

## “The Powerful Influence of Friends”

### Introduction

- Friendship with God.  
*Friendship with God is the apex of all human relations. To be counted a friend of God is a worthy honor indeed.*

Exodus 33:11

And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. KJV<sup>1</sup>

James 2:23

And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

1 Cor 16:22 AMP

If anyone does not love the Lord [does not have a friendly affection for Him and is not kindly disposed toward Him], he shall be accursed! Our Lord will come! (Maranatha!)

- The Need for Human Company.

Genesis 2:18

And the LORD God said, **It is not good that the man should be alone**; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:21-25

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

- The Danger of the World.

James 4:4

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

### I. Evil Communications

#### 1. Corrupt Good Ethics

1 Corinthians 15:33 “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”

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<sup>1</sup> All references are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

*The word translated “manners” is the Greek word ethos, from which we get “ethics.” It means “moral conduct.” Evil associations degrade our moral conduct through process over time.*

2. Lead to Destruction

Proverbs 13:20

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

3. Judah’s History

A. Judah and Hirah the Adullamite – Gen 38:12-20

*Who’s corrupting who here? Hirah took the price of a prostitute to Tamar for Judah.*

B. Amnon and Jonadab – 2 Sam 13:3-15, 28-29

*Jonadab tells Amnon how to get his sister in a compromising situation. It leads to her rape and ultimately to Amnon’s death.*

C. Rehoboam and the companions of his youth – 1 Kings 12:1-17

*Because Rehoboam listened to the companions of his youth, he lost the kingdom.*

## II. Right Relationships

1. Friends and Sinners

A. The Law Against Corruptors

Deuteronomy 13:6-11

6 If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;

7 Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;

8 Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him:

9 But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

10 And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

11 And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you.

B. A Friend of Sinners

Matthew 11:19

The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

C. From Such Turn Away

2 Timothy 3:1-7

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Titus 3:10-11

10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

Matthew 18:15-17

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

2. What Is a "Good" Friend?

A. One Who Keeps Us Accountable

Proverbs 27:5-6

5 Open rebuke is better than secret love.

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

Proverbs 27:17

17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

B. One that Gives Us Wise Counsel

Proverbs 27:9-10

9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.

C. One that Is Willing to Die for Us

Proverbs 18:24

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

John 15:13-15

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

### 3. Girlfriend / Boyfriend

#### A. Focusing on the Lord

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

32 But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

#### B. Defined by Family

Matthew 12:46-50

46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

1 Timothy 5:1-2

1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

#### C. Who's Your Mate?

Song of Solomon 5:16

His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

### III. Friendship and Marriage

#### 1. The Danger of Fantasy

Ezek 23:11-17

- 11 "Yet even though Oholibah saw what had happened to Oholah, her sister, she followed right in her footsteps. And she was even more depraved, abandoning herself to her lust and prostitution.
- 12 She fawned over her Assyrian neighbors, those handsome young men on fine horses, those captains and commanders in handsome uniforms — all of them desirable.
- 13 I saw the way she was going, defiling herself just like her older sister.
- 14 "Then she carried her prostitution even further. She fell in love with pictures that were painted on a wall — pictures of Babylonian military officers, outfitted in striking red uniforms.
- 15 Handsome belts encircled their waists, and flowing turbans crowned their heads. They were dressed like chariot officers from the land of Babylonia.
- 16 When she saw these paintings, she longed to give herself to them, so she sent messengers to Babylonia to invite them to come to her.
- 17 So they came and committed adultery with her, defiling her in the bed of love. But later, she became disgusted with them and broke off their relationship. NLT

Matthew 5:28

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

#### 2. Defrauding by Flirtation

##### A. To Flirt – A Definition

“To amuse oneself in playful amorousness; play lightly or teasingly at courtship.”

##### B. Defraud Not

1 Corinthians 7:5

Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

C. Vessels of Honor

2 Timothy 2:20-22

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

3. The Wedding Supper of the Lamb

A. The Marriage of God

Isaiah 54:5

For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Isaiah 62:5

For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

B. The Need for Chastity

2 Corinthians 11:2-3

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Hebrews 4:15

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

C. The Wonderful Mystery

Ephesians 5:25-32

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Revelation 19:7-9

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

### **Conclusion**

*The only wise friendships are those that bring us closer to God.*