

### Scripture Text

Proverbs 17:17, 18:24, 27:5-6, 9, 17

### Context

The book of Proverbs gives 21st century Christians wisdom for their lives. It is part of God's plan to redeem man by providing the "skill in the art of godly living". The book of Proverbs is thematic in scope and is widely regarded as the pinnacle of the Bible's wisdom literature. It assumes and builds upon the law and prophets, but goes beyond them in training the reader to live wisely in a practical 'how to' way.

### Big Idea

A wise person is surrounded by good friends who live out the biblical version of friendship that is based upon our Trinitarian, relational God. True friends know and understand us, love us rightly, and graciously provide counsel and correction to us so that we can become all who God is making us to be. We are greatly empowered to live out this vision of friendship when we come to know the friendship of the Lord, through the selfless actions of Jesus who lays down his life for his friends.

### Sermon Outline

1. Uniqueness of Friendship
2. Component of Friendship
3. Path to rich Friendship

### Ice-breaker Question

- What is your idea of an ideal friend? What are some expectations you have of an ideal friendship?

### Observation and Meaning

Let's read Proverbs 17:17, 18:24

- What are these verses saying about a "friend", and its contrast with a "brother"?

Let's read Proverbs 27:5-6, 27:9

- Why do you think "open rebuke" and "wounds of a friend" are better than "hidden love"? Provide examples.
- Share about your experience of being given or giving "earnest counsel" and "wounds" in friendship.
- Why do we tend not to give earnest counsel to our friends?
- What are these verses telling us about a good friendship?

Let's read Proverbs 27:17

How is discipleship part of a healthy friendship, according to Proverbs 27:17?

### Getting to Christ

Let's read John 15:13-15

- What is the greatest love, according to this passage? How is that so?
- What is revealed in this passage about who God is? (John 15:14-15)
- How can we know that Jesus is the ultimate friend? (John 15:13)

### Application

- How does having Jesus as the ultimate friend help us to pursue and build friendship with one another?

## Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

### Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

### Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?

What is the situation of the author and of the readers?

Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?

Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

### Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.