

Relating to Friendship

2019-06-23 by Ben Deaver at Tallgrass Church on John 15:12-17

Mingle Questions:

Question 1: What's something specific you are thankful for?

Question 2: What are you struggling with and how can I help?

Relating Sermon Series

Relating to... Wordcloud List: Soul/Self, God, Scripture, Disciples, Friends, Technology, Past, Culture, Sexuality, Enemy, Money, Neighbors, Church, Earth, Body, Politics, Family

Relating to Friendship: Some Relating talks have slightly off titles. Relating to Discipleship, Friendship, Worldviews. We're always relating to people, not concepts.

Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*

- "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee."
- However, we learn in Genesis 2:18 that me and God isn't actually enough to meet our relational need. It is not good for man to be alone. ^{18a} Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone...
 - Then God makes a way where there was no way! He creates Eve...and the rest is history.
- "One another" passages

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church

- "Christianity is essentially a social religion... To turn it into a solitary religion, is indeed to destroy it."
- We talk about Christianity not as a religion but as a relationship itself. Back in the day they still called Christianity a religion though. But they understood that it is not, in fact cannot, be experienced in solitude alone.

Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks over Two Decades

American Sociological Review, 2006, vol. 71, June, Pages 353–375

- Sociologist and Duke University Professor Lynn Smith-Lovin: Nearly 50% of Americans report they discuss important matters with either one person or no one at all.
- The number of people, who report they have no close friends, has tripled in recent decades.
- In the 1980s, 33% of Americans claimed to have a network of 4-5 people with whom they talk to about important matters.
- Today, that number has dropped by 50% down to 15% of Americans! (Over 10 years ago!)
- The number of people who report having at least one non-family member with whom they confide about important matters dropped from 80% to 57%.
- God built the need for companionship into our architecture (Gen. 2:18).
 - A 2015 study from BYU shows that the subjective feeling of loneliness increased the risk of death by 26%.
- We can't faithfully follow Christ, if we don't build deep Christian friendships.
- The "one another" passages imply spending lots of time with close spiritual friendships.

Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other

By Sherry Turkle, professor of Social Studies and Technology at MIT

- When I ask people “What's wrong with having a conversation?” People say, “I'll tell you what's wrong with having a conversation. It takes place in real time and you can't control what you're going to say.
- So that's the bottom line. Texting, email, posting, all of these things let us present the self as we want to be... We get to edit, and that means we get to delete, and that means we get to retouch, the face, the voice, the flesh, the body – not too little, not too much, just right...
- Online, we easily find company but are exhausted by the pressures of performance. We enjoy continual connection but rarely have each other's full attention. We can have instant audiences but flatten out what we say to each other...
- The ties we form through the Internet are not, in the end, the ties that bind.

Questions to Ponder/Discuss:

- Is social media good for relationships? Can social media be good for relationships?
- What are the pros and cons of technology as it pertains to relationships?
- How would Jesus and/or Paul have related to Facebook or Instagram?

Facebook Friends

- I've got 2,592 Facebook friends. Guess how close I am to each of them?
- A Facebook friend is not a friend, they are a potential networking opportunity. That's not bad, it's just not what a friend is.
- How many Facebook friends do you think Jesus would've had?
 - 12...and then 11...and then 12 again...and then millions...
 - I'd love to see Jesus' Facebook Timeline throughout church history!

Babylon Bee—Man On Deathbed Deeply Regrets Not Spending More Time Arguing On Facebook

Connected, but alone?

TED talk by Sherry Turkle, February 2012

- Human relationships are rich and they're messy and they're demanding. And we clean them up with technology. And when we do, one of the things that can happen is that we sacrifice conversation for mere connection.
- We're getting used to a new way of being alone together. People want to be with each other, but also elsewhere -- connected to all the different places they want to be. People want to customize their lives. They want to go in and out of all the places they are because the thing that matters most to them is control over where they put their attention.
- These days, those phones in our pockets are changing our minds and hearts because they offer us three gratifying fantasies. One, that we can put our attention wherever we want it to be; two, that we will always be heard; and three, that we will never have to be alone...
- The moment that people are alone, even for a few seconds, they become anxious, they panic, they fidget, they reach for a device. Just think of people at a checkout line or at a red light. Being alone feels like a problem that needs to be solved.
 - Experiment with NOT going to a device so quickly in those available moments...even if brief experiments.

