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No. 1

FRIENDSHIP FIRST™

DOCUMENT:

New Testament

LIVING IN FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD AND OTHERS

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

Group
Loveland, Colorado



New Living
Translation®
SECOND EDITION



Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
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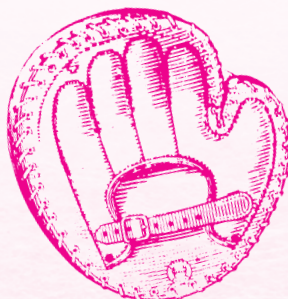
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*To our Friends:*

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004 and is reflected in this edition of the New Living Translation.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world. The resulting translation is easy-to-read and understand, while also accurately communicating the meaning and content of the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose text especially good for study and devotional reading and to be read aloud in public worship.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the latest biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will communicate God's Word powerfully to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that God will use it to speak his timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh, new way.

~ Tyndale House Publishers
July 2004



Friendship First™ NEW TESTAMENT



You're about to embark on a journey of the heart. We designed this *Friendship First™ New Testament* to give you a glimpse on Earth of what a friendship with God is all about.

God made us.

And he made us to be in relationship with him and others.

We all long to experience the richness of relationships. We wonder: What is it like to really know God? How can we understand what a true connection with the Creator of the universe must be like? What must we do to really “get it”?

Someone once asked Jesus a question. It was meant to be a stumper. Yet Jesus' reply put our lives and relationships in perspective. In Matthew 22:36 someone asks, “Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” (In other words, boil everything down to something simple so I can understand what I'm supposed to do.)

In a stunning display of simplicity, Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Simply love God and love others.

Jesus lets us in on the secret of a fulfilling life. We need to be in relationship.

God gave us a picture of what it means to be in relationship with him. In experiencing healthy friendships with other people, we get a glimpse of a real friendship with God. For example, when a new friend accepts us—warts and all—we get a small indication of God's unconditional acceptance and grace.

God gave us permission to look at our relationship with him as a friendship. In John 15:15, he says, “I no longer call you slaves...Now you are my friends.” The relationship moves from a boss/subordinate relationship to a unique friendship.



We've had God's Word for thousands of years. "In the beginning the Word already existed," we read in John 1:1. But God chose to make his Word more personal, more relational. "So the Word became human and made his home among us" (John 1:14).

Some view the Bible as a textbook. They pursue faith in God as a subject to be mastered—such as geology, physics, or history. But when "the Word became human," we see that God isn't looking for mere readers of text. He's looking for friends.

The Bible you're holding in your hand is unlike any other Bible. It's designed to show you the ultimate joy and fulfillment in connecting with

God. It's not a heady, academic, informational exercise but a journey of the heart—a transformational experience. The New Living Translation communicates more like an intimate letter between friends than a dry textbook. And the additional material throughout this book helps you make the connection between befriending others and befriending God.

Jump in. Accept the invitation and become a friend of God.

Thom Schultz

Joani Schultz

Mark D. Taylor

"You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

~ Jesus (Matthew 22:37-39)



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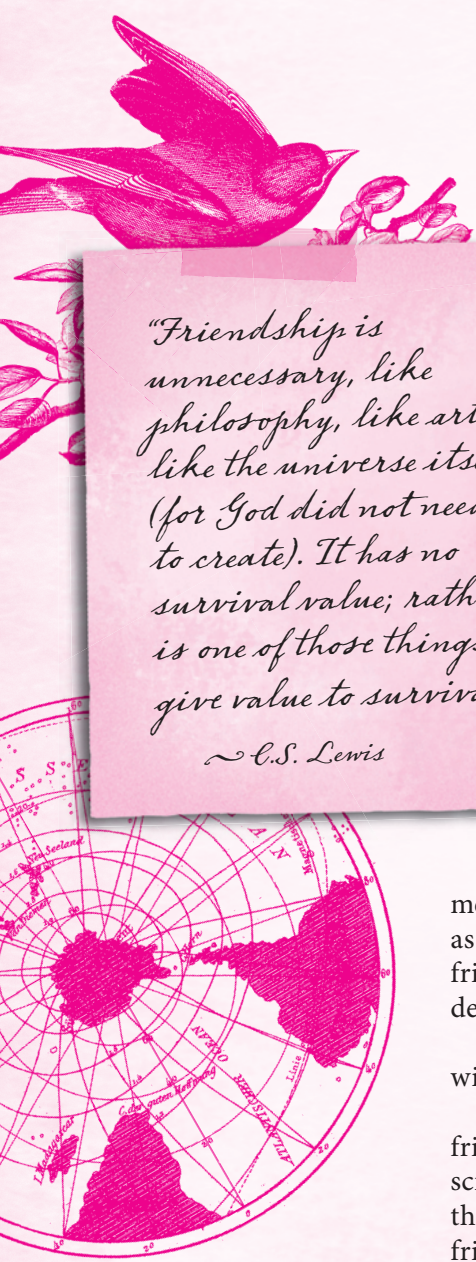
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WHAT'S IN STORE WITH THE *Friendship First* NEW TESTAMENT?



"Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art, like the universe itself (for God did not need to create). It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival."

~ C.S. Lewis

It's about friendship. Friendship with God. Friendship with others.

It's about authentic community. Where people can be themselves and share life, laughter, tears—companionship.

It's about life...and how much better it is with friendships.

Everyone hungers for friendship—in fact, God designed us that way!

God wants you to have friendships with others and with him.

And the truth is, friendships with God and others look a lot alike. A friendship with God may seem like some sort of impossible, intangible, impractical idea...but it's not. Friendship with God is within reach; it's as real and enjoyable as friendship with another person. God made us to be friends with him, just as God made us to have meaningful friendships with other people. In fact, our friendships with people are the greatest metaphor for our friendship with God. Just as you spend time with friends talking and hanging out, God desires to spend time with us and be in conversation with us. Just as it's important to trust a friend—to be open and honest—it's important to trust God and be vulnerable with him. God is still *God*—mysterious, powerful, infinite—but that doesn't

mean you can't engage in a friendship with God. It won't be *exactly* the same as your friendships with people—especially considering that God is the *perfect* friend—but there will be similarities, and those similarities can help you grow deeper friendships with God and with others.

But how do you have authentic, intimate, *lasting* friendships with people and with God? You know, the kinds of friendships that "give value to survival"?

