

FRIEND REQUEST

Establishing Godly Friendships

Series: Relationship Status

Primary Text: Proverbs 13:20

Supporting Texts: Proverbs 17:17; Proverbs 27:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9–10; 1 Samuel 18:1–4; John 15:12–15

Key Verse

“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”

— Proverbs 13:20 (NIV)

INTRODUCTION — EVERYBODY NEEDS A FRIEND

If you have ever been on social media, you’ve probably seen the words:

“Friend Request.”

Somebody wants to connect with you.

You have a choice:

Accept.

Decline.

Or sometimes:

Ignore.

We have become very good at collecting friends.

You can have hundreds of Facebook friends, thousands of Instagram followers, and dozens of contacts in your phone—and still feel completely alone.

Because there is a difference between having **connections** and having **relationships**.

There is a difference between having people who know **about you** and having people who actually **know you**.

God never intended for us to walk through life alone.

Genesis 2:18 says:

“It is not good for the man to be alone.”

God created us for relationship.

We need people. We need encouragement. We need accountability.

We need people who will laugh with us, cry with us, pray with us, and sometimes tell us:

“You’re heading in the wrong direction.”

The question isn’t whether we need friends.

The question is:

What kind of friends are we allowing to influence our lives?

Because the people closest to you are helping shape the person you are becoming.

1. GODLY FRIENDSHIPS ARE INTENTIONAL

Proverbs 18:24

“One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

Godly friendships don’t usually happen by accident.

They have to be developed.

We live in a culture that encourages relationships based on convenience.

“Who do I like?”

“Who likes me?”

“Who makes me feel good?”

But biblical friendship asks a different question:

“Who helps me become more like Christ?”

That’s a completely different standard.

DAVID AND JONATHAN

One of the greatest friendships in Scripture is the relationship between David and Jonathan.

1 Samuel 18:1

“Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself.”

Jonathan was the son of King Saul.

David was the young shepherd who would eventually become king.

Jonathan could have seen David as competition.

Instead, he became David’s friend.

Their friendship was intentional. Jonathan invested in David.

He encouraged him.

He protected him.

He warned him.

He sacrificed for him.

Godly friendships require investment.

CROSS-REFERENCE: Proverbs 27:17

“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

A godly friend doesn't simply make you feel comfortable.

A godly friend helps make you **better**.

CROSS-REFERENCE: Ecclesiastes 4:9–10

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”

We need people who will help us get back up.

CROSS-REFERENCE: Hebrews 10:24–25

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together.”

Christian friendship should encourage us toward **Christ**, not merely toward comfort.

APPLICATION

If you want godly friendships, don't just sit around waiting for someone to become your friend.

Be intentional.

Invite someone to coffee. Invite someone to lunch. Sit beside someone at church. Join a Bible study.

Invite another couple over.

Call somebody who has been missing.

Send the text:

“I've been thinking about you. How can I pray for you?”

You may discover that the friendship you've been praying for begins with the friendship you decide to initiate.

2. GODLY FRIENDSHIPS MOVE YOU CLOSER TO GOD

Proverbs 13:20

“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”

Notice the language:

“Walk with.”

The people you walk with influence the direction you’re going.

You may not realize it, but your friends are discipling you.

They are teaching you something.

Their attitudes influence your attitudes.

Their priorities influence your priorities.

Their language influences your language.

Their relationship with God influences your relationship with God.

You become like the people you spend time with.

CROSS-REFERENCE: 1 Corinthians 15:33

“Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’”

Paul gives us a warning:

Relationships have influence.

CROSS-REFERENCE: Psalm 1:1–2

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD.”

Notice the progression:

Walk → stand → sit.

Compromise often happens gradually.

You don’t necessarily wake up one morning and decide:

“I’m going to walk away from God.”

Sometimes it starts with:

Who you’re walking with.

CROSS-REFERENCE: 2 Corinthians 6:14

“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.”

This doesn't mean Christians isolate themselves from unbelievers.

Jesus intentionally reached sinners.

But it does mean we must be careful about who has **spiritual influence** over our lives.

JESUS AND SINNERS

Jesus spent time with people who didn't know God.

Mark 2:17

“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Jesus went toward people who needed Him.

But Jesus never allowed their sin to redefine His holiness.

That's the balance:

We reach people without becoming like the people we're reaching.

ASK YOURSELF:

Who is influencing me?

