

A) SERMON SLIDES

Slide 1: Title

How to Be Good at Friendships
Selected Proverbs

Slide 2:

Proverbs 17:17 (ESV)

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

Proverbs 18:24 (ESV)

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

Proverbs 25:17 (ESV)

Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house,
lest he have his fill of you and hate you.

Proverbs 25:20 (ESV)

Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart
is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day,
and like vinegar on soda.

Proverbs 26:18–19 (ESV)

Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death
is the man who deceives his neighbor
and says, "I am only joking!"

Slide 3:

Proverbs 27:5–6 (ESV)

Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.
Faithful are the wounds of a friend;
profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

Proverbs 27:9 (ESV)

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

Proverbs 27:14 (ESV)

Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud voice,
rising early in the morning,
will be counted as cursing.

Proverbs 28:23 (ESV)

Whoever rebukes a man will afterward find more favor
than he who flatters with his tongue.

Proverbs 29:5 (ESV)

A man who flatters his neighbor
spreads a net for his feet.

Slide 4:

I. Importance and Beauty of Friendships

II. Marks of Lasting Friendships

III. Motivation for Gospel Friendships

Slide 5:

Proverbs 18:24 (ESV)

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

1) There is a difference between a "companion" and a "friend."

2) Friends can offer more (be better) than family relationships.

Slide 6:

Proverbs 17:17 (ESV)

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

Slide 7:

"sticks" = cleaves and clings (Genesis 2:24)

Slide 8:

All the other loves (family, romantic, social/civic) are more necessary than Friendship Love.

Slide 9:

It's exactly because Friendship love is unnecessary that it becomes so important and beautiful.

Proverbs 27:9 (ESV)

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

Slide 10:

“Friendship arises out of mere Companionship when two or more of the companions discover that they have in common some insight or interest or even taste which the others do not share and which, till that moment, each believed to be his own unique treasure (or burden). The typical expression of opening Friendship would be something like, "What? You too? I thought I was the only one."

-C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves

Slide 11:

"Lovers are always talking to one another about their love; Friends hardly ever about their Friendship. Lovers are normally face to face, absorbed in each other; Friends, side by side, absorbed in some common interest."

- C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves

Slide 12:

"That is why those pathetic people who simply "want friends" can never make any. The very condition of having Friends is that we should want something else besides Friends."

- C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves

Slide 13:

4 Marks of (or ways to) Lasting Friendship

- 1) Faithful Endurance
- 2) Emotional Congruence
- 3) Selfless Honesty
- 4) Wise Counsel

Slide 14:

Faithful

Proverbs 17:17 (ESV)

A friend loves at all times..."

Proverbs 25:17 (ESV)

Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house,
lest he have his fill of you and hate you."

Slide 15:

Emotional Connection

Proverbs 25:20 (ESV)

Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart
is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day,
and like vinegar on soda.

Proverbs 27:14 (ESV)

Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud voice,
rising early in the morning, will be counted as cursing.

Slide 16:

Selfless Honesty

Proverbs 27:5–6 (ESV)

Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.

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

Proverbs 29:5 (ESV)

A man who flatters his neighbor
spreads a net for his feet.

Slide 17:
Wise Guidance

Proverbs 27:9 (ESV)

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

Slide 18:
"But it does not seem that I can trust anyone," said Frodo.

Sam looked at him unhappily. "It all depends on what you want," put in Merry. "You can trust us to stick to you through thick and thin – to the bitter end. And you can trust us to keep any secret of yours – closer than you keep it yourself. But you cannot trust us to let you face trouble alone, and go off without a word. We are your friends, Frodo. Anyway, there it is. We know most of what Gandalf has told you. We know a good deal about the Ring. We are horribly afraid – but we are going with you, or following you like hounds." -J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship Of The Ring*

Slide 19:
A) Longing (I wish I had better friends)
B) Guilt and Shame (I wish I was a better friend)

Slide 20:
The Gospel heals the longing and the guilt

B) GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What does C.S. Lewis mean when he calls friendship "unnecessary?"
How is this true compared to all the other kinds of relationships?

2. If someone really wants friendship, what might you advise that person to do? Can friendship be manufactured?

3. Once we have discovered a friend or two, Pastor Don mentioned 4 ways to build. Speak to your strength or weaknesses in each one:

- a) Faithful (always there)
- b) Connected (emotionally)
- c) Honesty (to be truly seen and known)
- d) Counsel (why are friends BEST at this?)

4. When it comes to truly great and close Friendships, it is common in this culture to feel like we actually don't have them! This may cause these two feelings:

- a) Longing/Possibly Blame (I wish I had this)

b) Guilt and Shame (I wish I could do this)

How does the Gospel speak to each one of these feelings, and to each of us in this process?

5. Praise and prayer