Well, you've picked up the right book! Consider it your field guide to friendship—what you need to start, build, and keep valuable friendships. With scriptural insights, practical advice, and real ways to *experience* friendship, this *Friendship First New Testament* will help you reach new levels in your friendships with others and with God.



The Friendship Guide



Five Types of Friendship

Six Layers of Friendship

	NEIGHBORS	HARD-TO-LOVE PEOPLE	FAMILY	FRIENDS	JESUS
GETTING ACQUAINTED (greeting and engaging in small talk)	Luke 10:25-37 (The Good Samaritan)	Acts 9:10-19a (Saul and Ananias)	2 Timothy 1:5-7 (Generational Faith)	John 1:35-50 (Calling of the First Disciples)	John 4:1-30 (The Woman at the Well)
ACCEPTANCE (reaching out and listening)	James 2:1-13 (A Warning Against Prejudice)	Acts 9:19b-28 (Barnabas Accepts Saul)	Luke 15:11-31 (The Parable of the Prodigal Son)	Mark 2:13-17 (The Calling of Levi)	John 1:10-14 (Yet to All Who Receive Him...)
TRUST (opening up, being transparent, sharing confidences)	Acts 27:13-44 (Paul Encourages the Sailors)	Ephesians 2:11-22 (Gentiles and Jews Are One in Christ)	Luke 1:39-45 (Mary Visits Elizabeth)	Mark 2:1-12 (Four Friends Help a Paralytic)	Matthew 14:22-36 (Peter Walks on Water)
DEEPENING (showing affection, revealing emotions, working through conflict, forgiving)	Ephesians 4:25-32 (Living as Children of Light)	Matthew 5:38-48 (Love Your Enemies)	Matthew 18:21-35 (The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant)	Acts 15:36-41 (Paul and Barnabas' Disagreement)	Mark 14:66-72 (Peter Disowns Jesus)
COMPANIONSHIP (cooperating and spending quality time together)	Romans 12:9-18 (Rejoice With Those Who Rejoice)	2 Corinthians 2:5-11 (Forgiveness for the Sinner)	Ephesians 5:31-6:4 (Spirit-Guided Family Relationships)	John 13:1-17 (The Last Supper)	Luke 10:38-42 (Martha and Mary)
COMMITMENT (serving, sacrificing, and sharing)	1 Corinthians 13:1-7 (The Love Chapter)	Luke 19:1-10 (Jesus and Zacchaeus)	1 Timothy 5:3-8 (Take Care of Your Family)	John 15:12-17 (Love Each Other as I've Loved You)	Matthew 28:16-20 (The Great Commission)

Useful Directions

SCENARIO #1

He did it again! You slam your door shut as you walk into the house. You're so sick of dealing with him. He doesn't care about your projects. He doesn't seem to notice that it bothers you when he makes those snide comments. You're thinking about calling in sick just so you don't have to be *near* him.

We all have them—those hard-to-love people who can make our lives miserable. But the truth is, God loves those people...and he has called you to love them, too.

So when you need help **accepting** those **hard-to-love people**, here's what you do: Run your finger down the "Hard-to-Love People" column (under *Friendship Types*) and across the "Acceptance" column (under *Friendship Layers*)...and when your fingers meet...well, that's the box you're looking for. Inside the box you'll find a reference to an Anchor Passage.

That passage and its accompanying feature are going to get you started on some powerful experiences and insights that will help you accept hard-to-love people.

Five Types of Friendship

	NEIGHBORS	HARD-TO-LOVE PEOPLE	FAMILY	FRIENDS	JESUS
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Six Layers of Friendship



SCENARIO #2

Your small group is on a mission. You want to learn to fully accept people. You want to be a reflection of God's love and acceptance to your co-workers, family, and friends.

What's the first step? Where do you begin?

How about with your neighbors?

As a small group, go through the experiences connected with the "Acceptance" and "Neighbors" box. You'll get practical ideas for accepting the people with whom you live and work...and learning to become better friends with them.

And once your small group has gone through that box, move on to the "Acceptance" and "Hard-to-Love" box, and then the "Acceptance" and "Family" box...You get the idea!

Six Layers of Friendship

Five Types of Friendship

	NEIGHBORS	HARD-TO-LOVE PEOPLE	FAMILY	FRIENDS	JESUS
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SCENARIO #3

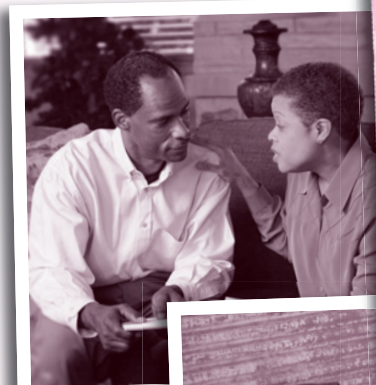
Your friend doesn't know much about the Bible or about Jesus, but she has come to you with questions. You're not sure where to begin, but you desperately want your friend to know Jesus...to become *friends* with him. You ask her if she's willing to meet with you once a week to talk. She says she is...so you give her a *Friendship First New Testament* and tell her to

read through the experiences for the "Jesus" and "Getting Acquainted" box. You set up a time next week to talk about it.

After a few weeks of working through the experiences in the "Jesus" column, your friend is beginning to understand. She tells you that she never realized having a friendship with Jesus could be so *easy*, so *natural*. "I never thought it would be like a real friendship, but it is. It's kind of like being friends with you," she says.

Five Types of Friendship

	NEIGHBORS	HARD-TO-LOVE PEOPLE	FAMILY	FRIENDS	JESUS
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*"Christ did not
lay down his life
for us as enemies
so that we should
remain enemies,
but so that he could
make us friends."*

~ Thomas Aquinas



WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THE

Friendship First NEW TESTAMENT

LOOK INSIDE each box of the Friendship Guide to see a Scripture reference. That Scripture reference is the Anchor Passage for that topic. It's the launching point for your study into that topic. When you flip to the page with the Anchor Passage, you'll find a highlighted section of Scripture as well as a reading and experience in the margin of that page.

READ IT. Soak up every word. Delight in fresh glimpses of God and people as you read the Scripture passage and the accompanying text. You'll see how the passage relates to the Friendship Type and Friendship Layer you're exploring. You'll also find great—and *practical*—ideas for living out that friendship in your life.

EPHESIANS 4

PAGE 374



Anchor Passage

Passage Ephesians 4:25-32

FRIENDSHIP TYPE

Neighbors

FRIENDSHIP LAYER

Deepening

Getting Messy

Write on a piece of paper five things that could break a relationship apart.

