

The Savior's Example of Making Friends

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As young adults, we all go through seasons of loneliness—moving away for school, coming home from a mission, going through breakups, being the only Church member in your area, being new in a ward, being single, being married to someone who is away from home a lot, being a new parent, and many more. Some stages of life just don't make it all that easy to make friends.

But that doesn't mean it's impossible. As in all things, the answer lies in following the Savior. Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles remarked, "In friendship, as in every other principle of the gospel, Jesus Christ is our Exemplar."¹ Here are just a few things we can learn from the Savior's example about making friends.

Seek Them Out

Jesus valued friendship. He needed the help and support of others (as we all do!) to fulfill His earthly ministry, but instead of waiting for the right people to show up at His door, He went

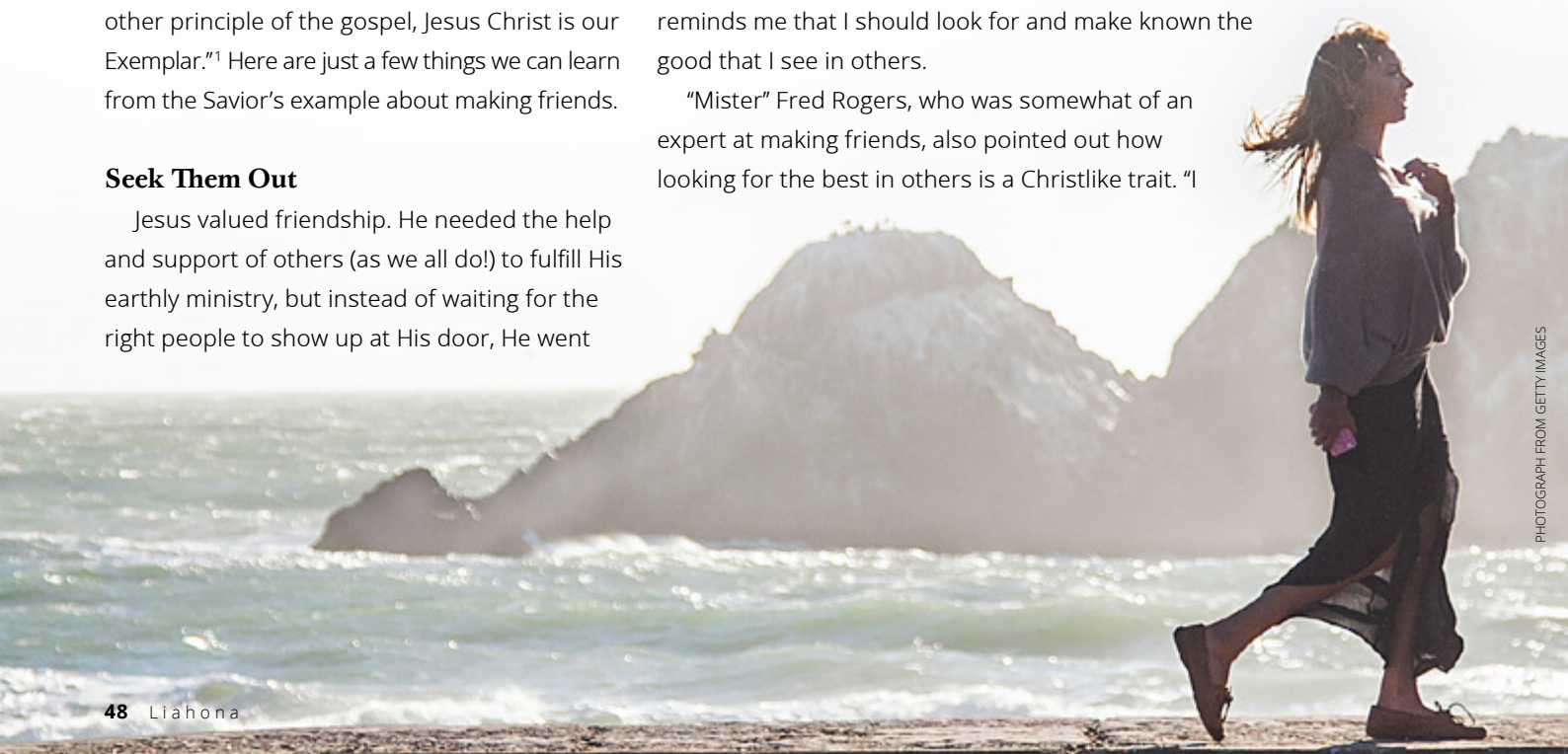
out and found them! He went to places He might not normally go (see Luke 5:3–10), He walked around (see Mark 1:16; John 1:36), and He even invited people to come and see where He lived (see John 1:39).

We may not need friends for the same reasons the Savior did, but it's still important for us to surround ourselves with good people. If you're in a new stage of life where you find yourself needing friends, seek them out. Participate in church and other activities, introduce yourself, try new things, host a get-together, minister sincerely (whoever you minister to probably needs a friend too!), and you will find yourself more and more surrounded by potential friends.

Point Out the Good in Others

I love when Jesus met Nathanael and said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (John 1:47). Whenever I think about this verse, it reminds me that I should look for and make known the good that I see in others.

"Mister" Fred Rogers, who was somewhat of an expert at making friends, also pointed out how looking for the best in others is a Christlike trait. "I



believe that appreciation is a holy thing," he said. "That when we look for what's best in the person we happen to be with at the moment, we're doing what God does. So, in loving and appreciating our neighbor, we're participating in something truly sacred."²

Pray for Friends

Some of the most memorable earthly experiences with the Savior may have been when He prayed for others. The Nephites recorded that "no one [could] conceive of the joy which filled [their] souls at the time [they] heard him pray for [them] unto the Father" (3 Nephi 17:17). Our prayers might not be as touching as His, but we can still take the time to pray for those we care about.

Besides praying for your friends, you can also pray to have friends. As you "counsel with the Lord in all thy doings" (Alma 37:37)—including your concerns about being lonely and needing friends—He will not only "direct [you] for good," He will also direct you to good—good people who can become good friends.

Look to the Savior

Jesus knows how we feel when we feel lonely because He too was "acquainted with grief" and loneliness (Mosiah 14:3). So even if we are the best at being a friend, we will likely still have

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seasons or moments of loneliness. But loneliness can also be a reminder to us of the divine mandate to love one another (see John 13:34).

If you're struggling through a season of loneliness right now, look to the Savior's example. Above anyone else, make *Him* your friend. He—and our Heavenly Father—will never leave you lonely. ■

NOTES

1. Ronald A. Rasband, "True Friendship," *New Era*, Oct. 2016, 5.
2. Fred Rogers, commencement address at Marquette University, 2001, marquette.edu/universityhonors/speakers-rogers.shtml.