The ties we form through the Internet are not, in the end, the ties that bind. So the question is, “Where do we find the tie that binds?”

Please turn to page 526 in your ESV giveaway Bible!

Read John 15:12-17

¹²This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

PRAY!!!

We were made for Kingdom collaborative friendships! We were made for supernatural friendships that have much larger goals than merely meeting our relational need.

Gospel Hexagons—Gospel, Gospel Truths, Gospel Relating

Gospel

^{12b-13} ...as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

- The Gospel—Christ died for my sins.
- God did for me what I could not do for myself.
- God made a way where there was no way.
- Respond to the Gospel tonight! Let's plan a Baptism Celebration!

Gospel Truth—I am Jesus' friend.

¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

- Transition in the relationship from servant to friend
- There often comes a point in a discipling relationship where someone goes from disciple to friend.
- It's like the difference between a mere employee at a company and a manager or even a co-owner.
- Friend—Φίλος (philos) 5384—someone dearly loved in a personal way; a trusted confidant; root (phil-) conveys experiential, personal affection; experience-based love; whereas (agapao) focuses on value-driven (decision-based) love—which of course does not exclude affection
 - Philadelphia—City of Brotherly Love
- We were made from relationship and for relationship.
- It is not good to be alone. See Genesis 2:18. BTW, your spouse can be a good friend too. Over time, your kids can become friends as well!
- Disciples—Friends and Ministry Teams Traveled, brought others in, worked through conflict—Checkout the book of Acts!
- Jesus' Approach to Friendship:
 - Time together
 - Shared experience
 - Physical presence—This makes walking with Jesus very difficult today! Having one another helps.
 - Physical embrace
- Settlers of Catan or disc golf aren't enough to deepen a friendship to where your relational need is.

Gospel Relating

¹²This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

- Commandment—έντολές (entolas)—instructions, orders, requirement, a charge, injunction, precept
- Like a toast!
- Our translations convey more of a legal nuance than a familial nuance.
- We've got to start hearing Jesus' instructions more in the context of intimate relationship rather than legalistic exhortations. Jesus is building a family, a team of friends!

¹³Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

- Love sacrificially! Lay down your life for your friends.

¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

- Know what the Master is doing. BTW, Jesus is the Master.

^{16a}You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide...

- Bear abiding fruit! Remember the original command to Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply? They could not produce the life but they still had a role to play in being fruitful and multiplying. That analogy carries over to other relationships. We are to bear fruit. Discipleship and friendship is how that happens.
- **John 13:34-35** ³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
- Abiding fruit! Eternal relationships! Remember the son *Friends* by Michael W. Smith?

^{16b}...so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

- Ask the Father for the things that are on Jesus' heart. This is called prayer.

¹⁷These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

- Love one another.

Initial Vision for Tallgrass Church

- Initial vision for Tallgrass Church was Maris and I in our living room at 1230 Houston Street with 6-8 close friends, praying for God to make a way where there seemed to be no way.
- I longed for and continue to long for that Upper Room experience with Jesus where He transitions from calling His disciples servants and says, "Now I call you friends!" I long for friendship with Jesus. And He offers that to me. Out of the depth of my friendship with Jesus I'm able to offer and receive friendship from others.
- The most difficult thing about planting Tallgrass Church was not having a few friends on the ministry team that I was really hoping and praying would join us. There was no betrayal of friendship or anything like that and all those specific friendships are still intact and strong. But nonetheless, the toughest thing for me about the months leading up to planting Tallgrass Church in April 2018 and the first year of Tallgrass Church was not having some of the friends on the team.

Vision for Tallgrass Church

- Circles of friends who are experiencing the love of God and then as a result, loving one another sacrificially and loving their neighbors sacrificially together.
- Engaging in sharing their faith, discipleship, hospitality, fun, etc. and inviting others in!
- Sounds a lot like our Mission Statement! Who wants to give it a whirl?
- Because God first loved us, we exist to love God and love our neighbors.

