



## Part 5: Friends

Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

*"Friendliness bears fruit for a man."* Proverbs 19:22

### Meaningful friendships benefit my...

- \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. James Lynch: "Lonely people live significantly shorter lives"
- \_\_\_\_\_ U of Mich.: No friendship is health risk as high as obesity, smoking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. John Gottman: "Friendship is the key to marital happiness"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Carnegie Institute: 85% of financial success due to skill with people

Why we have trouble making friends

- We're \_\_\_\_\_
- We're \_\_\_\_\_
- We're \_\_\_\_\_
- We're \_\_\_\_\_

### Five skills for lasting friendship

1. I must be \_\_\_\_\_

*"A mirror reflects a man's face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses"* Proverbs 27:19 (LB)

*"Don't envy godless men; don't even enjoy their company."* Pr. 24:1 (LB)

*"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."* Proverbs 18:24

2. I must be \_\_\_\_\_

*"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity"* Pr. 17:17

*"A despairing man should have the devotion of his friends, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. But my brothers are as undependable as intermittent streams."* Job 6:14

3. I must be \_\_\_\_\_

*"Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds of a friend can be trusted."* Pr 27:5-6

*"An honest answer is the sign of a true friendship."* Pr 24:26

The Golden Rule for candor: I must be \_\_\_\_\_ myself!

*"Don't refuse to accept criticism; get all the help you can."* Pr. 23:12 (LB)

4. I must be \_\_\_\_\_

4 tendencies that destroy friendship:

- \_\_\_\_\_  
*"Love forgets mistakes. Nagging about them parts the best of friends"* Pr. 17:9 (LB)
- \_\_\_\_\_  
*"Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips."* Pr. 27:2
- \_\_\_\_\_  
*"Don't visit your neighbor too often, or you will outwear your welcome!"* Pr. 25:17 (LB)
- \_\_\_\_\_  
*"A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret"* Pr. 11:13

*"In everything you do, do to others what you would have them do to you."* Matt. 7:12

5. I must be \_\_\_\_\_

*"As iron sharpens iron, friend shapes friend"* Pr. 27:17

*"Now we can rejoice in our wonderful relationship with God -- all because of what our Lord Jesus has done for us in dying for our sins -- making us friends with God."* Rom 5:11

### Friendship Resources

Jim Conway, *Friendship*

Alan Loy McGinnis, *Bringing Out the Best in People and The Friendship Factor*

Les & Leslie Parrott, *A Good Friend: Ten Traits of Enduring Friends*

Jerry and Mary White, *Friends and Friendship*

TLC message by Pastor René Schlaepfer, March 9 & 10, 2002

## Daily Meditations

Take a few minutes every day to read Scripture, pray, and answer some thought-provoking questions pertaining to this week's topic.

This week's memory verses: *"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!"* - Eccl. 4:9-10

### Monday

Look back over your notes from this weekend. Which of the five skills for friendship is easiest for you?

Which is hardest? Why?

Read Prov. 27:17 and Prov. 18:24. Why is true friendship a dwindling commodity in our culture? What are the factors in your life that conspire against closer friendships?

Are you close to anyone? Call up someone today and set up a time to be together!

*Ask the Lord to help you make more time this week to develop healthy friendships.*

### Tuesday

Read John 5:13-15. What does Jesus say to His disciples about friendship?

How is it possible for you to "lay down your life" -- to sacrifice -- for your friend?

Have you ever sacrificed for a friend? What happened?

Do you remember when in your life you stopped thinking of yourself as merely a servant working for God and began thinking of yourself as God's beloved friend -- when you changed from law to grace?

If God wants you as a friend, how can you be a closer friend to Him -- what do friends do?

*Thank God today that He chooses to call us friends! Spend some friendship time with God today!*

### Wednesday

Read 1 Corinthians 13. These are all apt descriptions of true friendship. Which of these adjectives is hardest for you in your friendships-- do you struggle with possessiveness? Envy? Keeping a record of wrongs?

Have you ever seen these elements damage a friendship?

*Read the passage again, making it a prayer: Pray, "God, in my love for my friend \_\_\_\_\_, I will..." and then read the descriptions of love here, applying them to your relationship.*

### Thursday

Read Matt. 7:12. How does the Golden Rule spoken by Jesus here apply to friendship?

In what ways does it apply to friendship with your mate? With your children? With your parents?

*Thank God for His clear principles like this. Ask Him to help you keep this "Golden Rule" principle in your mind always. Ask Him to help you be a true, loyal friend!*

### Friday

Read Colossians 1:9-12. Intimate friends pray for one another. If you pray with your friend, you will always know what concerns him or her. What does Paul pray for his friends in these verses?

When did you last pray with -- not just for-- a close friend?

What needs does a close friend have right now that you can pray about?

Can you call your friend and ask to pray with him or her? What has God done lately for your friend for which you can give thanks?

*Pray today for your friend, using Paul's prayer as a model! Thank God for what He is doing in the life of your friend!*

### Saturday

*Read over the notes from last weekend and review the points and Scriptures. Ask the Lord to help you apply them in your life! Review the memory verse at the top of this page. We really appreciate your continued prayers for the weekend services at TLC. Please remember the next three weeks in prayer: The "Vision Day" message this weekend (with the annual meeting); Palm Sunday the next weekend, and Easter the next! Very exciting opportunities for you to invite your friends and neighbors!*