

# Rudolph's Friends

December 16, 2018

Thank you so much for choosing to worship with us today! We are thrilled you are here!

---

Many people are singing "Rudolph, The Red Nosed Reindeer" during this holiday season. I don't think much of Rudolph's friends. The song tells the story of an unpopular reindeer with a red nose. He was teased and rejected by his peers until Santa Claus needed his bright red nose to guide his sleigh one night. Then all the other reindeer loved him when they could use him. With friends like that, we don't need enemies.

Solomon said, "A friend loveth at all times" (Proverbs 17:17). Even when a friend wounds you, it is a faithful wound (Proverbs 27:6). Thus people who "love" us only because they have a use for us don't love us at all. Love seeks to give rather than to receive or to exploit (I Cor. 13:4-7).

There are children in every school classroom like Rudolph. They are unpopular and don't know why. Often there is no good reason. They are taught to be failures early in life by unpopularity with their peers. I read recently of a study conducted in a public school which showed that children with "popular" names were regarded as more intelligent than the other students. The names David and Stephen, for instance, were names that rated high. I expect the name "Rudolph" would have rated low.

It is sad but true that the world accepts some artificial things as indicative of our worth. Wealth, for instance, has historically been a measurement used to determine the worth of individuals. In Mark Twain's, "The Million Pound Note," the hero was regarded as the choicest companion and best of fellows while in possession of a million-pound note and was never required to spend any of it. When

it became known, however, that he was actually penniless, he lost all of his money-based friends. The Bible condemns such snobbery in the church. Read James 2:2-4.

Let all Christians everywhere take note: BE ESPECIALLY KIND AND CONSIDERATE TO THE UNPOPULAR PERSON; THE WORLD IS OFTEN WRONG IN ITS ESTIMATION OF THE VALUE OF ANOTHER HUMAN BEING.

Don't be deceived by the world's standards. Jesus said that false prophets of old were acclaimed and held in high esteem--yet they were worthless people (Luke 6:26).

By contrast the true prophets were often stoned (Matt. 21:35). Those who are regarded as popular in the society in which we live may actually be people of small mind, negligible character, and of little consequence in the scheme of things.

Someone who is not well liked may turn out to be a great humanitarian, a gifted leader, or a servant of God. Joseph, an ex-slave, and ex-convict, because he had been betrayed by his brothers, became second only to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt and protected God's people during a time of famine. A mediocre student poor in math became the world-famous Albert Einstein, and a young man who was regarded weak in English composition, named Churchill, wrote one of the most marvelous histories of this century. Jesus was without honor in his own country (Matt. 13:57), and yet is Lord and Christ.

In any case, any person rejected by others is my opportunity to show forth the love of God in this underprivileged world. And who knows, some casual cup of cold water I proffer may find its way to the lips of my Savior.

Borrowed from Bert Mercer

All Things for Christ,  
Michael