Scary Steps of Friendship:

1. Pick a friend.

- Prayerfully ponder the possibility of picking a new friend from the Tallgrass Directory!
- Rejection may happen, probably will happen will you take a relational risk. Take a risk anyways. Don't risk relationship but do take relational risks.
- Remember how much relational risk Jesus took and then how much rejection and hurt He experienced? Judas' betrayal, Peter's denials, everyone leaving Him high and dry at the point of His greatest relational need, the rejection and hurt He's experienced from each and every one of us in this room. And yet He keeps moving towards us in friendship!
- Forgiveness and relational reconciliation are beautiful gifts that we have in Jesus-centered relationships!
- So, pick a friend. But remember, you can pick your friends, and you can pick your nose, but you can't pick your friend's nose. Well, I guess you could pick your friend's nose if you really wanted to.

2. Love sacrificially.

- Truly sacrificial love begins to feel less sacrificial and more just like relational fulfillment.
- Jesus endured the cross, the greatest act of sacrificial love, for the JOY set before Him (Hebrews 12:2). The path to happiness, to joy, to relational depth was sacrificial love. Jesus experienced what He taught when He said, "It is more blessed, or more happy, to give than to receive!" See Acts 20:35.

3. Have conversations that linger.

- We landed on this phrase when reading Ajith Fernando's book *Reclaiming Friendship: Relating to Each Other in a Frenzied World*.
- "People who let long conversations eat into their schedules—and that is a sacrifice—will know the joy of minds meeting on a deep level. From such depths true friendships will be forged." –p. 33
- "Jesus was willing to sacrifice time in exchange for friendship. When Andrew and another of the disciples of John asked Jesus where he was staying, he did not simply give the information they wanted. He said, 'Come and...see.'"
- "They went 'and spent that day with him' (John 1:37-39). It was about 4:00 p.m. when they went home, and it seems that these two spent the night with Christ."
- "The Savior of the world, perfect model for the Christian leader, was inefficient according to much modern management philosophy. He spent a whole day on an unplanned appointment!" –p. 33
- The Upper Room Discourse, John 14-17, was definitely a powerful, world-changing conversation that lingered.
- This is one of the main reasons we did Episode 11 of The Chopping Block—Getting to 70%
- Converse...for awhile: Talk about the Scriptures. Talk about your lives. Talk about your hopes and dreams. Talk about your fears and frustrations. Talk about your disappointments and failures. Talk about what comes to mind. Bring curiosity to what God may be up to in your friendship.
- Plan a shared activity where you can actually talk to help you get going:
 - Coffee or lunch or snag a drink together.
 - Golf...if you can afford it and have the time and won't get overly frustrated.
 - Disc golf (unless you're highly competitive or lose discs all the time).
 - Going to a movie won't facilitate a lingering conversation...but it could get a relational ball rolling.
 - What other ideas do you have?
- Help your spouse carve out precious time for conversations that linger with other friends.
- And don't forget to carve out precious time with your spouse for conversations that linger so you can deepen your friendship with one another too!
- Build in structure then seize the spontaneous. Set yourself up for success!
- The Discovery Group format may be a practical way to get started in a good conversation that lingers.

Discovery Group

7 Questions that become 9

Accountability (only after the first meeting):

1. How did you do with your application step from last week?
2. Who did you tell?

Personal Sharing:

3. What are you thankful for?
4. What are you struggling with? And how can we help?

Read the passage you're studying together and then ask:

5. What do we learn about God, and Jesus specifically?
6. What do we learn about man?
7. What does this passage seem to be communicating?

Application:

8. In light of what we've learned, what will you do about it?
9. Who will you tell?

4. Pray with one another.

- It takes a brave man or woman to initiate praying together. But once you do, you won't regret it. I challenge someone to find a time when you're regretted praying with someone. Come tell me about it.
- Need help learning to pray? Join us on a Tuesday morning for Tallgrass Prayer!
- Remember our little Hexagonal Prayer Challenge? My kids are doing a great job finding hexagons. Every time I'm reminded to pray for key relationships and relationships within and beyond Tallgrass Church.

