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Proverbs Part 4

"Proverbs: Friends and Family"

Pastor Gary Hamrick

God has wired us to be social beings, and studies show that loneliness and isolation are detrimental to our well-being. Thankfully, the book of Proverbs offers a lot of advice about relationships, including how we should treat our family and how to wisely choose our friends. In this message Pastor Gary will help us understand more about the biblical theme of friends and family.

We Need Relationships

1. There have been quite a number of studies done, which demonstrate that loneliness and isolation are detrimental to our wellbeing.
2. It's clearly revealed to us in the Bible that we need relationships with other people.
 - a. **Genesis 2:18** - *"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'"*
3. "Being connected to others socially is widely considered a fundamental human need; crucial to both well-being and survival. Extreme examples show infants in custodial care who lack human contact fail to thrive and often die... Yet an increasing portion of the U.S. population now experiences isolation regularly."¹
4. "The second study, involving 70 studies representing more than 3.4 million individuals primarily from North America but also from Europe, Asia and Australia, examined the role that social isolation, loneliness or living alone might have on mortality. Researchers found that all three had a significant and equal effect on the risk of premature death, one that was equal to or exceeded the

¹ <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/08/lonely-die.aspx>

effect of other well-accepted risk factors such as obesity.”²

5. An AARP study found that an estimated 42.6 million adults who are 45 years of age or older, suffer from chronic isolation.³
6. A 2017 study was published “in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, [in which] researchers at the University of Pittsburgh reported the results they received when they surveyed 1,787 people between the ages of 19 and 32 on social media use and feelings of social isolation. Among the results, they found that young people who use social media 58 times or more per week had three times higher odds of experiencing social isolation than those who use social media nine times a week or fewer.”⁴
7. Pastor Gary said: “... the evidence is that even though we’ve become more socially connected - in terms of technology - technology cannot and will never replace the human need for touch and interaction. We are wired this way. God has created us as social beings. We need each other! We need each other in personal relationships and friendships. We need each other face to face, [and] side by side... [God] has created us... to experience friendship, and love, and connection on a deep interpersonal relationship... Relationships are tricky, because relationships and friendships take risk, [and] they take a certain level of transparency, [and] vulnerability... [The] wonderful thing about relationships [is that they] are richly rewarding. The downside of relationships [is that] they can be messy!”

Marriage

8. **Proverbs 18:22** - “*He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.*”
9. **Proverbs 19:14** - “*Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.*”
10. **Proverbs 31:10** - “*A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.*”

² <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/08/lonely-die.aspx>

³ https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys_statistics/general/2013/infographics/Loneliness-One-Pager-AARP-res-gen.pdf

⁴ <https://www.inverse.com/article/28671-social-media-isolation-millennials>

11. [Proverbs 21:19](#) - *“Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife.”*
12. Pastor Gary commented on the fact that the book of Proverbs doesn't have even one verse about men being “a good catch!”

Family - Advice To Parents - Love By Correction

13. [Proverbs 13:24](#) - *“He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.”*
14. [Proverbs 22:15](#) - *“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.”*
15. Pastor Gary said: “If you choose to discipline your children [by spanking] ... never [spank] your kids when you're angry, [and] never inflict injury... Always follow up with hugs and words of love.”

Family - Advice To Parents - Love By Instruction

16. [Proverbs 13:1](#) - *“A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke.”*
17. [Proverbs 22:6](#) - *“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”*
 - a. Pastor Gary commented on the fact that this verse is one of the truisms of the Bible, which he spent quite a lot of time covering in part one of his seven-part 2017-2018 series in the book of Proverbs.

Family - Advice To Parents - Love By Demonstration

18. [Proverbs 20:7](#) - *“The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him.”*

Family - Advice To Children

19. [Proverbs 15:20](#) - *“A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish man despises his mother.”*
20. [Proverbs 6:20-21](#) - *“My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever...”*

Friends - A Good Friend Is A Good Influence

21. **Proverbs 23:20-21** - *“Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.”*

Friends - A Good Friend Is A Wise Example

22. **Proverbs 13:20** - *“He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.”*

Friends - A Good Friend Speaks The Truth

23. **Proverbs 27:5-6** - *“Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.”⁵*

Friends - A Good Friend Is There Through “Thick And Thin”

24. **Proverbs 17:17** - *“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”*

Friends - A Good Friend Keeps Your Confidence

25. **Proverbs 16:28** - *“A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.”*

Friends - A Good Friend Sharpens You

26. **Proverbs 27:17** - *“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*
27. Pastor Gary said: “Is someone a better person because of your friendship? Are you a better person because of the friends you’ve chosen? Now, iron sharpening iron, means that there’s friction. In every friendship and every relationship there’s going to be a little friction. Sparks fly when iron sharpens iron, but if at the end of the day, you can realize that that friction actually helped [you] to become a better person, and that the friction that [you] inflicted [on] someone actually helped them to become a sharper person [or] a better person, then that’s a true friend.”

⁵ Pastor Gary said this verse is actually a prophetic Scripture about Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus.

Friends – A Good Friend Forgives Easily

28. **Proverbs 17:9** – *“He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.”*

The One True And Reliable Friend

29. **Proverbs 18:24** – *“A man of many companions may come to ruin, **but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.**”* (Emphasis added)
30. Pastor Gary said: “It is better to have one true, trusted friend, than a multitude of unreliable [friends], and that one true, and trusted friend that everyone needs to have, is Jesus, because he will never disappoint you. People, humanly speaking, will [disappoint us], [but] Jesus will never disappoint you. Jesus will never forsake you. [Jesus] will never abandon you. He will be there in good times and bad times. He is that friend *‘who sticks closer than a brother.’*”
- a. **John 15:13** – *“Greater love has no one than this, than he lay down his life for his friends.”*
31. Pastor Gary said: “Jesus needs to be, if he isn’t already, your greatest best friend.”
32. Pastor Gary shared the account of Joseph Scriven, who wrote the hymn: *What a Friend We Have in Jesus.*⁶

Discussion Questions

1. Read **Proverbs 27:9-10** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Spend time talking about the studies Pastor Gary mentioned concerning our need for relationships and the influence technology is having which is an impediment to healthy relationships. (See #1 through #7 above).
3. Read and discuss the Scriptures Pastor Gary shared concerning marriage. (See #8 through #12 above)
4. Read and discuss the Scriptures concerning advice to parents and children. (See #13 through #20 above)
5. Read and discuss the Scriptures concerning advice about friends. (See #21 through #28 above)

⁶ https://hymnary.org/text/what_a_friend_we_have_in_jesus_all_our_s

6. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about Jesus being their one true friend.
7. Option: Encourage everyone in your group to join in singing the Joseph Scriven's hymn, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*.
8. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).