Remember the old parental adage "if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all"? Good advice, but not God's advice. **Ephesians 4:25-32** is God's advice—go ahead, read it right now.

At first glance this passage may sound like a parent's laundry list of the "don'ts" for proper behavior. Don't lie, don't be angry, and stop saying bad things! Your heavenly Father *is* trying to teach you the don'ts, but his real desire is to teach you the do's: *Do* be useful to others, *do* be kind and compassionate, and *do* forgive others as Christ has forgiven you!

Great advice...but hard to do in the heat of an argument, when your emotions are on high and your judgment is, well...at a low. It's during those times, though, that you have your greatest opportunity for *building* that friendship...or *destroying* it.

In order to build it, you have to really dig in and learn to love as God loves—even when it's tough. You have to forgive as he forgives. You have to build others up instead of tearing them down. You have to bless them instead of cursing them. You have to be tenderhearted instead of hardhearted. And here's the good news: God's power can help you do these tough things.

When it comes to deepening in friendship with your neighbors, you can't always avoid the messes. But there's a reward for getting your hands dirty and learning to work through the conflicts: a deeper friendship that lasts!

Anchor Passage continues on page 375...

Friendship First NEW TESTAMENT

and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Living as Children of Light

¹⁷With the Lord's authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. ¹⁸Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. ¹⁹They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

²⁰But that isn't what you learned about Christ. ²¹Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, ²²throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. ²³Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. ²⁴Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.



²⁵So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. ²⁶And "don't sin by letting anger control you." ²⁷Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

²⁸If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. ²⁹Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

³⁰And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit

4:26 Ps 4:4.

★ Anchor Passages ★

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EPHESIANS 5

by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own,* guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.

³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior.

³²Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. ‡

CHAPTER 5

Living in the Light

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. ²Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us* and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

³Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. ⁴Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. ⁵You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshipping the things of this world.

⁶Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. ⁷Don't participate in the things these people do. ⁸For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! ⁹For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true.

¹⁰Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. ¹²It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. ¹³But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, ¹⁴for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said,

"Awake, O sleeper,
rise up from the dead,
and Christ will give you light."

Living by the Spirit's Power

¹⁵So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. ¹⁶Make the most of every opportunity in these

4:30 Or has put his seal on you. 5:2 Some manuscripts read loved you.

Anchor Passage continued from page 374...



Experience

Take your list of things that could break apart a relationship, and tear it into pieces. Use tape to reassemble the pieces in the shape of a building. As you build, identify each piece of tape as something that could repair a friendship.

Choose a neighbor in your life whom you've had trouble getting along with but would like to deepen your relationship with. Pick one of the do's from **Ephesians 4:25-32** that would help you build that deeper friendship...and do it! (And don't be afraid of making a mess!)



Reflect

- ★ What friendship troubles are you having right now?
- ★ Underline the specific things from the Scripture passage that can help you deal with the relationship messes in your life. How can those words help you deepen your friendships?

DIGGING DEEPER

FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

Neighbors

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Deepening

For deepening in friendship with your neighbors, check out...

- The Friendship Experience on page 387
- The Friendship Story on page 502
- What to Say and What Not to Say on page 391

Friendship First NEW TESTAMENT

DO IT. Don't just read it and move on. Accept the challenge. Then go out and *experience* friendship in everyday, down-to-earth ways. *Live out* the lessons of Scripture.

REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCES. Use the questions at the end of the Anchor Passage and the journal space around it to jot down your thoughts regarding the Scripture, the insights you've gained, and the experiences you've had.

MOVE ON. At the end of each Anchor Passage is a "Digging Deeper" box that will direct you to more experiences, stories, and laughs! The "Digging Deeper" section will help you find the *Friendship Experience*, *Friendship Story*, and *What to Say and What Not to Say* related to the topic you're studying within the Friendship Guide.

★ Friendship Experiences ★

Experience friendship—with people and with God. The *Friendship Experiences* offer you the opportunity to dig deeper into the type of friendship and layer of friendship you're exploring.

Relevant, practical challenges for experiencing friendship will help you see the connection between friendship with others and friendship with God.

A photo scavenger hunt. A prayer walk. A Saturday at the homeless shelter. A long hike with an old friend. Sometimes the experiences

are quick and easy. Sometimes they're intense and challenging. But they're always inspiring... and they'll always help you grow your friendships!

These fellowship activities will help you create meaningful experiences—shared memories—of each type of friendship and at every layer of friendship...both with your friends and with God.

Experience the connection between friendship with others and friendship with God.

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FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE

FRIENDSHIP TYPE: *Neighbors*
FRIENDSHIP LAYER: *Acceptance*

Smash Through

We often blame prejudice on ignorance. And that's certainly part of the problem but not all of it—there are plenty of educated people who are also highly prejudiced. And nearly everyone has some level of prejudice.


Many who are free from racial prejudice harbor religious prejudice. Others make judgments about people based on what they've heard from family, from the media, or even (sadly) at church.

Prejudice is usually the result of an indulgence in stereotypes and a refusal to get to know a person or group of people.

Sure, education is great, and it may help a little, but the best cure for judgment and prejudice is exposure. It's tough to hate someone you truly know and understand.

Getting to know someone is the first step toward acceptance. If there's a person or a group you struggle with, try getting to know them. Your efforts might turn people you dislike or fear into friends. And remember, God loves those people...deeply.

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE continues on page 451...



Friendship First NEW TESTAMENT

7So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. 9Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. 10Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.

Warning against Judging Others

11Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters.* If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. 12God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor?

Warning about Self-Confidence

13Look here, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit." 14How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone. 15What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that." 16Otherwise you are boasting about your own plans, and all such boasting is evil. 17Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.

CHAPTER 5

Warning to the Rich

Look here, you rich people: Weep and groan with anguish because of all the terrible troubles ahead of you. 2Your wealth is rotting away, and your fine clothes are moth-eaten rags. 3Your gold and silver have become worthless. The very wealth you were counting on will eat away your flesh like fire. This treasure you have accumulated will stand as evidence against you on the day of judgment. 4For listen! Hear the cries of the field workers whom you have cheated of their pay. The wages you held back cry out against you. The cries of those who harvest your fields have reached the ears of the LORD of Heaven's Armies. 5You have spent your years on earth in luxury, satisfying your every desire. You have fattened yourselves for the day of slaughter. 6You have condemned and killed innocent people,* who do not resist you."

