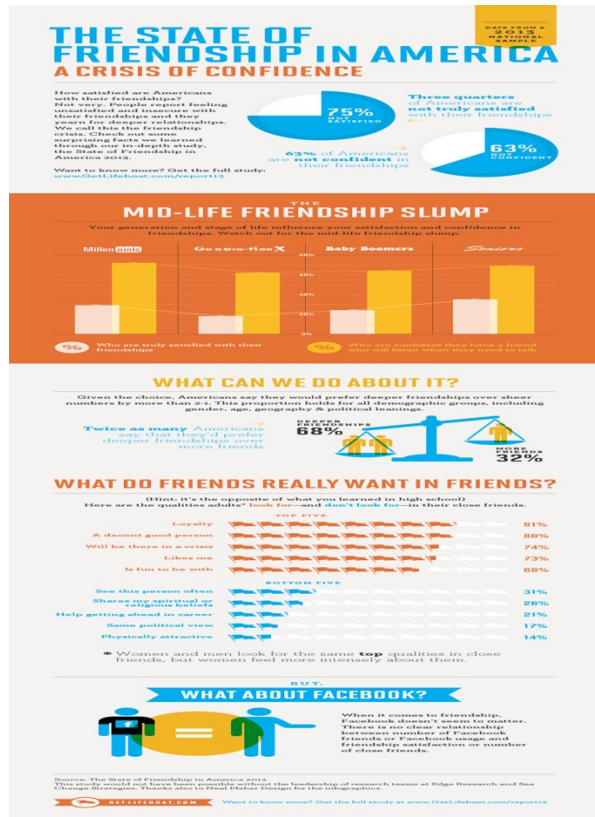


L2 LIFE: DOING LIFE TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE: MARK 3:13-15

How would you rate the quality of your friendships?

Research suggests most people in America crave more meaningful social interactions. To make things worse, 75 percent of people say that they're unsatisfied with the friendships that they do have, according to a 2013 study [<http://www.getlifeboat.com/report>].



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Most people are **not fully satisfied** with or secure about the state of their friendships.
2. Gen-Xers and Baby Boomers exhibit markedly lower levels of overall satisfaction with their friendships than do Millennials and Seniors, indicating a **mid-life friendships slump**.
3. People who say they have more close friends are happier and more fulfilled in life than those who say they have fewer or none. Most people, given the choice, would **prefer deeper friendships to having more friends**.
4. The qualities most people look for in friends are markedly similar across demographics, including gender, age, race, and geography. Most **people want friends who are loyal, are good people, and who will be there for them in a**

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crisis. Among attributes considered least important are physical attractiveness, similar political views, and similar religious views.

5. **Women** say they have access to more intimate friendships, but they are **no happier** than men with the state of their friendships.
6. **Use of social media** is probably **not a factor** one way or the other in the quality of one's friendships or one's overall friendship satisfaction.
7. Those seeking more fulfillment from their friendships should **invest** disproportionate time and energy in the **relationships they consider close.**

Health insurer Cigna's [2018 U.S. Loneliness Index](#) found that **46 percent of Americans** report feeling lonely sometimes or always, and **47 percent report feeling left out sometimes or always.** A little less, **43 percent, report feeling isolated from others,** and the same number report feeling they **lack companionship and their relationships lack meaning.**

Community is God's answer to LONELINESS.

Mark 3:13-15 "And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. 14And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach 15and have authority to cast out demons.

LIFE TOGETHER BEGINS WITH A COMMITMENT TO JESUS.

LIFE TOGETHER REQUIRES A COMMITMENT TO OTHER FOLLOWERS OF JESUS.

Mark 3:16-19 "He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, 19and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

What does it look like to do life together? What are the commitments we make to one another?

COMMITMENT TO TIME TOGETHER.

Consider, for example, the reciprocal pronoun "one another" in the New Testament. This one word alone highlights the significance of doing life together:

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- Outdo one another in showing honor (Rom. 12:10)
- Live in harmony with one another (Rom. 12:16)
- Admonish one another (Rom. 15:14)
- Greet one another with a holy kiss (Rom. 16:16)
- Wait for one another (1 Cor. 11:33)
- Have the same care for one another (1 Cor. 12:25)
- Be servants of one another (Gal. 5:13)
- Bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2)
- Comfort one another (1 Thess. 5:11)
- Build one another up (1 Thess. 5:11)
- Be at peace with one another (1 Thess. 5:13)
- Do good to one another (1 Thess. 5:15)
- Put up with one another in love (Eph. 4:2)
- Be kind and compassionate to one another (Eph. 4:32)
- Submit to one another (Eph. 5:21)
- Forgive one another (Col. 3:13)
- Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16)
- Pray for one another (James 5:16)
- Love one another from the heart (1 Pet. 1:22)
- Be hospitable to one another (1 Pet. 4:9)
- Meet one another with humility (1 Pet. 5:5)

COMMITMENT TO SHARE SPACE TOGETHER.

COMMITMENT TO SHARE RESOURCES TOGETHER.

COMMITMENT TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

We make these commitments because we believe what Jesus taught in 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."

We make these commitments because we believe what Jesus taught in John 17:20-21, "I 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".

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO LIFE TOGETHER?

SELFISHNESS IS A BARRIER TO LIFE TOGETHER.

James 4 verses 1 and 2 say this, "What causes fights and quarrels, don't they come from your desires that battle within you. You want something but you don't get it."

Here's what Paul Tripp says in his book, *Whiter Than Snow: Meditations on Sin and Mercy*, "We weren't created to be independent, autonomous, or self-sufficient. We were made to live in a humble, worshipful, and loving dependency upon God and in a loving and humble interdependency with others. Our lives were designed to be community projects. Yet, the foolishness of sin tells us that we have all that we need within ourselves. So we settle for relationships that never go beneath the casual. We defend ourselves when the people around us point out a weakness or a wrong. We hold our struggles within, not taking advantage of the resources God has given us." (p. 147)

THE ANTIDOTE TO SELFISHNESS IS **SELFLESSNESS**.

PRIDE IS A BARRIER TO LIFE TOGETHER.

In *Proverbs 13:10*, it says this, "Pride leads to arguments."

The antidote to PRIDE is **HUMILITY**.

INSECURITY IS A BARRIER TO LIFE TOGETHER.

Proverbs 29:25 when it says, "The fear of human opinion disables."

The antidote to Insecurity is **LOVE**.

RESENTMENT IS A BARRIER TO LIFE TOGETHER.

The antidote to RESENTMENT is **FORGIVENESS**.

Colossians 3:13, would you read this verse aloud with me? "You must make allowances for each others' faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

Questions to Ponder for Next Steps:

1. Have you committed to Jesus? If not, complete say yes card in the foyer and commit to following Jesus.
2. Who do you need to be more unselfish with? What is the selfless step God is asking you to take?

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SCRIPTURE: MARK 3:13-15

3. Have you been unwilling to admit “I was wrong, I’m sorry, please forgive me?”
Who do you need to say that to? “I was wrong. I’m sorry. Please forgive me.”
4. Have you been afraid of being real with other people and you’ve held your cards close and you’ve denied your emotions and you’ve hidden your emotional nakedness? If so, what one thing can you do to take off your mask and be authentic with other followers of Jesus?
5. Who do you need to forgive?