Wise Friendships

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[0:00] A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity. One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Seldom set foot in your neighbour's house. Too much of you, and they will hate you. Like one who takes away a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on a wound, is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.
Like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death, is one who deceives their neighbour and says, I was only joking. Better is an open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.
Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice. If anyone loudly blesses their neighbour early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse.
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. Whoever rebukes a person will in the end gain favour, rather than one who has a flattering tongue.
[1:21] Those who flatter their neighbours are spreading nets for their feet. And finally, the words of Jesus. Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends. For everything that I learned from my Father, I have made known to you.
This is the word of the Lord. Thanks, Katrina, for reading. And we're going to look at those proverbs together now.
So if you're a child and you want to just sort of see what's going on and be part of things, if you want to come to the front now, you might want to bring a grown-up with you, or you might not. You might just want to come to the front.
Without my own children here, I do need some help. So a small amount of help. So a few children would be great. Brilliant.
[2:26] Thank you. Okay, and I'll just give these out to a few of you, and then you can help me. Each one's got a number on. So if I just give these out to a few people, and then when it's your number, you can come and help me by holding those up for me.

Let's ask for God's help as we turn to his word. Heavenly Father, thank you that you give wisdom to us when we ask. Thank you for Jesus, that he is your wisdom, your truth, your living word.
Please help us to grow in our wisdom. Help us so that we can be better friends with you and better friends with others. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, we all know that we need friends, don't we? And if you were alive 50 years ago, there was the song. If I, if I, you see, you'll see this, children. If I say to the grown-ups, if I ask, Do you need anybody?
I need somebody to love. That's because they all know the song. I get by with a little help from my friends. And for me, a man hanging on for dear life to my late 30s, I was part of the friends generation.
[3:38] And for perhaps people a little bit younger than me, and older, but younger than me, there's Facebook friends, and how many Facebook friends do you have? And then maybe for children, there's how many BFFs do you have?

Best friends forever, and you're my BFF, and today you're not my BFF. But we all, we all care about, about friendships. So we need to get wisdom about friendship. And I don't know who's got number one.
Who's got sheet number one? Is anyone? Brilliant. Thanks, Emily. So if you come over, and if you just, can you just untape it for me? Do you think it's just taped together? Do you think we can peel

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that off? Maybe I've done too good a job.
Shall I try and help? There we go. We could just do it. It's okay. Wow, what a good job. Okay, so if you open that up, and you hold that out for us, our first point is that true friendship is crucial.
Crucial. It's really important. And we've got a verse on the screen, a proverb. Proverb, one who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
[4:50] So according to this proverb, maybe you can have a think as you look at that proverb. What happens to you if you have friends that are not reliable? Friends that are not really your friends.

You see that? You come to ruin. One who has unreliable friends comes to ruin. That's what it says. So instead, we need to have good friends in our life.
It's crucial. So maybe you could think of a friend that you've had before or a friend that you still have and ask yourself, what makes them a good friend? Why do you think their friendship is special? Maybe we can talk, just talk to your neighbor for a minute and maybe think, what makes someone a good friend? What do you like about your friends? You don't have to stand up the whole time.
I'll tell you when you can sit down, don't worry. Thank you for holding that up for me, Emily. What do you think? Do you have... What do you think is nice about your friends? They're kind, darling.
[5:51] Yeah. Absolutely, they're kind. Yeah. They're caring, aren't they? Yeah. Brilliant. Brilliant. Anything else you can think of? Share their toys.

Oh, yeah, totally. Okay, well, let's come back together.
Hopefully you can keep those conversations going, though, as we meet after coffee at the end of the service. But just as important of thinking, what's good about my friends or what do I want in a friend is thinking, how can I be a good friend to others?
If you're a good friend to others, you'll have good friends. So back to our proverb. We know that we need good friends. What sort of friends are we looking for? We're looking for friends who stick closer than a brother or a sister.
So that's our second point. Can someone help me? Has anyone got number two? And, Emily, you can sit down if you like, just to, because you'll have to get up again at the end. Thanks so much. Okay, well done, Hannah.
[7:08] So, brilliant. We'll open that up. Thanks, Hannah. So true friendship is constant. Verse on the screen, I'm going to read it.