Who influences your decisions?

Who influences your attitude?

Who influences your marriage?

Who influences your parenting?

Who influences your spiritual life?

Who influences the way you spend your money?

Who influences what you watch?

Who influences what you think is acceptable?

Because eventually:

Your relationships will influence your direction.

3. GODLY FRIENDS TELL YOU THE TRUTH

Proverbs 27:6

“Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.”

A real friend isn't somebody who always tells you:

“You're right.”

A real friend loves you enough to say:

“I don't think you're right.”

A real friend will say:

“I think you're making a mistake.”

“I think you need to pray about that.”

“I don't think that relationship is good for you.”

“You need to apologize.”

“You need to get back into church.”

“You need to get right with God.”

That's not judgment.

That's love.

Proverbs 28:23

“Whoever rebukes a person will in the end gain favor rather than one who has a flattering tongue.”

Flattery makes us feel good.

Truth makes us grow.

Ephesians 4:15

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.”

Notice that Scripture doesn't say:

Truth without love.

And it doesn't say:

Love without truth.

It says: **“Speaking the truth in love.”** That's godly friendship.

JESUS WAS A TRUTH-TELLER

Jesus loved people too much to lie to them.

He confronted Peter.

He confronted the Pharisees.

He corrected His disciples.

But Jesus never used truth as a weapon.

He spoke truth because He loved people.

Galatians 6:1

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.”

Notice the word:

Restore.

The purpose of correction isn't to destroy somebody.

It's to **restore** somebody.

4. GODLY FRIENDS HELP CARRY YOUR BURDENS

Ecclesiastes 4:9–10

“Two are better than one... If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”

Everybody falls.

Everybody gets tired.

Everybody has moments when they don't have the strength to keep going.

Sometimes you don't need a sermon.

You need somebody to sit beside you.

You need somebody to pray.

You need somebody to say:

“I'm here.”

Galatians 6:2

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

Godly friendship means we don’t just celebrate each other’s victories.

We help carry each other’s burdens.

Romans 12:15

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”

A godly friend knows how to celebrate with you **and** cry with you.

Job 2:11–13

Job’s friends came when he was suffering.

They sat with him.

They mourned with him.

They didn’t initially try to explain everything.

Sometimes the greatest ministry we can offer is simply:

“I’m here.”

5. GODLY FRIENDSHIPS REQUIRE MUTUAL SACRIFICE

David and Jonathan didn’t have a friendship based on:

“What can you do for me?”

They had a friendship based on:

“How can I help you?”

Jonathan sacrificed his own interests for David.

That’s biblical friendship.

Philippians 2:3–4

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

The world says:

“Find people who make your life better.”

Jesus teaches us:

“Become someone who makes other people’s lives better.”

John 15:12–13

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

Jesus connects friendship with **sacrifice**.

Real friendship costs something. It costs time. It costs convenience. It costs pride.

Sometimes it costs money.

Sometimes it requires forgiveness.

Sometimes it means showing up when you would rather stay home.

Love is not merely something we say.

Love is something we do.

6. JESUS IS THE MODEL FOR EVERY GODLY FRIENDSHIP

John 15:13

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

The greatest example of friendship isn’t David and Jonathan.

It’s **Jesus**.

Jesus didn’t simply call us friends.

He demonstrated friendship through sacrifice.

He served.

He loved.

He listened.

He forgave.

He corrected.

He encouraged.

And ultimately:

He laid down His life.

Romans 5:8

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Jesus didn't wait until we became worthy.

He came to us in our brokenness.

John 15:15

“Instead, I have called you friends.”

Think about that.

The Creator of the universe calls us friends.

James 2:23

Abraham was called:

“God's friend.”

God isn't merely interested in religious activity.

He desires relationship.

7. BE THE FRIEND YOU WANT TO HAVE

This may be the most practical point of the entire sermon.

We often pray:

“God, give me better friends.”

But maybe the better prayer is:

“God, make me a better friend.”

Luke 6:31

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

If you want encouragement: **Give encouragement.**

If you want someone to pray for you: **Pray for someone.**

If you want someone to call you: **Make the call.**

If you want someone to forgive you: **Be willing to forgive.**

If you want someone to show up for you:

Show up for someone else.

Proverbs 17:17

“A friend loves at all times.”

Not just when it’s convenient.

Not just when you’re fun to be around.

Not just when everything is going well.

