

The Case for Friendship

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01 Do you think Christians are better at relationships than non-Christians? Why or why not?

02 What would you pick as your four top principles for friendship?

03 Read John 15:12-17. What is distinctive about the friendship Jesus has with his followers?

04 Read the following quote from Rebecca McLaughlin. What stands out as helpful?

Aristotle famously put friendship in three categories: friendships of pleasure, of utility, and of virtue. In today's terms, we might see the first as friendships built around shared interests; the second as networking; and the third as friendships we invest in a deeper sense—ones in which each person seeks the other's good and recognizes the goodness in the other as they seek to grow in goodness side by side. Many in our society today have friends of pleasure or utility; fewer have friends of virtue. These relationships take much more serious investment.

- No Greater Love: A Biblical Vision for Friendship.

05 Think about the way Christian relationships are expressed in the following verses. How might these situations challenge our ideas of friendship within the family of God?

a. John 11:3-5

b. Romans 16:13

c. 1 Corinthians 4:17

d. Philemon 10

e. Acts 2:44-46

06 Proverbs often give practical advice for relationships. What do these proverbs contribute to what makes a good friend?

a. Pr 13:20

b. Pr 19:4

c. Pr 27:5-6

d. Pr 18:13

07 What can we learn from Jesus' example as the perfect friend?

08 Read the following quote from Frances Schaeffer and discuss.

We are finite and therefore we do not expect to find final sufficiency in any human relationship, including marriage. The final sufficiency is to be found only in a relationship with God ... If a man tries to find everything in a man-woman, or a friend-friend relationship, he destroys the very thing he wants and destroys the one he loves. He sucks them dry, he eats them up and they, as well as the relationship are destroyed. But as Christians we do not have to do that. Our sufficiency of relationship is in that which God made it to be, in the infinite-personal God on the basis of the work of Christ in communication and love.

09 Go back to your top principles for friendship at question 2. Would you change or add anything to your list in light of this study?

10 Given the critical nature of friendship, how might we promote friendship with those at church? How can we include those outside our circle of existing friendships?

11 Pray for each other.

Want to submit a question for QnA Sunday 21 Sep?

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