54a Or killed the righteous One. 54b Or Don't they roast you or doest? God oppose you? or Aren't they now accusing you before God? 55 Greek brothers; also in 5:9, 10, 12, 19.

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FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE continues from page 450...

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE


THE ONE THING YOU CAN DO TODAY

Experience

Begin by being really honest with yourself. There is likely a certain type of person you avoid, are afraid of, don't like, or feel uncomfortable around. Do you hold hidden prejudice against a race? a social or economic group? people without education? people with certain interests or behaviors?

Make an effort to get to know that race, group, or type of person. Perhaps you can start up a conversation with someone during lunch or a break at work. If you don't have direct contact with that type of person, gain exposure by learning about them. Read about their history. Search for stories about respected men and women who share the same race, economic background, or level of education.

Virtually every people group and demographic has been reached by the message of Jesus at some level. Check with a mission agency or missions program to find out what God is doing with different groups of people around the world. For the ultimate exposure, go on a mission trip and learn more (remember, a mission trip doesn't have to be to a foreign country; it could be to the inner city, a rural area, or another state).



ter. 6You have condemned and killed innocent people,* who do not resist you."

Patience and Endurance

7Dear brothers and sisters,* be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. 8You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.

9Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door! 10For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy.

12But most of all, my brothers and sisters, never take an oath, by heaven or earth or anything else. Just say a simple yes or no, so that you will not sin and be condemned.

The Power of Prayer

13Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. 14Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. 15Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. 16Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. 17Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! 18Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.

Restore Wandering Believers

19My dear brothers and sisters, if someone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back, 20you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

54a Or killed the righteous One. 54b Or Don't they roast you or doest? God oppose you? or Aren't they now accusing you before God? 55 Greek brothers; also in 5:9, 10, 12, 19.

★ *What to Say and What Not to Say* ★

They're funny. They're witty. They're entertaining.

They're nuggets of truth that you can't ignore.

Each *What to Say and What Not to Say* is jam-packed with fun, practical, often hilarious tips on what to say and do—and what *not* to say or do—in everyday situations.

Ever been annoyed by a friend who talks with his mouth full? Or what about a family member

who always asks for money? Have you ever been invited to a party you *didn't* want to attend?

We all face awkward situations like that. And a lot of the time, we don't know what to say or do. We stumble through and hope we come out looking OK...and that we don't offend anyone.

The *What to Say and What Not to Say* readings will make you laugh, but they'll also give you practical insights into social appropriateness and loving responses.

1 CORINTHIANS 1

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WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY

FRINDSHIP TIP: *Neighbors* FRINDSHIP LINK: *Commitment*

Test Your Commitment

Answer the following questions to see how committed you are to your neighbors!

1. A certain fellow walks his dog by your house every day and allows his animal to do its business on your lawn. You would:

- Follow him home to learn where he lives, and deliver his dog's "business" on his front porch when he isn't looking.
- Leave a container of plastic bags near the sidewalk with a sign that yells, "CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR BEAST!!"
- Get to know the fellow by visiting with him when he passes by. Treat him with the respect you'd like him to show you, with the hope of one day growing a friendship.

2. Your child plays on a sports team with another child whose parent yells at all the other players to get with it, win the game or else! You would:

- Send around a petition to get the parent kicked off the field.
- Ask the screaming parent to step out back and see who's really tough and who's all hot air.
- Ask God to help you have patience and love for the parent, and attempt to sit near the parent at games to offer kind, calm words and a gentle example.

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY continues on page 321...

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1 CORINTHIANS 5

PAGE 321

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY continued from page 320...

3. Your co-worker keeps eating your lunch. You even found the empty wrappers in the trash can by the culprit's desk. The best thing to do would be:

- Draw and hang up a picture of a pig with an arrow pointing toward the thief.
- Confront the co-worker in front of everyone, producing the evidence from the trash can to prove your point.
- Bring extra, and offer some to your co-worker.

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

★ If you answered A or B to the questions, then you'd best go read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 a few more times. If you wanted to answer A or B, but knew C was best...well, then you're on your way to knowing how to show love to your neighbors.

WHAT TO SAY:

★ If it was a cinch to go with C every time, then great job! Keep up the good work—go out there and show 'em how to love one another as God calls you to!

CHAPTER 5
Paul Condemns Spiritual Pride

I can hardly believe the report about the sexual immorality going on among you—something that even pagans don't do. I am told that a man in your church is living in sin with his

of your leaders at the expense of another.⁷ For what gives you the right to make such a judgment? What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?

⁸You think you already have everything you need. You think you are already rich. You have begun to reign in God's kingdom without us! I wish you really were reigning already, for then we would be reigning with you.⁹ Instead, I sometimes think God has put us apostles on display, like prisoners of war at the end of a victor's parade, condemned to die. We have become a spectacle to the entire world—to people and angels alike.

¹⁰Our dedication to Christ makes us look like fools, but you claim to be so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are so powerful! You are honored, but we are ridiculed.¹¹ Even now we go hungry and thirsty, and we don't have enough clothes to keep warm. We are often beaten and have no home.¹² We work wearily with our own hands to earn our living. We bless those who curse us. We are patient with those who abuse us.¹³ We appeal gently when evil things are said about us. Yet we are treated like the world's garbage, like everybody's trash—right up to the present moment.

¹⁴I am not writing these things to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children.¹⁵ For even if you had ten thousand others to teach you about Christ, you have only one spiritual father. For I became your father in Christ Jesus when I preached the Good News to you.¹⁶ So I urge you to imitate me.

¹⁷That's why I have sent Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of how I follow Christ Jesus, just as I teach in all the churches wherever I go.

¹⁸Some of you have become arrogant, thinking I will not visit you again.¹⁹ But I will come—and soon—if the Lord lets me, and then I'll find out whether these arrogant people just give pretentious speeches or whether they really have God's power.

²⁰For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power.²¹ Which do you choose? Should I come with a rod to punish you, or should I come with love and a gentle spirit?

CHAPTER 5
Paul Condemns Spiritual Pride

I can hardly believe the report about the sexual immorality going on among you—something that even pagans don't do. I am told that a man in your church is living in sin with his

3:16 Or among. 3:19 Job 5:13. 3:20 Ps 94:11. 3:22 Greek Cephas. 4:6a Greek Brothers. 4:6b Or If you learn not to go beyond "what is written."

Friendship First NEW TESTAMENT

★ Extra! Extra! ★

Insightful thoughts and quotes on friendship.

