

January 11, 2009
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
Selected Proverbs

“Friendship”

“Life is all about RELATIONSHIPS.”

1. Definition of Friend:
 - a. Encarta: “Somebody emotionally close. Somebody who trusts and is fond of another.”
 - b. Old Testament: reá = a brother, companion, fellow, friend, husband, lover, neighbor.
 - c. New Testament: philos = someone you love, care for, feel close to...
2. Priority in Friendships:
 - a. God (Mk. 12:28-30; Jn. 15:12-15; James 2:23; Prov. 16:7; Gal. 5:22-23)
 - b. God’s Word (Wisdom)
 - c. Spouse / Family (Prov. 2:17; 1 Pet. 3:7)
 - d. Church – Heb. 3:13; “one another” passages
 - e. Lost (“hospitality” commands)
3. Characteristics of Friendship
 - a. Genuine love (Jonathan & David – 1 Sam. 18:1-3; 19:1; 20:17; 2 Sam. 1:26; 1 Cor. 13)
 - b. Constant (Prov. 14:20; 19:4, 6, 7; 18:24; 17:17; 27:10)
 - c. Talk (Confront / Counsel – Prov. 27:5-6; 28:23; Gal. 4:16; 27:9; 27:17)
 - d. Listen (Prov. 13:1, 10; 17:10)
 - e. Cover (Prov. 10:12; 17:9 cf. 1 Pet. 4:8; Prov. 16:28)
 - f. Tact (Prov. 25:17; 27:14; 26:18-19)
 - g. Encouragement (1 Sam. 23:16)
 - h. Pray!
 - i. TIME!!!

Discussion Questions:

1. What definition would you give for the word “friend”?
2. When you were growing up, who was your best friend? Why were they your best friend? What qualities did they have that you admired the most?
3. Who do you think of as “great friends” in the Bible? Why did you choose them? What was it about their relationship that you admired the most?
4. Read 1 Samuel 18:1-3. What are some other ways of saying that two people’s souls are “knit together”? What does it mean to love someone as you love yourself? How do you practice that with your friends?
5. Read Proverbs 18:24. Why would a man of “too many” friends come to ruin? How can we avoid that?
6. Read James 2:23. Abraham was called a friend of God. What does that mean? How do we become a friend of God? Once we become a friend of God how do we grow as a friend of God? How does our friendship with God enable us to be a better friend to other people (even our enemies - Prov. 16:7)?
7. A person’s spouse is to be an intimate friend (see Prov. 2:17 – “companion” = bosom friend; compare Prov. 16:28; 17:9; Ps. 55:13). Virtually all marriages start with that as the goal but many don’t continue that way. What keeps married couples from continuing to be best friends? What can be done about those things so they can continue to be best friends?
8. Read Prov. 16:28. How does slander (and/or gossip) separate intimate friends? Who is the father of slander? Why would he want to separate intimate friends? What are some ways that people justify spreading gossip & slander about others? Read Prov. 10:12; 17:9 (cf. 1 Pet. 4:8). What does it mean for love to “cover” all transgressions?
9. Many people avoid confrontation, but it is critical to genuine friendships (Prov. 27:5-6; 28:23; Gal. 4:16). What fears might keep us from confronting problems / sins that we see in our friends? How can we overcome these fears and lovingly confront our friends so they can grow in godliness?
10. How might great friendships in the church be used of God to impact people who don’t yet know Jesus?
11. How can we develop better friendships with people who don’t yet know Jesus? How might you be a better friend to your family members, neighbors, and co-workers?
12. What are the primary things you need to work on this year in order to BE a great friend?