

THE TRUTH ABOUT REAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Proverbs 27:6 KJV

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Introduction

Look around this room. It is a beautiful thing to be gathered together, dressed in our best, shaking hands, and sharing smiles. We love the idea of friendship. We love the idea of family. But if we are going to be honest in the house of God today, some of the deepest emotional scars we carry were given to us by people we called friends. Some of the greatest mental strongholds we fight were built by people who sat at our dinner tables.

We live in a culture that is obsessed with being comfortable. We want a circle of people who will hype us up, clap for our dysfunction, and applaud our self-sabotaging mindsets. But God did not call us to be comfortable; He called us to be conformed to the image of His Son. And sometimes, the very thing you are praying for requires a word you do not want to hear.

Proverbs 27:6 in the King James Version says this: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

That is a heavy word. It means true love is not always a warm hug. Sometimes, true love is a sharp word. We have to learn the difference between somebody who is cutting you to hurt you, and somebody who is cutting you to heal you. A murderer cuts you to take your life. A surgeon cuts you to save it.

Today, we are going to look at four truths about real relationships, and how God wants to heal your mind, deliver you from toxic connections, and build a circle around you that will push you into your destiny.

1. THE PAIN OF A PROVEN FRIEND

The writer of Proverbs says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." We do not like this part of friendship. We want friends who make us feel good, who validate our wrong attitudes, and who cosign our bitterness. But a proven friend loves you too much to let you self-destruct. A real friend will look you in the eye and tell you when you are out of line, when you are walking in hypocrisy, and when you are letting your trauma dictate your testimony.

That kind of truth hurts. It wounds our pride. It strikes a blow to our ego. But the wound of a friend is faithful because it is rooted in your preservation, not your destruction. When your brother pulls you aside and says, "You are treating your wife wrong," or your sister says, "You are letting bitterness ruin your spirit," they are doing the work of a spiritual surgeon. Do not push away the people who love you enough to tell you the truth. If your circle only agrees with you, you do not have a circle of friends - you have a circle of fans. And fans will watch you destroy your life as long as they get a front-row seat.

2. THE POISON OF A PRETENDING FOE

The scripture flips the coin and gives us a warning: "but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." You have to catch this. The enemy does not always come at you with a sword; sometimes, he comes at you with a kiss. The devil is a master of camouflage. He will send people into your life who look supportive, who sound supportive, but who are secretly feeding your dysfunction.

This is the danger of pretentious relationships. A deceitful enemy will flatter you. They will tell you that you are right when you are dead wrong. They will kiss your ego, kiss your pride, and kiss your insecurities, all while setting you up for a fall. Think about the Garden of Gethsemane. How did Judas identify Jesus to the soldiers? He did not point a finger; he planted a kiss. Satan will use something that looks like affection to execute his agenda against your life. You have to pray for the spirit of discernment so you can recognize

when a compliment is actually a cage.

3. THE POWER OF A PURIFIED FELLOWSHIP

When you stop running from the faithful wounds and stop falling for the deceitful kisses, you step into something beautiful. You step into purified fellowship. This is what Family and Friends Day is really about. It is not about pretending we are perfect. It is about locking arms with people who will stand in the gap for you when you are under a demonic attack on your mind.

A purified fellowship is a space where healing happens. When you are struggling with guilt, shame, or the psychological effects of your past, you do not need people who just want to gossip about your pain. You need men and women who know how to go to the altar on your behalf. You need friends who will drag your mat to the feet of Jesus when you do not have the strength to walk there yourself. When we let go of our fake smiles and our pretentious worship, we create a church environment where the Holy Ghost can do surgery on our minds and set the captive free.

4. THE PERFECT PARTNER IN OUR SAVIOR

I cannot preach about friendship without pointing you to the greatest Friend you will ever have. Earthly friends will fail you. Family members will misunderstand you. But there is a Friend that sticks closer than a brother. His name is Jesus Christ. He understands betrayal because He was betrayed. He understands the pain of the mind because He sweat drops of blood in the garden. He understands rejection because He came to His own, and His own received Him not.

But look at the cross. He did not just talk about the wounds of a friend; He took the wounds for His friends. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes, we are healed. He took the ultimate cut so you and I could have the ultimate cure.

If you are here today and your mind is exhausted, your heart is broken, and

you are tired of the fake kisses of this world, I came to introduce you to a Savior who will never leave you nor forsake you. Surrender your