale sign of need. If someone is missing without reason, a friend starts searching. If someone is sad or weighed down by circumstances, a friend will faithfully come alongside to help lift the load. If someone fails, a friend faithfully forgives-whether or not a confession is offered.

Pain-even unexpressed pain- is felt and shared by faithful friends. They understand unspoken fears and offer assurance. Friends can sense the storms suffering that ravage your heart, and they offer shelter. True friends faithfully fulfill the needs that go undetectable by most. Friends rush to your side without a syllable being uttered.

Friends talk about thoughts, feelings, dreams, fears, and needs. They share laughter and tears. But the best friends are the ones who, through the years of faithfulness, know us well enough to understand and respond even when we're quiet.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Have you ever experienced faithfulness in friendship? Share an experience.
- 2) Are you a faithful friend? Is so, how? If not, why not?
- 3) Describe a time when you felt frustrated because a friend was not faithful.
- 4) The author says that silence is one way faithfulness is expressed in friendship. What are other ways that we can be faithful?
- 5) Name some other circumstances besides friendship in which faithfulness is important.

Quotations about faithfulness and friendship:

The only way to have a friend is to be one.
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Who finds a faithful friend, finds a treasure. -- Jewish Saying

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man." Proverbs 3:3,4

"A faithful friend is the medicine of life."
-- Apocrypha