



Lesson #4: Don't be a Loner! (Proverbs)

Living in an inhabited planet, it is impossible to avoid associations with fellow humans. I wonder if you would describe yourself as an "extrovert" or an "introvert." Myths and misunderstanding about each group abound but the real truth is that neither introverts nor extroverts are _____. The weakness of our personality types (not to mention sinfulness) cause us to mess up every day and miss opportunities to serve God best.

So what is God's message about our relationships with others? If we all keep messing up there must be a better way to go about building friendships. A good portion of God's wisdom regarding the topic of friendship is found in the book of _____. In this book of wisdom much is revealed regarding God's thoughts about friendships. Most importantly we come to discover that the most _____ position a Christian can be in is to live without _____.

YOU MUST GRASP THE _____ OF HAVING A FRIENDS

True friendship is rare. The book of Proverbs helps us answer the age-old question, "How can I find a good, godly friend?"

A. Friends can be a source of _____

One person wisely put it this way, "A friend is one who walks _____ when the rest of the world walks _____." Friends are there for you both in the good times and the bad. Proverbs 17:17 says that "a friend loves at all times!" No change of outward circumstance will abate the affection of a true friend.

B. Friends can be a source of good _____

Did you know that having a friend that offers good counsel is actually something to be treasured? Solomon actually described it as being "sweet" (Proverbs 27:9). The truth remains – no man is an island unto himself! You need the counsel and advice of godly friends. There is great value in this! "Where no _____ is, the people _____: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Proverbs 11:14). So what is good counsel? I think we can confidently conclude that good counsel is not always something that you _____ to hear. Good counsel often involves biblical confrontation.

YOU MUST GRASP THE _____ OF CHOOSING FRIENDS

Choosing friends is something that should not be taken lightly. It is a task that will in fact guide the very course of your life.

A. Avoid the _____ friends

- Avoid the _____ (Prov. 20:19)
- Avoid the _____ (Prov. 22:24-25)
- Avoid the _____ (Prov. 23:20-21)
- Avoid the _____ (Prov. 25:18-20)

It has often been said that "you will be the same person that you are today except the _____ that you meet and the books you read." Don't be naïve! Your _____ friend can be more damaging than anyone else.

B. Accept the _____ friends

When you enter into a conversation on the topic of friendship in a church family relationship you come to realize that when a person comes to Christ things change when it comes to _____.

- Cling to those who display _____ (Prov. 12:30)
- Cling to those who will lead you in the _____ way (Prov. 13:14)

YOU MUST GRASP THE _____ OF GODLY FRIENDS

The Bible gives us guidelines to help us not only recover from conflicts but it offers advice to help us maintain relationships.

A. There is a way to _____ strong friendships

- _____ everything you hear will destroy friendships (Prov. 17:9)
- Getting into senseless _____ will destroy friendships (Prov. 17:14)
- Meddling in affairs that are _____ your own will destroy friendships (Prov. 26:17)
- Playing bad _____ will destroy friendships (Prov. 26:17)
- Being a _____ will destroy friendships (Prov. 26:20)

Not always, but often, the reason people don't have friends is because they are the ones destroying them.

B. There is a way to _____ strong friendships

Sometimes we do offend, and regaining our friends' confidence after that is not easy. Solomon said, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city" (Prov. 28:19). So what can be done when this happens?

- Be slow to _____ (Prov. 15:18)
- Be slow to _____ (Prov. 18:13)
- Avoid _____ (Prov. 20:3)
- Be quick to show _____ (Prov. 10:12)

Let's pick up our friends up when they fall. Why? Eventually you will fall and need someone to pick you up.