"There is always an intangible something which makes a friend, it is not what he does, but what he is."

~ Oswald Chambers

Old Testament wisdom on friendships with others and with God.

"Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends."

~ Proverbs 17:9

Statistics revealing the connection between faith and friendship.

★
"Pass the cheesecake, please..."

Of those surveyed, **71%** said they have **developed friendships** with others in church over a **shared meal** or meals.

—from "Friendship and Faith," a Gallup Research Study
Commissioned by Group Publishing, Inc.

JOURNAL

Journal space to record your reflections, insights, and discoveries as you study and experience your *Friendship First New Testament*.

More Scripture passages on friendship in the Friendship Reading Plan on page 512. Check it out, and follow the plan with a friend this year!

HOW TO BE A FRIEND TO NEIGHBORS

- **MARK 10:35-45** (Jesus teaches us to serve others.)

How to Use This New Testament

It's for small-group Bible study.

It's for weekly get-togethers with a friend.

It's for personal devotions.

It's all three—and more!

This Friendship Guide is endlessly versatile and creative. It can be used with your small group, with a friend, and in your own reflection times. Study down a column, study across a row, or study a box as it's needed in your life. Go through a box a week or a feature a day, or just grab it when you need it!

It doesn't matter how you use this New Testament; what matters is how you *live* it.

We're called to true friendship with God and with the people around us. The two greatest commandments God has given us (Matthew 22:37-39)?

Love God.

Love people.

So what are you waiting for? The promises of authentic friendship are just pages away...



The New Testament



Matthew

ENTRY

AUTHOR:

Matthew (Levi)

DATE WRITTEN:

Approximately A.D. 60–65

JOURNAL

CHAPTER 1

The Ancestors of the Messiah

This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David* and of Abraham:

- ² Abraham was the father of Isaac.
Isaac was the father of Jacob.
Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.
- ³ Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar).
Perez was the father of Hezron.
Hezron was the father of Ram.*
- ⁴ Ram was the father of Amminadab.
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.
Nahshon was the father of Salmon.
- ⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab).
Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth).
Obed was the father of Jesse.
- ⁶ Jesse was the father of King David.
David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah).
- ⁷ Solomon was the father of Rehoboam.
Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.
Abijah was the father of Asa.*
- ⁸ Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat.
Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram.*
Jehoram was the father* of Uzziah.
- ⁹ Uzziah was the father of Jotham.
Jotham was the father of Ahaz.
Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.

1:1 Greek *Jesus the Messiah, son of David*. 1:3 Greek *Aram*, a variant spelling of Ram; also in 1:4. See 1 Chr 2:9–10. 1:7 Greek *Asaph*, a variant spelling of Asa; also in 1:8. See 1 Chr 3:10. 1:8a Greek *Joram*, a variant spelling of Jehoram; also in 1:8b. See 1 Kgs 22:50 and note at 1 Chr 3:11. 1:8b Or *ancestor*; also in 1:11.

- ¹⁰ Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh.
Manasseh was the father of Amon.*
Amon was the father of Josiah.
- ¹¹ Josiah was the father of Jehoiachin* and his brothers
(born at the time of the exile to Babylon).
- ¹² After the Babylonian exile:
Jehoiachin was the father of Shealtiel.
Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel.
- ¹³ Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud.
Abiud was the father of Eliakim.
Eliakim was the father of Azor.
- ¹⁴ Azor was the father of Zadok.
Zadok was the father of Akim.
Akim was the father of Eliud.
- ¹⁵ Eliud was the father of Eleazar.
Eleazar was the father of Matthan.
Matthan was the father of Jacob.
- ¹⁶ Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.
Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

¹⁷All those listed above include fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah.

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

¹⁸This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement* quietly.

²⁰As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus,* for he will save his people from their sins.”

²²All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet:

- ²³ “Look! The virgin will conceive a child!
She will give birth to a son,

1:10 Greek Amos, a variant spelling of Amon; also in 1:10b. See 1 Chr 3:14. 1:11 Greek Jeconiah, a variant spelling of Jehoiachin; also in 1:12. See 2 Kgs 24:6 and note at 1 Chr 3:16. 1:19 Greek to divorce her. 1:21 Jesus means “The LORD saves.”

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE

FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

Family

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Deepening

Patterned Forgiveness

Ever been forgiven for something really big?
How did you feel after being forgiven? Grateful?
Undeserving? Resentful? Guilty?

Consider this: The feelings you have when you are forgiven can affect your own ability and willingness to forgive others.

If you’re grateful for forgiveness, you’re quick to give it away. If you feel undeserving of forgiveness, you might try to pay it off and then expect the same from others. If you’re resentful of forgiveness, you might withhold it from people you love. If you still feel guilty, even after being forgiven, then you may be unable to completely forgive someone else.

Read **Matthew 18:21-35**, and consider how the servant might have felt when his huge debt was forgiven. Why do you think he, after receiving such lavish forgiveness, turned around and refused to forgive his fellow servant?

Was he simply ungrateful and incredibly stingy? Or did he feel guilty and want to push his guilt onto someone else? Or maybe he still felt he should pay off his debt to the king and wanted to begin collecting the money.

How do you receive forgiveness?

It has a lot to do with how you forgive others.

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE continues on page 4...



Friendship First NEW TESTAMENT

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE *continued from page 3...***Experience**

Get together with one or more family members. Ask everyone to make two lists: one list of times you forgave someone in your family (remember when he wrecked your car?) and one list of times you received forgiveness from someone in your family (how about when you forgot that birthday?).

Finish the list, and then write down one feeling you associate with each event.

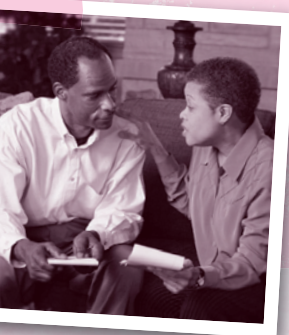
Gratitude? Anger? Sadness? Guilt? Relief?

Talk about your lists. Are they filled with positive or negative words? Is anyone still hurting? Is anyone holding a grudge? Or have you mostly moved on?

Discuss this: How do you think these feelings reflect your ability to give and receive forgiveness—from God and others? How can you, as a family, grow in giving and receiving forgiveness?

Maybe you can remind each other that forgiveness comes with no

strings attached. Or perhaps you can pray together each day and thank God for his perfect forgiveness.

