



Build Deeper Friendships

Relationships are important for building community, culture and discipleship.




The Qualities of Friendship

- ▶ 1. How would you define a close friendship?
- ▶ 2. How many close friends do you think the average person has?
- ▶ 3. If you had a choice, how often would you like to spend time with a close friend?
- ▶ 4. How often do you invite your close friends to your home? How often do you visit their home?
- ▶ 5. How often do you communicate with a friend by phone or text?
- ▶ 6. Think about one of your close friends. Is your friendship based on a shared hobby or activity, a philosophy of life, a common workplace, a shared history (like High School), pleasant conversation, something else or a combination of these?
- ▶ 7. Does it get harder to build a close friendship when you get older?



The Importance of Friendship

- ▶ 1. How do friends make your life better?
 - ▶ 2. Do you have friendships that have lasted for years, a lifetime?
 - ▶ 3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how important are friends to you when you are facing a tough time in your life?
 - ▶ 4. Do you know people who might need a friend?
 - ▶ 5. What are some ways you could help others to find and build closer friendships?
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Church Friends



- ▶ 1. How easy is it to make friends at your church on a scale of 1 to 10?
- ▶ 2. What is the difference between a friendly church and a friend at church?
- ▶ 3. Is it possible to be in a crowd of people (like at church) but not really feel like you have a close friend there?
- ▶ 4. How important is it to you that you have friends at the church where you attend on a scale of 1 to 10?
- ▶ 5. What have you seen a church do that made it easier for people to make friends?
- ▶ 6. If you are in a small group at church, what does your small group do that makes it harder or easier to make friends?



What Does the Bible Say?

- ▶ Proverbs 11:25 *“he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.”*
- ▶ Proverbs 12:26 *“a righteous man is cautious in friendship”*
- ▶ Proverbs 13:20 *“he who walks with the wise grows wise”*
- ▶ Proverbs 18:24 *“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*
- ▶ Proverbs 22:24 *“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man”*
- ▶ Proverbs 27:9 *“the pleasantness of one’s friend springs from his earnest counsel”*
- ▶ Proverbs 27:17 *“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*



What Does the Bible Say?

- ▶ Eccles 4:9-10 *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work; if one falls down, his friend can help him up.”*
- ▶ Luke 6:31 *“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”*
- ▶ John 15:12-13 *“Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”*
- ▶ Philippians 2:4 *“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*
- ▶ I Thess 2:8 *“We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.”*



Help People Build More Friendships In Your S.S. Class

- ▶ When you walk into class, sit beside someone else. Don't put empty chairs between you.
- ▶ Make it your goal to have a conversation with someone every time you go to class. It is easy to sit in a group, but never connect with an individual.
- ▶ When a guest visits your class, don't just shake their hand, have a conversation before class or after class.
- ▶ At the end of class, walk with someone from your class and sit with them in the worship service.
- ▶ Have a once-a-month fellowship so you can spend time together.
- ▶ Make a list of everyone's hobbies. Do some hobbies together.



Help People Build More Friendships In Your Church

- ▶ Once a month, or more often, invite someone in your church to share a meal or an activity with your family – a picnic or cookout, a walk, tennis or bowling, a game night, a movie.
- ▶ Get to church a few minutes early and be intentional to sit with someone you know or want to know better.
- ▶ Invite someone to go with you when you serve others. If you are visiting a home or the hospital, take someone with you.
- ▶ Post a list of people who have hobbies or interests and would like to do them with others – exercise, games, sports, travel, gardening, etc.
- ▶ Start more small groups for Bible study, ministry, prayer or support.




Help People Build More Friendships In Your Church

- ▶ Could you start 5 small groups for single adults in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s & 60s
- ▶ Could you start a support group for people recently divorced?
- ▶ Could you start a support group for widows and widowers?
- ▶ Could you start a cancer support group?
- ▶ Could you start an exercise class, a softball team, or a walking group?
- ▶ Could you start a MOPS group – mothers of preschoolers?
- ▶ Could you start a single Moms group?
- ▶ Could you start a weekly or monthly supper club?
- ▶ Could you have a monthly church fellowship - pot-luck lunch or supper?



The Power of a Friendship

- ▶ I have been friends with Bill, Tom, Glenn and Duncan, Wally, Dee, Tom and Gloria, Larry and Teresa, Carroll and Donna for 45 years or more.
 - ▶ I have been friends with my wife for 38 years and counting!
 - ▶ A friend helped me understand that I could have a relationship with Christ, and it changed my life forever.
 - ▶ Friends can have a powerful long-lasting influence on us. Our friendship can have a life-changing impact on others.
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Some Practical Steps To Take

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- 1. Be intentional to sit with people in your small group and in church.
 - 2. Share your hobbies and sports with others. Do it together.
 - 3. Invite neighbors to your home. Have a neighborhood supper party.
 - 4. Host a small group Bible study or support group in your home.
 - 5. Take people with you when you do a service project.
 - 6. Don't just shake hands, have a conversation.
 - 7. Reconnect with friends when you travel across the country.
 - 8. Reconnect with out-of-town friends a few times a year – phone calls, visits or texts.
 - 9. Plan a party every month with friends and potential friends.