

Love, With All Your Heart

Week 2: Loving Friendships

TALK IT OVER

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying into action. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take the next step.

Talk It Over

With your Bible, read Proverbs 17:17 (AMP) and John 15:15 (AMP)

Aristotle said, "A friend is a single soul dwelling in two bodies."

Having friends and being a friend are both essential elements in the health of our spirit, soul, and body.

- How have your friends affected the health of your spirit, soul, and body in positive and negative ways?
- Why is your best friend, your closest friend? ...Think about how this person has affected your spirit, soul, and body.

The three great commands of scripture teach us the value of close, intimate relationships:

- Love God.
- Love your neighbor.
- Love one another.

Enduring, trusting, loving relationships are more important to us than success and achievement. Friendships are very important and very necessary in our lives and have a great influence upon who we are and who we become.

- How have your friends affected your character and who you are today?
- What are marks of a good friendship?

Good friends strengthen us, nurture us, and help us grow. Good friendships affect the health of our spirit, soul and body.

Each of us has a deep "longing for belonging." We want to be "wanted, accepted, affirmed, appreciated, enjoyed, loved and nurtured."

- Although we long to belong, how do we actively do this in our current friendships? How will you nurture your friendships to ensure your friends feel a sense of belonging?
- How and when has Jesus been your greatest, best friend? How did He provide when no one else could?

Jesus shared the secrets of His Kingdom with His disciples. No one can ever live a real, genuine, authentic, purpose-filled life without experiencing a personal, intimate relationship and friendship with Jesus. Only Jesus can ultimately satisfy our compulsion for completion.

Think It Over: Friends of the Heart

A "friend of the heart" are those enduring kinds of friendships with those who sometimes know us better than we know ourselves and love us anyway.

Dinah Mulock described it like this:

All the comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they are – chaff and grain together – certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.

"Friends of the heart" require commitment. If we care, we commit and the commitment gradually grows.

"Friends of the heart," true friends, keep their promises, don't tell their secrets to others, don't desert you even when you are in trouble. God is continually pursuing a love relationship with each of us. His greatest desire is to call us His friends.

Take Action:

"Love your neighbor as yourself." –Matthew 22:39

"My ambition has always been to preach the good news where the name of Christ has never been heard, rather than where a church has already been started by someone else."
– Romans 15:20

"We are to bringing others to Christ." –2 Timothy 4:5

"Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth." –2 Timothy 2:15

"Let us stop saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions." –1 John 3:18

"You must give them my messages whether they listen or not."
–Ezekiel 2:7

"Love does no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." –Romans 13:10