A friend loves at all times.

A GODLY FRIEND:

Encourages you when you’re discouraged.

Corrects you when you’re wrong.

Prays for you when you’re struggling.

Celebrates you when you’re succeeding.

Challenges you when you’re settling.

Stays with you when life gets difficult.

Points you toward Jesus.

THE HOLINESS CONNECTION

There is a powerful holiness principle here.

Entire sanctification isn’t just about what we **stop doing**.

It’s about what kind of people we **become**.

When God’s love fills our hearts, it changes the way we relate to people.

CROSS-REFERENCE: 1 Thessalonians 5:11

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.”

Holiness should make us people who build others up.

CROSS-REFERENCE: Colossians 3:12–14

“Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience... And over all these virtues put on love.”

A sanctified heart produces Christlike relationships.

We become:

Less selfish.

More patient.

More forgiving.

More truthful.

More compassionate.

More willing to serve.

A holy heart produces holy relationships.

CROSS-REFERENCE: John 13:35

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Our relationships should be evidence that Jesus is changing us.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

HOW DO I ESTABLISH GODLY FRIENDSHIPS?

1. PRAY FOR GODLY FRIENDS

Proverbs 18:24

Ask God to bring people into your life who will help you grow spiritually.

2. BECOME A GODLY FRIEND

Philippians 2:4

Don't just ask:

“Who can help me?”

Ask:

“Who can I help?”

3. GET CONNECTED

Hebrews 10:24–25

You can't develop meaningful friendships sitting on the sidelines.

Join a small group.

Serve.

Attend Bible study.

Participate in church life.

4. BE VULNERABLE

James 5:16

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

Healthy spiritual relationships require honesty.

You can't be known if you never allow anyone to know you.

5. PRACTICE ACCOUNTABILITY

Proverbs 27:17

“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

Find someone spiritually mature enough to ask:

“How are you really doing?”

6. SET HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Proverbs 22:3

“The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.”

Not everyone deserves equal access to your heart.

Love everyone.

Serve everyone.

Reach everyone.

But be intentional about who has influence over your life.

7. KEEP JESUS AT THE CENTER

John 15:4–5

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you... apart from me you can do nothing.”

The strongest friendships aren’t ultimately built around hobbies, sports, careers, or common interests. They are built around **Christ**.

CONCLUSION — THE FRIEND REQUEST

Imagine that your phone buzzes this morning. You look down. There’s a friend request.

But this one isn’t from Facebook. It’s from God.

God is inviting you into deeper relationships. With Him. And with His people. Maybe you’ve been lonely.

Maybe you’ve been hurt by friendships. Maybe you’ve surrounded yourself with people who are pulling you away from God. Maybe you’ve been trying to do life completely on your own.

Today, God is saying:

You were never meant to walk alone.

But there’s an even greater invitation. Jesus is inviting you into relationship with Him.

John 15:15

“I have called you friends.”

Think about that.

The God who knows everything about you.

Your failures.

Your mistakes.

Your fears.

Your weaknesses.

Your past.

And He still says:

“Come walk with Me.”

ALTAR CALL

“WHO IS WALKING WITH YOU?”

Today I want to ask you three questions.

1. WHAT’S YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS?

Are you walking with Him?

Or have you been walking away from Him?

2. WHO IS INFLUENCING YOUR LIFE?

Are the people closest to you helping you become more like Jesus—or pulling you away from Him?

3. ARE YOU BEING THE FRIEND GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO BE?

Maybe today isn’t about asking God for a better friend.

Maybe today is about asking:

“God, make me a better friend.”

FINAL CHALLENGE

If you’ve never surrendered your life to Jesus, **today can be the beginning of the most important relationship you’ll ever have.**

If you’ve drifted away from God, **come home.**

If you’ve been hurt by relationships, **bring that hurt to Jesus.**

If you’re lonely, **let the church become your family.**

If you need godly friends, **ask God to lead you into godly relationships.**

And if God has placed someone on your heart who needs encouragement, forgiveness, or friendship—

Don’t wait. Send the friend request.

Pick up the phone.

Make the call.

Send the text.

Walk across the room.

Invite them to church.

Pray with them.

Because somebody may be waiting for the very friendship God is calling **you** to offer.

Be the friend.

Build the relationship.

Point them to Jesus.

Because the right friendship can change the direction of a life—and the greatest Friend of all can change your eternity.