Scripture Reading: Proverbs 17:20-22 and 2 Peter 1:3-10
Sermon Title: Friends, how many of us have them/how many of us are them

Allowing God to have more of us so that we can experience more of Him by allowing Him to shape our relationships.

God gives us frameworks over formulas because He wants meaningful relationship not a mechanical one.

*The **power**:*
One whose heart is corrupt does not prosper; one whose tongue is perverse falls into trouble. 21 To have a fool for a child brings grief; there is no joy for the parent of a godless fool.22 **A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.**
Proverbs 17:20-22

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?
James 4:1

There is a two-way street between our inner & outer world.

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Proverbs 17:20-22

A foolish son brings **grief to his father** and **bitterness to the mother** who bore him.
Proverbs 17:25

Our relational health will shape us in negative & positive ways—it's powerful.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, **how often I have longed** to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.
Luke 13:34

For we do not have a high priest who is **unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but** we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
Hebrews 4:15-16

Jesus can heal & redeem our relational pain.

*The **mark**:*

Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.
Proverbs 17:9

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.
Proverbs 17:17

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, **he loved them to the end.**
John 13:1

The mark of healthy relationships is enduring love that grows.

Authentic love isn't situational but should be adaptable to every situation.

Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.
Proverbs 17:14

Greater love has no one than this: **to lay down one's life for one's friends**. [14] You are my friends if you do what I command. [15] I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.
John 15:13-15

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. [2] The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. [3] **We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.** [4] **We write this to make our joy complete.**
1 John 1:1-4

Jesus is the model for being a friend & having healthy relationships.

"Within this Christian vision of marriage, here's what it means to fall in love. It is to look at another person and get a glimpse of what God is creating, and to say, "I see who God is making you, and it excites me! I want to be part of that. I want to partner with you and God in the journey you are taking to his throne. And when we get there, I will look at your magnificence and say, 'I always knew you could be like this. I got glimpses of it on earth, but now look at you!"
-Tim Keller. The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God

Am I the type of friend my friends should be, or I'm expecting my friends to be?

We don't wander into the health or wholeness we're looking for—we walk in & towards it.

*The **pursuit**:*
His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. **4** Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 For this very reason, **make every effort to add to your faith goodness**; and to goodness, **knowledge**; 6 and to knowledge, **self-control**; and to self-control, **perseverance**; and to perseverance, **godliness**; 7 and to godliness, **mutual affection**; and to mutual affection, **love**. **8** **For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** **9** But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.**10** Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, **11** and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2 Peter 1:3-10

Befriend Jesus

Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.
Hebrews 2:11