5. Co-Labor!

- Get after some Kingdom endeavors together. This could be acts of service or sharing your faith in overlapping relational circles.
- **John 13:34-35**
- You have Jesus on your ministry team. Actually, Jesus is your Team Leader, the Good Shepherd, the Overseer of your souls. This is what the book of Acts is about, teams of friends getting after it, following Jesus' leadership...having a great time...through great difficulty.
- Reminds me of the Kansas motto: Ad Astra per Aspera – To the Stars through Difficulty!

Q&R&Testimonies

Resources:

- Ajith Fernando, *Reclaiming Friendship*
- Dennis McCallum, *Organic Discipleship* Chapter 4 "Friendship Building"

Jesus' Prayer in John 17

John 17:20-23 ²⁰I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

- That conversation that lingered in the Upper Room 2000 years ago ended in prayer. That prayer is still being answered today.
- *Experiencing the Trinity* by Darrell W. Johnson—“‘At the center of the universe is a relationship.’ That is the most fundamental truth I know. At the center of the universe is a community. It is out of that relationships that you and I were created and redeemed. And it is for that relationship that you and I were created and redeemed! And it turns out that the community is a Trinity. The center of reality is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” —p. 37
- Relational depth is still on Jesus' heart for His brothers and sisters today.
- May we see this prayer being answered in our friendships at Tallgrass Church more and more day by day.
- Then may we offer depth of relationship to a hurting world that desperately needs friendship with Jesus.

Songs:

1. What a Friend We Have In Jesus
2. Blest Be the Tie That Binds
3. Take Courage
4. The Benediction

The Chopping Block:

Julie Beck quotes

- Julie Beck: “Saying “Happy Birthday” on Facebook, faving a friend’s tweet—these are the life support machines of friendship. They keep it breathing, but mechanically...Social media makes it possible to maintain more friendships, but more shallowly...”
- Julie Beck: “And it can also keep relationships on life support that would (and maybe should) otherwise have died out...Facebook makes things weird by keeping these friends continually in your peripheral vision. It violates what I’ll call the camp-friend rule of commemorative friendships:
- Julie Beck: “No matter how close you were with your best friend from summer camp, it is always awkward to try to stay in touch when school starts again. Because your camp self is not your school self, and it dilutes the magic of the memory a little to try to attempt a pale imitation at what you had...”
- Julie Beck: “The same goes for friends you only see online. If you never see your friends in person, you’re not really sharing experiences so much as just keeping each other updated on your separate lives...”
- Julie Beck: “It becomes a relationship based on storytelling rather than shared living—not bad, just not the same.”
- Julie Beck: “It becomes a relationship based on storytelling rather than shared living—not bad, just not the same.”

Bible:

- Job and his friends
- David and Jonathan
- Jesus and Lazarus
- Jesus and John
- Jesus and Judas
- Paul and Timothy and Silvanus and Titus and Epaphras

Passages:

- **Proverbs 27:17** Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.
- **Psalms 25:14** The **friendship** of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.
- **Proverbs 17:9** Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close **friends**.
- **Proverbs 17:17** A **friend** loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.
- **Proverbs 18:24** A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a **friend** who sticks closer than a brother.
- **Matthew 11:19** The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a **friend** of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”
- **Luke 7:34** The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a **friend** of tax collectors and sinners!’
- **John 3:29** The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The **friend** of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.
- **John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his **friends**.
- **John 15:14** You are my **friends** if you do what I command you.
- **John 15:15** No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you **friends**, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.
- **James 2:23** ...and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a **friend** of God.

- **James 4:4** You adulterous people! Do you not know that **friendship** with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a **friend** of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
- **3 John 1:15** Peace be to you. The **friends** greet you. Greet the **friends**, each by name.

Discovery Groups

Discovery Groups are smaller groups of 3-5 people and are ideal for those looking to go deeper with others beyond traditional LIFE Groups. These 3-5 people are the same gender and could all be fellow believers, could come from your LIFE Group, be a mix of folks from different LIFE Groups, could include seekers, nonbelievers, neighbors, coworkers, so on and so forth. They are highly flexible, reproducible, and cross-cultural!

