Sam Gamgee

In Tolkien’s famed book *The Lord of the Rings*, Sam Gamgee accompanies Frodo on a long quest to destroy the evil ‘ring.’ Sam helps Frodo every step of the way like a true, biblical friend ought. He is not a false shadow, but a true friend who sticks by Frodo no matter what the circumstances.

Benjamin Franklin has said how ‘false friends and shadows attend only while the sun shines.’ By contrast, a true friend will be like the thing that casts the shadow, one who sticks by his friends even when the sun is not shining.

And indeed, the sun shone only but a few times on the hobbit’s perilous quest. The land of Mordor was termed the ‘Land of Shadows’ but unlike this ominous name Sam stays true to Frodo, not as a shadow but as a twin. Shadows cast over them were not cast over their hearts, and Sam stayed true to Frodo despite the darkening horizons.

But a true friend does not simply hold heavy allegiances with everyone he comes in contact with. Sam is cautious as well, and wary of Gollum. Frodo chides him at first – but he bears it as a true friend ought – but in the end, Sam’s watchful eye saves them from a worse fate than that which they encountered.

Nor does a true friend only stand by few to the chosen few. Besides watchful care and steadfast loyalty, a true friend ought to have ever-seeking love. Sam does not abandon Frodo when Frodo is captured by the hounds of Mordor, even though he had the Ring and could have continued the quest. No, Sam seeks out Frodo and rescues him, despite all odds, laughing in the face of death.

However, one does not have to be Hercules to be a friend. Sam is strong, yet wise and gentle. He not only protects and helps Frodo physically, but mentally and spiritually also. Throughout their struggles Sam and Frodo impart their hearts to each other – no ‘penny’ for their thoughts here, but an outpouring of struggles, emotions, feelings, and thoughts to each other as true, firm friends.

So it is shown that Sam is a friend in every aspect of life, in danger, in sorrow, in joy, in peace – and he is a true friend, too. He is a friend who aids. He is a friend who rejoices in Frodo’s joy. He is a friend who weeps in Frodo’s sorrow. Sam ‘Halfast’ Gamgee is a friend beyond compare.