**Reflect**

- ★ How do you think God wants you to feel toward the forgiveness he offers? How can that attitude enable you to give and receive forgiveness from others?
- ★ Why is forgiveness an important part of deepening the friendships in your family?



and they will call him Immanuel,* which means ‘God is with us.’”

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. ²⁵But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

Visitors from the East

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men* from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ²“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose,* and we have come to worship him.”

³King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. ⁴He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote:

⁶ ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities* of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. ⁸Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

⁹After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! ¹¹They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

1:23 Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10 (Greek version). 2:1 Or royal astrologers; Greek reads magi; also in 2:7, 16. 2:2 Or star in the east. 2:6a Greek the rulers. 2:6b Mic 5:2; 2 Sam 5:2.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,” the angel said. “Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, ¹⁵and they stayed there until Herod’s death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: “I called my Son out of Egypt.”*

¹⁶Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first appearance. ¹⁷Herod’s brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ “A cry was heard in Ramah—
weeping and great mourning.
Rachel weeps for her children,
refusing to be comforted,
for they are dead.”*

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. ²⁰“Get up!” the angel said. “Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead.”

²¹So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. ²²But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod’s son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. ²³So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

CHAPTER 3

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, ²“Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”* ³The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said,

“He is a voice shouting in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the LORD’s coming!
Clear the road for him!’”*

2:15 Hos 11:1. 2:18 Jer 31:15. 3:2 Or *has come, or is coming soon.* 3:3 Isa 40:3 (Greek version).

*“To err is human,
to forgive divine.”*
~ Alexander Pope



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⁴John's clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁵People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. ⁶And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize,* he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming wrath?"

⁸Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. ⁹Don't just say to each other, "We're safe, for we are descendants of Abraham." That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. ¹⁰Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"I baptize with* water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.* ¹²He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire."

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. ¹⁴But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"

¹⁵But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.*" So John agreed to baptize him.

¹⁶After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened* and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

CHAPTER 4

The Temptation of Jesus

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. ²For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry.

3:7 Or coming to be baptized. 3:11a Or in. 3:11b Or in the Holy Spirit and in fire. 3:15 Or for we must fulfill all righteousness. 3:16 Some manuscripts read opened to him.

³During that time the devil* came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.”

⁴But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say,

‘People do not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’*”

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, ⁶and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say,

‘He will order his angels to protect you.
And they will hold you up with their hands
so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’*”

⁷Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the LORD your God.’*”

⁸Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

⁹“I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.”

¹⁰“Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say,

‘You must worship the LORD your God
and serve only him.’*”

¹¹Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

The Ministry of Jesus Begins

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee. ¹³He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴This fulfilled what God said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵ “In the land of Zebulun and of Naphtali,
beside the sea, beyond the Jordan River,
in Galilee where so many Gentiles live,

¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light.

And for those who lived in the land where death casts
its shadow,
a light has shined.”*

4:3 Greek the tempter. 4:4 Deut 8:3. 4:6 Ps 91:11-12. 4:7 Deut 6:16. 4:10 Deut 6:13. 4:15-16 Isa 9:1-2 (Greek version).

WHAT TO SAY

AND

WHAT NOT TO SAY

FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

Jesus

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Commitment

Do I Have To?

The Scene: You’re driving to a friend’s house with the dinner you just picked up for everyone to share. You won’t be late if you hit all green lights...though it’s not like that ever happens. And sure enough, the car in front of you is the last one to get through on yellow. You sigh and mutter, drum your fingers on the wheel, and think about what movie you and your friends will go to tonight. Suddenly, it occurs to you that nobody checked theater times yet. Instantly irritated, you reach for your cell phone...and lock eyes with a man standing on the corner next to your car. He’s holding a cardboard sign with a plea for food, for any kind of help. The man’s legs are bent at an unnatural angle, and he looks like he’s in pain. A woman and three small children sit nearby. It looks as if they have only one duffel bag between them and that they’ve been on that corner for a while. Hungry. Hurting. Suddenly, you have the very distinct feeling that God’s saying something to you...



WHAT NOT TO SAY:

- ★ “Who, me? No way; what would we do about dinner? Besides, I have to get reimbursed for this stuff.”
- ★ “But I’m not really sure what I could even do to help...OK, what about if I pass some change through the window? Looks like I have quite a few pennies here...”
- ★ “You’re right, Lord—I can help. If I say a quick prayer while I’m driving, I’m sure that would do a lot of good. Right? I’m sure somebody else will come by soon and help out anyway.”

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY continues on page 8...

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY *continued from page 7...*



WHAT TO SAY:

- ★ “Thank you, Jesus, for the ways you love all of us. I pray you would help me share your love with this family as an overflow of my friendship with you.”
- ★ “Jesus, I have to admit that I’m angry. And sad. And confused. It’s hard to understand why these people would be in such a painful situation. Please relieve their suffering. Please also be with me as I go talk to them. Show me what to say and do.”
- ★ “Jesus, thank you for blessing this food. It’s a small gift, but please use it in the way you want.”



“For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me...I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!”

—Jesus (Matthew 25:35-36, 40)

¹⁷From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.*”

The First Disciples

¹⁸One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. ¹⁹Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” ²⁰And they left their nets at once and followed him.

²¹A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. ²²They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

Crowds Follow Jesus

²³Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. ²⁴News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon possessed or epileptic or paralyzed—he healed them all. ²⁵Large crowds followed him wherever he went—people from Galilee, the Ten Towns,* Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River.

CHAPTER 5

The Sermon on the Mount

One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, ²and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

- ³ “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,*
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- ⁴ God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ God blesses those who are humble,
for they will inherit the whole earth.
- ⁶ God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,*
for they will be satisfied.

4:17 Or has come, or is coming soon. 4:25 Greek Decapolis. 5:3 Greek poor in spirit. 5:6 Or for righteousness.

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⁷ God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.

⁹ God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.

¹⁰ God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

¹¹“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you* and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. ¹²Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Teaching about Salt and Light

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. ¹⁵No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Teaching about the Law

17“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. 18I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. 19So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

²⁰“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

Teaching about Anger

²¹“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’”

5:11 Some manuscripts omit *and lie about you*. 5:21 Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17.

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²²But I say, if you are even angry with someone,* you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot,* you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone,* you are in danger of the fires of hell.*

²³“So if you are presenting a sacrifice* at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

²⁵“When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.*

Teaching about Adultery

²⁷“You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’* ²⁸But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹So if your eye—even your good eye*—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your hand—even your stronger hand*—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

Teaching about Divorce

³¹“You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’* ³²But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.