Each person in a Discovery Group gets 15 minutes of total talk time so you'll want to carve out a good chunk of at least 1.5 hours weekly. You'll also want to pick a book of the Bible to study together. I'd recommend not picking a long book, especially to begin with. One of Peter or Paul's letters could be great! You don't have to do prior personal Bible study to be a part of a Discovery Group. The Discovery Group itself is the Bible study. Although of course any study of the Scriptures you put in on your own time is still beneficial.

Here's how Discovery Groups go. Find a time when your 3-5 people can meet. Sit down over coffee, tea, breakfast, lunch, or dinner (or whatever you fancy). Then someone leans in and ask the first question. "So guys, what are you thankful for?" Then move on to the next question.

Discovery Group Format:

7 Questions that become 9

Accountability (only after the first meeting):

10. How did you do with your application step from last week?
11. Who did you tell?

Personal Sharing:

12. What are you thankful for?
13. What are you struggling with? And how can we help?

Read the passage you're studying together and then ask:

14. What do we learn about God, and Jesus specifically?
15. What do we learn about man?
16. What does this passage seem to be communicating?

Application:

17. In light of what we've learned, what will you do about it?
18. Who will you tell?

Things to have in mind:

- Think groups discipleship/multiplication, not just individual discipleship/multiplication. 5 People max. Once you reach 6, multiply into two groups.
- Think 3rd generation. A group planting a group planting a group.
- Pray for a person of peace, someone who receives you and your words and is connected to others.

Reasons this might be awesome for our community:

- Scheduling is much easier for 3-5 people than for an entire small group.
- 3-5 people bring needed accountability that's difficult to come by in a one-on-one interaction.

- This can be taken anywhere in the world easily, without years of training.
- This is conducive for anyone and everyone. (in families, with coworkers, in neighborhoods, etc.)
- These questions cut to the heart quickly, stays focused on the Scriptures, and pushes people to share with others.
- This helps cultivate a culture of gratitude.
- Leadership requires very little prep or training. Just be willing to ask the questions and pay attention to the time!

Who knows what God might do through a few good questions and His Word? Consider jumping into (or starting!) a Discovery Group today!

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

Published in 1536 when John Calvin was 27 years old.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND OF OURSELVES MUTUALLY CONNECTED. - NATURE OF THIS CONNECTION.

- Without knowledge of self there is no knowledge of God
- Without knowledge of God there is no knowledge of self

More quotes:

- Ralph Waldo Emerson—"The only way to have a friend is to be one."
- C.S. Lewis—"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: "What! You too? I thought I was the only one."

Friend in the ESV

Proverbs 7:4

Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call insight your intimate **friend**,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 14:20

The poor is disliked even by his neighbor, but the rich has many **friends**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 16:28

A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close **friends**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 17:9

Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close **friends**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 17:17

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

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 18:24

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

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 19:4

Wealth brings many new **friends**, but a poor man is deserted by his **friend**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 19:6

Many seek the favor of a generous man, and everyone is a **friend** to a man who gives gifts.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 19:7

All a poor man's brothers hate him; how much more do his **friends** go far from him! He pursues them with words, but does not have them.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 22:11

He who loves purity of heart, and whose speech is gracious, will have the king as his **friend**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 22:24

Make no **friendship** with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 27:6

Faithful are the wounds of a **friend**; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 27:9

Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a **friend** comes from his earnest counsel.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Proverbs 27:10

Do not forsake your **friend** and your father's **friend**, and do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity. Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 7:4

if I have repaid my **friend** with evil or plundered my enemy without cause,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 15:3

who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his **friend**;

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 25:14

The **friendship** of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 35:14

I went about as though I grieved for my **friend** or my brother; as one who laments his mother, I bowed down in mourning.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 38:11

My **friends** and companions stand aloof from my plague, and my nearest kin stand far off.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 41:9

Even my close **friend** in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 55:13

But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion, my familiar **friend**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 55:20

My companion stretched out his hand against his **friends**; he violated his covenant.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Psalms 88:18

You have caused my beloved and my **friend** to shun me; my companions have become darkness.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Matthew 11:19

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a **friend** of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds."

