

Ancient wisdom that works today

Proverbs 13:20 Friends for Life

1. Friendship begins with God

- ‘The heart of God is friendship reaching out’ (R Ortlund)
- Ex 3 YHWH (I AM) ‘I will be with you’ Ex 3:12
- Ex 33:11 ‘The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to a friend.’
- John 15:15 ‘I have called you friends’
- God is saying “Let’s be friends. And let’s make more friends – wisely. (R Ortlund)
 - Proverbs 13:20 ‘He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.’
- A true friend knows who you really are and does not walk away. Proverbs 17:17 ‘A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.’

2. Friendship is challenging

- Proverbs 27:17 ‘Iron sharpens iron’
- Proverbs 27:6 ‘Faithful are the wounds of a friend
- Proverbs 24:26 ‘Whoever gives an honest answer kisses the lips.’
- There is a difference between hurting someone and harming them.

3. Keeping friends

- Proverbs 17:9 ‘Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.’
- Proverbs 11:12 ‘Whoever belittles a neighbour lacks sense, but a man of understanding remains silent.’
- Time together and times apart. Be wise! Proverbs 25:17

4. The best friend

- Real friends are not found in quantity but in quality!
- Proverbs 18:24 ‘There is friend who sticks closer than a brother.’
- John 15:13 ‘Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.

Digging Deeper

1. Describe one of the best friendships you've ever had.
2. How did your friend affect you and change you?
3. Proverbs 6: 16 – 19 describes seven characteristics of people to avoid having as friends. How can such people have a negative effect on us?
4. Think about the type of person you want to become, the character traits you would like to develop. Who do you know who exhibits those traits?
5. What steps could you take to get to know that person or persons better?
6. What stands out for you as important aspects of your friendship with Jesus? What would you like to develop further? Take time to talk with him about this?
7. What actions do you need to take to develop friends for life?