Teaching about Vows

³³“You have also heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the LORD.’* ³⁴But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, ‘By heaven!’ because heaven is God’s throne. ³⁵And do not say, ‘By the earth!’ because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, ‘By Jerusalem!’ for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. ³⁶Do not even say, ‘By my head!’ for you can’t turn one hair

5:22a Some manuscripts add *without cause*. 5:22b Greek uses an Aramaic term of contempt: *If you say to your brother, ‘Raca.’* 5:22c Greek *if you say, ‘You fool.’* 5:22d Greek *Gehenna*; also in 5:29, 30. 5:23 Greek *gift*; also in 5:24. 5:26 Greek *the last kodrantes* [i.e., quadrans]. 5:27 Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18. 5:29 Greek *your right eye*. 5:30 Greek *your right hand*. 5:31 Deut 24:1. 5:33 Num 30:2.

white or black. ³⁷Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will,’ or ‘No, I won’t.’ Anything beyond this is from the evil one.



Teaching about Revenge

³⁸“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’* ³⁹But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. ⁴⁰If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. ⁴¹If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile,* carry it two miles. ⁴²Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.

Teaching about Love for Enemies

⁴³“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’* and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say, love your enemies!* Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷If you are kind only to your friends,* how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. ⁴⁸But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect. ⚓

CHAPTER 6

Teaching about Giving to the Needy

“Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ²When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

5:38 Greek the law that says: ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21. 5:41 Greek milion [4,854 feet or 1,478 meters]. 5:43 Lev 19:18. 5:44 Some manuscripts add Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you. Compare Luke 6:27-28. 5:47 Greek your brothers.



Anchor Passage

PASSAGE: Matthew 5:38-48

FRIENDSHIP TYPE: Hard-to-Love People

FRIENDSHIP LAYER: Deepening

Sure...Be Glad To

Think about the last time you hiked a mile.

Read **Matthew 5:38-48**.

Hey, you think you have annoying people in *your* life?

Consider this: In Jesus’ day, Roman soldiers could legally demand that civilians carry their packs for one Roman mile—approximately 4,854 feet.

Picture dragging yourself home after a long day at the carpentry shop when—*wham*—a soldier grabs you by the shoulder and you’re hiking a mile out of your way hauling a fully loaded pack. And do you get a tip or a thank you?

All you get is the opportunity to hike back to where you started.

Annoying? You bet. The Romans not only conquer your country and tax you for the privilege but also make you haul their stuff all over the countryside.

Note what Jesus recommends in this situation: Go a second mile. *Voluntarily*.

Jesus isn’t encouraging his people to become doormats for Roman abuse. Rather, he’s encouraging his followers to adopt God’s outlook when it comes to loving others.

God is absolutely *surrounded* by annoying people. People who call only when they want something. Who whine. Who are disobedient. Who sin.

You know—people like *us*.

Yet God continues to give...to answer...to love.

What to do with annoying people? We could do nothing and hope they’ll go away. Eventually they will, but that’s not what Jesus calls us to do.

Anchor Passage continues on page 12...



Anchor Passage continued from page 11...

We could do only what's absolutely required, teeth clenched and game face on, and then feel noble about an hour spent listening or 10 bucks passed to someone in need.

Or we could open up our hearts and lives, treating others the way God treats us. To not only endure annoying people but seek to deepen our relationship with them.

"Be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Experience

You could use some exercise, right? Ask that co-worker or neighbor who's annoying you to join you for a brief, refreshing hike during a break in your day. Ask open-ended questions to get to know the person better. And if God uses the time to open doors or to remove some barriers, go the second mile—twice around the block!

Anchor Passage continues on page 13...



Teaching about Prayer and Fasting

⁵"When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

⁷"When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! ⁹Pray like this:

- Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.
¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.
¹¹ Give us today the food we need,*
¹² and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.
¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation,*
but rescue us from the evil one.*

¹⁴"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

¹⁶"And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Teaching about Money and Possessions

¹⁹"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

^{6:11} Or Give us today our food for the day; or Give us today our food for tomorrow. ^{6:13a} Or And keep us from being tested. ^{6:13b} Or from evil. Some manuscripts add For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



²²“Your eye is a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light. ²³But when your eye is bad, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

24“**No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.**

²⁵“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸“And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, ²⁹yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ ³²These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³Seek the Kingdom of God* above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴“So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

CHAPTER 7

Do Not Judge Others

“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. ²For you will be treated as you treat others.* The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.*

³“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye* when you have a log in your own? ⁴How can you think of saying to your friend,* ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye.

6:33 Some manuscripts do not include *of God*. 7:2a Or *For God will judge you as you judge others*. 7:2b Or *The measure you give will be the measure you get back*. 7:3 Greek *your brother's eye*; also in 7:5. 7:4 Greek *your brother*.

Anchor Passage continued from page 12...

Reflect

- ★ What's your default attitude toward adding a voluntary second mile to an obligatory first mile? Why?
- ★ Who's gone a "second mile" for you? How did it impact you?
- ★ In what ways did God use the voluntary second mile to improve your relationship with that "hard-to-love" person?

DIGGING DEEPER

FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

Hard-to-Love People

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Deepening

For deepening your friendship with hard-to-love people, check out...

- The Friendship Experience on page 43
- The Friendship Story on page 49
- What to Say and What Not to Say on page 25

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Friendship Reading Plan

Check out these Scripture passages for more insights on friendship!

HOW TO BE A FRIEND TO NEIGHBORS

- **MARK 10:35-45** (Jesus teaches us to serve others.)
- **ACTS 6:1-7** (The early church chooses seven men to serve.)
- **ACTS 10:1-48** (God's grace extends equally to the Gentiles.)
- **ACTS 17:1-21** (Paul preaches in various locations.)
- **ACTS 18:1-3** (Paul meets Priscilla and Aquila.)
- **ACTS 28:7-10** (Paul gets acquainted with Publius.)
- **1 THESSALONIANS 5:11-15** (Encourage one another.)
- **1 PETER 3:8-12** (Live together in harmony.)

HOW TO BE A FRIEND TO HARD-TO-LOVE PEOPLE

- **LUKE 16:19-31** (Jesus tells a parable of a rich man and Lazarus.)
- **ACTS 16:16-36** (Paul and Silas help the jailer.)
- **2 CORINTHIANS 6:3-13** (We are called to love others despite what they've done to us.)
- **COLOSSIANS 1:15-23** (We are hard to love.)

