



May 30, 2021 | Wisdom for Relationships from the Book of Proverbs (Part 6) | David Liauw

**WARM-UP QUESTION:** Where do you turn first for wise counsel on life and relationships?

**READ:** Proverbs 18:24

**FOCUS:** True friendship is marked by intentionality, sustained by devotion and satisfied in Christ.

**OBSERVE:**

It is important to live wisely as a friend. The key to wise friendships, in light of the fear of the Lord, is to be a friend who is shaped by the gospel. In Proverbs 18:24, we learn that there is a difference between “companions” and “friends.” Indeed, a true friend can be relationally closer than even one’s biological family. Deuteronomy 13:6 refers to a close friend as one “who is as your own soul,” indicating that true friendship is:

- A binding commitment of love to one another
- Not a transactional “consumerist” relationship
- A closeness based on trust and vulnerability

True friendship is incredibly hard and is a growing rarity as our society is increasingly isolated. Many modern friendships are really just acquaintanceships. Many people are lonely, and social media has made this worse, trading deep communion for digital communication. We were made for true friendship in the image of God who exists in a triune fellowship of love.

**Jesus valued true friendship and lived in close fellowship with a tight circle of friends, inviting them into His most vulnerable moments of pain and emotional stress.**

- Sticking “closer than a brother” requires carefully cultivated intentionality. “Sticking” itself implies devotion (strong and constant) no matter what. Proverbs 18:24, 17:17
- True friendship also requires transparency and honesty. Proverbs 27:5-6
- Jesus intentionally initiates friendship with us and demonstrated this friendship by laying down his life for us. We were saved by and for friendship with Jesus. John 15:13, 15

**REFLECT:**

- Jesus’ friends forsook Him, but Jesus did not forsake them or us. He went to the cross for His friends, rose from the dead for His friends and still lovingly embraces us as His friends despite our infidelity towards Him. Are we forbearing with our friends? Sacrificial with our friends? Honest with our friends?

**TAKE ACTION:**

- This week, be intentional about spending time with friends. Talk face to face. Do things side by side. Eat together. Be an encourager. Be vulnerable. Talk about spiritually significant topics.
- Consider creating new social media habits this week. Tune into real-life friendships.

**PRAY:**

Jesus, thank You for laying down Your life for me in true friendship. Thank You for knowing me and loving me no matter what, because You are a true friend. Help me to be transformed by Your friendship so that I can be a true friend to others. We love You and pray this in Your name, Amen.