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Matthew 20:13

But he replied to one of them, '**Friend**, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Matthew 22:12

And he said to him, '**Friend**, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Matthew 26:50

Jesus said to him, "**Friend**, do what you came to do." Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Mark 5:19

And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your **friends** and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 7:6

And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent **friends**, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 7:34

The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a **friend** of tax collectors and sinners!'

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 11:5

And he said to them, "Which of you who has a **friend** will go to him at midnight and say to him, '**Friend**, lend me three loaves,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 11:6

for a **friend** of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him';

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 11:8

I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his **friend**, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 12:4

[*Have No Fear*] "I tell you, my **friends**, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 14:10

But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, '**Friend**, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 14:12

[*The Parable of the Great Banquet*] He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your **friends** or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 15:6

And when he comes home, he calls together his **friends** and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.'

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 15:9

And when she has found it, she calls together her **friends** and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.'

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 15:29

but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my **friends**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 16:9

And I tell you, make **friends** for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 21:16

You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and **friends**, and some of you they will put to death.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Luke 23:12

And Herod and Pilate became **friends** with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

John 3:29

The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The **friend** of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

John 11:11

After saying these things, he said to them, "Our **friend** Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his **friends**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

John 15:14

You are my **friends** if you do what I command you.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

John 15:15

No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you **friends**, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

John 19:12

From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's **friend**. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar."

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Acts 4:23

[*The Believers Pray for Boldness*] When they were released, they went to their **friends** and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Acts 10:24

And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close **friends**.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Acts 13:1

[*Barnabas and Saul Sent Off*] Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong **friend** of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Acts 19:31

And even some of the Asiarchs, who were **friends** of his, sent to him and were urging him not to venture into the theater.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Acts 24:23

Then he gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody but have some liberty, and that none of his **friends** should be prevented from attending to his needs.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Acts 27:3

The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his **friends** and be cared for.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Hebrews 11:31

By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a **friendly** welcome to the spies.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

James 2:23

and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a **friend** of God.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

James 4:4

You adulterous people! Do you not know that **friendship** with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a **friend** of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

3 John 1:15

Peace be to you. The **friends** greet you. Greet the **friends**, each by name.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Ideas:

Friendship

Ralph Waldo Emerson

- <https://emersoncentral.com/texts/essays-first-series/friendship/>
- “The only way to have a friend is to be one.”

Resources:

- <https://www.positivityblog.com/friendship-quotes/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-missing-relationship-in-the-church>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/why-is-friendship-hard-for-men>
- *Reclaiming Friendship: Relating to Each Other in a Frenzied World* by Ajith Fernando
- <https://www.xenos.org/counseling/friendships>
- *Spiritual Friendship from 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13* by Scott Risley—<https://www.xenos.org/teachings/?teaching=3957>
- *Wisdom and Friendship from Proverbs* by Scott Risley—<https://www.xenos.org/teachings/?teaching=3273>
- *Counselors Offer Advice on Building Friendships*—<https://www.xenos.org/news/counseling/counselors-offer-advice-building-friendships>

- *Advice on Building Friendships Part 2*—<https://www.xenos.org/news/counseling/advice-building-friendships-part-2>
- https://smile.amazon.com/Friend-ish-Reclaiming-Friendship-Culture-Confusion/dp/1400213517/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?keywords=reclaiming+friendship&qid=1557945765&s=gateway&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1

Fighting for Friendship - Practical Wisdom for Building and Maintaining Friendships by Conrad Hilario (at XSI 2016—*Love: The Mark of a Christian*)—<https://www.xenos.org/teachings/?teaching=3503>

- Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks over Two Decades” American Sociological Review, 2006, vol. 71, June, Pages 353–375.
- Sociologist and Duke University Professor Lynn Smith-Lovin – Nearly 50% of Americans report they discuss important matters with either one person or no one at all.
- The number of people, who report they have no close friends, has tripled in recent decades.
- Today, that number has dropped by 50% down to 15% of Americans!
- In the 1980s, 33% of Americans claimed to have a network of 4-5 people with whom they talk to about important matters.
- The number of people who report having at least one non-family member with whom they confide about important matters dropped from 80% to 57%.
- God built the need for companionship into our architecture (Gen. 2:18).
 - A 2015 study from BYU shows that the subjective feeling of loneliness increased the risk of death by 26%.
- We can’t faithfully follow Christ, if we don’t build deep Christian friendships.
- The “one another” passages imply spending lots of time with close spiritual friendships.
- Sherry Turkle, professor of Social Studies and Technology at MIT: “When I ask people “What’s wrong with having a conversation?” People say, “I’ll tell you what’s wrong with having a conversation. It takes place in real time and you can’t control what you’re going to say.” So that’s the bottom line. Texting, email, posting, all of these things let us present the self as we want to be...
- Sherry Turkle, professor of Social Studies and Technology at MIT: “We get to edit, and that means we get to delete, and that means we get to retouch, the face, the voice, the flesh, the body -- not too little, not too much, just right..”
- Turkle: “Online, we easily find company but are exhausted by the pressures of performance. We enjoy continual connection but rarely have each other’s full attention. We can have instant audiences but flatten out what we say to each other...The ties we form through the Internet are not, in the end, the ties that bind.”
- *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* (Basic Books, 2011), 280.
- Turkle: “Human relationships are rich and they’re messy and they’re demanding. And we clean them up with technology. And when we do, one of the things that can happen is that we sacrifice conversation for mere connection.”
- Turkle: “We’re getting used to a new way of being alone together. People want to be with each other, but also elsewhere -- connected to all the different places they want to be. People want to customize their lives. They want to go in and out of all the places they are because the thing that matters most to them is control over where they put their attention.”
- Turkle: “These days, those phones in our pockets are changing our minds and hearts because they offer us three gratifying fantasies. One, that we can put our attention wherever we want it to be; two, that we will always be heard; and three, that we will never have to be alone...
- Turkle: “The moment that people are alone, even for a few seconds, they become anxious, they panic, they fidget, they reach for a device. Just think of people at a checkout line or at a red light. Being alone feels like a problem that needs to be solved.”
- From “Connected, but alone?” TED talk, February 2012.

- Julie Beck: “Saying “Happy Birthday” on Facebook, faving a friend’s tweet—these are the life support machines of friendship. They keep it breathing, but mechanically...Social media makes it possible to maintain more friendships, but more shallowly...
- Julie Beck: “And it can also keep relationships on life support that would (and maybe should) otherwise have died out...Facebook makes things weird by keeping these friends continually in your peripheral vision. It violates what I’ll call the camp-friend rule of commemorative friendships:
- Julie Beck: “No matter how close you were with your best friend from summer camp, it is always awkward to try to stay in touch when school starts again. Because your camp self is not your school self, and it dilutes the magic of the memory a little to try to attempt a pale imitation at what you had...
- Julie Beck: “The same goes for friends you only see online. If you never see your friends in person, you’re not really sharing experiences so much as just keeping each other updated on your separate lives...
- Julie Beck: “It becomes a relationship based on storytelling rather than shared living—not bad, just not the same.”
- Julie Beck: “It becomes a relationship based on storytelling rather than shared living—not bad, just not the same.”

Cosmos/Culture/World—In the world but not of the world!

- Hexagon Venn Diagram for Hedonism vs. Ascetism Tension
- Colossians 2:16-23

Technology / Social Media / Marketing / Etc.

- <https://iterativemarketing.net/peso-model-marketing/>
- <https://www.prsa.org/>

Soul Care

- <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/17/entertainment/game-of-thrones-counseling-trnd/index.html>

Colossians ^{ESV}

Chapter 1

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, ⁶which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, ⁷just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf ⁸and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be

preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Chapter 2

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

⁶ Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. ¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, ¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

Chapter 3

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹ Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. ²² Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵ For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

Chapter 4

Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

² Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—
⁴ that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

⁵ Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

⁷ Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸ I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, ⁹ and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

¹⁰ Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹ and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. ¹² Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³ For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. ¹⁶ And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷ And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord."

¹⁸ I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.