

## Proverbs

### How Do I Win at Relationships?

**Big Idea:** Meaningful relationships start with God.

1. What is friendship to you? What do you expect out of friendships? Share some things you have learned about friendships over time.

2. Steadfast love sets the bar for relationships, and Jesus is the example.

#### **Proverbs 3:3-4**

*“Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. ‘So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.’”*

#### **Jesus is our Primary Example**

##### **John 15:13**

*“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”*

Share examples of how you have felt the steadfast love of Christ in your life. How have you felt that from others at times? How have you offered that kind of love to others? Discuss. (see also Proverbs 17:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

3. Here are some practical tips to foster meaningful relationships. Share examples of how you have experienced one of these, or what area you want to improve in:

#### **a. Ruling our Emotions- Proverbs 16:32**

“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”

#### **b. Ruling our Tongue- Proverbs 16:28b**

“...a gossip separates close friends.”

#### **c. Dealing with Offenses- Proverbs 17:9**

“Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.”

#### **d. Willing to Confront- Proverbs 27:6**

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.”

#### **e. Managing Friendships- Proverbs 18:24**

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

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Take a few moments of silence to pray individually about friendship. Is there anything God is revealing to you right now?

## How Do I Win at Relationships?

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### I. God is the Source

#### Proverbs 2:6

“For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity.”

**James 4:1 & 3-4** “What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is the source not your pleasures that wage war in your body’s parts? ... <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motives, so that you may spend *what you request* on your pleasures.<sup>4</sup>You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

### II. Steadfast Love is Foundational

#### Proverbs 3:3-4

“Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. <sup>4</sup>So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.”

### Jesus is our Primary Example

#### John 15:13

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

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#### John 13:1

“Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that His hour had come that He would depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”

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#### Proverbs 17:17

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

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#### Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: **10** If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

### III. Practical Tips to Foster Meaningful Friendships

#### A. Ruling our Emotions

##### Proverbs 16:32

“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”

#### B. Ruling our Tongue

##### Proverbs 16:28b

“...a gossip separates close friends.”

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##### Proverbs 11:13 (GN)

“No one who gossips can be trusted with a secret, but you can put confidence in someone who is trustworthy.”

#### C. Dealing with Offenses

##### Proverbs 17:9

“Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.”

#### D. Willing to Confront

##### Proverbs 27:6

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.”

#### E. Managing Friendships

##### Proverbs 18:24

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

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##### Proverbs 12:26

“The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.”

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