

# Women of Grace

## Lesson 15 | Friendship

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*As we consider this week's lesson on the topic of friendship in the book of Proverbs, it's helpful to remember the purpose of the book, which is to gain wisdom and understanding and live skillfully (Proverbs 1:1–7).*

*“The word “proverb” means “to be like,” thus Proverbs is a book of comparisons between common, concrete images and life’s most profound truths. Proverbs are simple, moral statements (or illustrations) that highlight and teach fundamental realities about life. Solomon sought God’s wisdom (2 Chronicles 1:8–12) and offered “pithy sayings” designed to make men contemplate 1) the fear of God and 2) living by His wisdom (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10). The sum of this wisdom is personified in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30).”*

— John MacArthur, *Grace to You Bible Introductions, Proverbs*, gty.org

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*Memorization Verse*  
**James 1:18**

In the exercise of His will  
He brought us forth by the word of truth,  
so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

*Outline*

- I. The Blessings of Being and Having a Christian Friend
  - a. A Friend Loves at All Times
  - b. A Friend Prays at All Times
  - c. A Friend Encourages at All Times
  - d. A Friend Helps at All Times
- II. The Blessings of Being a Christian Friend to the Friendless and Unbeliever
- III. The Blessings of Having “The Best Friend of All”

### DAY 1 | The Blessings of Friendship

Read selected Scriptures

1. From last week's lesson or lecture, what truths regarding the sin of adultery or its opposite, fidelity or faithfulness, convicted or encouraged you? How did you apply these principles to your own life?

2. Use a dictionary to define the word “friend,” used throughout the book of Proverbs.
  
3. How do Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 and Acts 27:3 deepen your understanding of the blessings and need for friendship?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. According to Proverbs 18:1, why do people isolate themselves?
  - a. What are some specific reasons that you may be tempted to isolate yourself instead of investing in relationships? What steps can you take to fight against this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. How can you encourage others at your church to form and deepen friendships with other believers?

## DAY 2 | How to Be a Faithful Friend

Read Proverbs 27:1-22

1. In Proverbs 27:1–2, what instruction is given about seeking honor for oneself, and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. According to verses 3–6, what is a necessary element of good friendship?

- a. What negative emotion does this passage warn against? How does this relate to friendship?
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3. How do you respond when a friend corrects or rebukes you, and how should you respond? Try to find Scripture to help direct your response.
    - a. How do you give loving correction to your friends? List one or two practical steps you can take to grow in being a more faithful friend.
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4. Skim Proverbs 16 and 17. This section contrasts the righteous with the wicked, and also draws attention to the impact of one's word on friendships. According to 16:23–28 and 17:9, what types of speech characterize the wicked, and what effect does that have on their friendships?
    - a. Have you experienced the joy of having a friend who lovingly conceals your failures instead of speaking of them to others? How does this affect the quality of your friendship with that person?
    - b. Are you trustworthy in guarding the reputation of your friends instead of “repeating” matters (Proverbs 17:9)? What steps can you take to do this more faithfully?



4. Proverbs is replete with examples of the types of people believers are to avoid and not have as intimate friends. According to Proverbs 23:17–21, 24:21, and 27:12–16, what types of people are to be avoided?
  - a. Do you think these verses are teaching that we are never to interact with these people? (See also Matthew 9:10–13 and 1 Corinthians 5:9–13.)
  - b. What key factors should direct with whom believers develop relationships? Use Scripture to support your answer.

## DAY 4 | Iron Sharpening Iron

Read Proverbs 27:1-21 and selected Scripture

1. According to Proverbs 27:17, what is one benefit of friendship? What does this look like practically?
  - a. How does this kind of relationship between believers contrast to a friendship between unbelievers?
  - b. List other passages in Scripture that encourage you in how you are to sharpen your brothers and sisters in Christ.

2. The relationship between Jonathan and David provides a vivid example of the kind of support that believers are to provide for one another. According to 1 Samuel 18:1 and 23:15–18, how did Jonathan love and strengthen David? How can this instruct you in your own friendships?
  
3. Proverbs 27:18–22 concludes this section on friendship with maxims about evaluating righteousness. According to these verses, how do believers determine whether someone is righteous and a valuable friend or one who is foolish and should be avoided?
  
4. Take time to evaluate your own friendships and whether they encourage you to grow in Christlikeness or draw you away from Christ. What godly qualities in your friends would you like to emulate? What friendships do you need to avoid?

## DAY 5 | The Greatest Friend

Read John 15:12-17

1. In John 15:15, what does Jesus call those who love Him?
  - a. According to John 1:45–49, 12:13–15, and 18:33–37, what makes this friendship unique and worthy of our utmost attention?
  
  - b. For the believer, how does the knowledge that you are a friend of Jesus, the King, change your thinking and direct how you live each day?

2. From John 10:11, 15:13, and 19:1–30, how did Christ demonstrate His love for His friends?
  - a. How does meditating on this truth change your perspective on your circumstances?
  
3. Have you submitted your life to Jesus Christ in faith and repentance? If so, you now experience friendship with the King of Kings forever! Write a prayer of praise to the Lord in response to these great truths.