HOW TO BE A FRIEND TO FAMILY

- **COLOSSIANS 3:18-21** (Paul gives instructions for Christian households.)
- **2 CORINTHIANS 6:14-18** (Don't team up with unbelievers.)

HOW TO BE A FRIEND TO FRIENDS

- **MATTHEW 17:1-13** (Jesus takes his friends to witness the Transfiguration.)
- **MARK 14:32-42** (Jesus takes his friends to pray with him in Gethsemane.)
- **LUKE 24:13-34** (Two friends travel together after the Resurrection.)

- **JOHN 21:1-14** (Disciples fish together after the Resurrection.)
- **ACTS 2:42-47** (The believers experience fellowship together.)
- **ACTS 4:32-37** (The believers share their possessions.)
- **ACTS 12:6-17** (Peter's friends pray for him while he is in prison.)
- **ACTS 13:13-16, 42-44** (Paul encourages the believers.)
- **ACTS 18:24-28** (Priscilla and Aquila instruct Apollos.)
- **ACTS 20:36-21:19** (Paul parts with his friends.)
- **ACTS 28:11-31** (Paul gets acquainted with the Jewish leaders in Rome.)
- **ROMANS 14:1-13** (Accept those believers who are weak in faith.)
- **1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-31** (The church is like a body with many parts.)
- **GALATIANS 6:1-10** (Carry each other's burdens.)
- **COLOSSIANS 3:8-17** (Live in peace with other believers.)
- **HEBREWS 10:23-25** (Don't quit meeting together.)
- **1 JOHN 3:11-18** (Love one another.)
- **1 JOHN 4:9-12** (Love each other as God loves us.)

HOW TO BE A FRIEND TO JESUS

- **MATTHEW 16:13-17** (Peter confesses his belief in Jesus.)
- **MARK 5:21-43** (Jesus heals those who come to him.)
- **JOHN 21:15-19** (Jesus forgives Peter.)
- **LUKE 18:18-30** (The rich young ruler chooses not to trust Jesus.)
- **JOHN 20:24-29** (Jesus appears to Thomas.)
- **LUKE 18:9-14** (Jesus tells a parable of a Pharisee and a tax collector.)
- **LUKE 7:36-50** (Jesus is anointed by a sinful woman.)

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★ NEIGHBORS ★

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FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

★ **HARD-TO-LOVE PEOPLE** ★

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Getting Acquainted***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Acts 9:10-19a (Saul and Ananias), page 242**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 235**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 231**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 239

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Acceptance***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Acts 9:19b-28 (Barnabas Accepts Saul), page 245**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 227**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 251**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 418

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Trust***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Ephesians 2:11-22 (Gentiles and Jews Are One in Christ), page 371**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 507**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 483**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 486

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Deepening***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Matthew 5:38-48 (Love Your Enemies), page 11**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 43**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 49**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 25

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Companionship***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 (Forgiveness for the Sinner), page 343**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 351**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 357**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 354

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Commitment***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Luke 19:1-10 (Jesus and Zacchaeus), page 159**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 165**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 173**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 367

FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

★ FAMILY ★

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Getting Acquainted

ANCHOR PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 1:5-7 (Generational Faith), page 411
FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 415
FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 471
WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 467

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Acceptance

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Luke 15:11-32 (The Parable of the Prodigal Son), page 153
FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 129
FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 381
WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 384

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Trust

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Luke 1:39-45 (Mary Visits Elizabeth), page 109
FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 113
FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 347
WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 121

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Deepening

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Matthew 18:21-35 (The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant), page 39
FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 3
FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 510
WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 55

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Companionship

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Ephesians 5:31–6:4 (Spirit-Guided Family Relationships), page 377
FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 493
FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 497
WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 500

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Commitment

ANCHOR PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 5:3-8 (Take Care of Your Family), page 406
FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 409
FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 441
WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 404



FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

★ FRIENDS ★

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Getting Acquainted***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** John 1:35-51 (Calling of the First Disciples), page 180**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 203**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 311**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 314

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Acceptance***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Mark 2:13-17 (The Calling of Levi), page 71**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 95**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 79**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 340

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Trust***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Mark 2:1-12 (Four Friends Help a Paralytic), page 68**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 83**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 394**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 397

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Deepening***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** Acts 15:36-41 (Paul and Barnabas' Disagreement), page 259**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 263**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 269**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 400

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Companionship***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** John 13:1-17 (The Last Supper), page 207**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 223**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 433**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 438

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

*Commitment***ANCHOR PASSAGE:** John 15:12-17 (Love Each Other as I've Loved You), page 213**FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE:** page 197**FRIENDSHIP STORY:** page 293**WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY:** page 289

FRIENDSHIP TYPE:

★ JESUS ★

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Getting Acquainted

ANCHOR PASSAGE: John 4:1-30 (The Woman at the Well), page 183

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 189

FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 425

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 430

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Acceptance

ANCHOR PASSAGE: John 1:10-14 (Yet to All Who Receive Him...), page 177

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 193

FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 489

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 481

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Trust

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Matthew 14:22-36 (Peter Walks on Water), page 33

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 21

FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 15

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FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Deepening

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Mark 14:66-72 (Peter Disowns Jesus), page 103

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 75

FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 337

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FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Companionship

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Luke 10:38-42 (Martha and Mary), page 141

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 145

FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 364

WHAT TO SAY AND WHAT NOT TO SAY: page 361

FRIENDSHIP LAYER:

Commitment

ANCHOR PASSAGE: Matthew 28:16-20 (The Great Commission), page 65

FRIENDSHIP EXPERIENCE: page 59

FRIENDSHIP STORY: page 29

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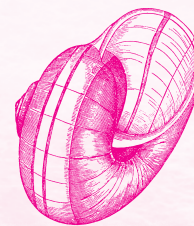
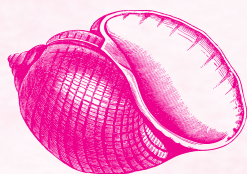


Friends

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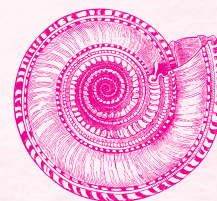
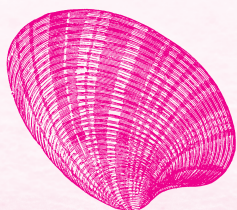
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Friends

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