A friend loves at all times. And a brother is born for a time of adversity. So you might have, I don't have a brother, but you might have a brother, a family member, who would be there when things are hard.
But actually, a friend's there all the time. A friend loves at all times. A friend is there for you in good times and in bad. Now, that's what made me and the people kind of my age bracket.
The friends generation. The TV show Friends, the theme song said, I'll be there for you when the rain starts to pour. I'll be there for you because you're there for me too.
But the reality is that we have to work hard to have friends like that. You can live in a city like Glasgow and pass lots of people every day and have people living near you in your street or in your close, in your tenement block, and actually not really know anybody.
[8:09] Or you can go online and you can find pretend friends that are not really there for you. Facebook friends are not going to be there for you when things are hard. Or another problem is you can watch TV and you can have substitute friends.

So the tragedy for me of being a child of the Friends TV show was Monica and Ross and Chandler became my friends, really. And for lots of us, but what's wrong with that?
They're not real people, okay? But I thought, I've got friends. I've got Ross, he'll be there for me. Of course he won't be there for me, Joey. We knew them better than we knew real people.
But for our real friends, we need to be there for them. A friend loves at all times. And that means maybe laying the foundations in your life now with two or three people through shared interest and spending time together so that when things are difficult, your friends can be there for you.
They can be a constant friend. You can't just think, I need a constant friend and go around saying, I want a friend. You've got to lay foundations and nurture a friendship. We're on to our next one.
[9:18] Who's got number three? Thanks, Hannah. You have a seat. And then Sam. Yeah, you've got it ready. Well done. Brilliant. Brilliant. This is our third thing about friends.

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True friendship is careful. Brilliant. Proverbs 25, 20. You may sing songs to a troubled heart, but that's like taking a coat away on a cold day.
It's like pouring vinegar on a wound. I know this guy, Johnny Giles. He plays football. He's a footballer. And he was playing last season one night on a cold day, a cold night.
And he saw a boy in the crowd watching who was really cold watching during the warm-up. So he went back into the changing room, Johnny, and he got his spare really big thick coat.
And he took it and he gave it to the boy. That's a picture of the boy wearing Johnny's spare coat.
But just imagine if it had been the other way around. Imagine if Johnny had seen a boy wrapped in a thick coat and gone and taken it off him and left him freezing so that he could be nice and warm.
[10:23] It would be so wrong to see that. Now, what this proverb is saying is that if your friend is troubled, if they're sad, and you just say, well, let me tell you what a great day I've had.

In fact, let me sing you some songs about how happy I am. It shows you don't really care about them. It'd be like taking a coat off someone who's cold. And real friendship is not like that.
Real friendship is careful. Now, sometimes you do need to cheer a friend up, don't you? You can be there to sort of help them to think more happily. But you don't do that by ignoring their problems.
We see a great picture of that kind of friendship in the Toy Story films. How many of you have seen Toy Story 4 yet? Anyone gone to see it yet? More grown-ups than children, I think.
But that's an interesting thing. Okay. The Toy Story films. Now, I love the Toy Story films. But they're not really about toys. The theme's right there in Randy Newman's opening song, isn't it?
[11:20] We'll just have a clip. Let's just play. Today again, Woody. You're my favourite deputy.

You got a friend in me. You got a friend in me. Come on, let's wrangle up the cattle. When the road looks rough ahead And you're miles and miles Look, no nice warm thing Round them up, cowboy Just remember what your old pal said Boy, you got a friend in me Yee-haw!
Yeah, you got a friend in me Hey, cowboy The rest. Maybe when you get home. But in Toy Story, the best friend of all is Woody.
Woody the toy. He's the best friend to the children who have him And he's the best friend to the other toys. But in the first movie, that was the whole point Is that Woody had to learn how to be a good friend. He didn't really care for other people and other toys.
It was only when the talking space ranger With built-in laser Buzz Lightyear arrived Woody had to learn to become a good friend. And the way that he was a good friend Is he never lets his friends down.
[12:34] He cares for them. So he puts himself on the line He gives things up for them And in the newest film, he's there Helping the other toys find new owners And he's giving up things for them. And real friendship is a bit like that.

It's careful. You think about how your friend is feeling. When they're sad, you feel a bit sad Because they're sad. When they're happy, you feel happy together. You enjoy it. True friendship is careful.
So let me ask grown-ups at this point Is there someone That as you think about how friendship should be careful Is there someone in your life That the spirit's just prompting you to move towards today?
That someone who you need to be more caring for You have an opportunity to see how they are And be there for them. But sometimes when you really love someone Being a true friend can also mean Saying things that actually make them feel a bit sad Because they need to hear the truth.
So that's our next point about friendship. Who's got number four? Are we up to number four now? Brilliant. Anna, if you come up. Brilliant.
[13:39] Thanks. True friendship is Candid. Candid means truthful. Telling the truth. But truthful doesn't begin with a That's the problem. True friendship is candid.

Proverbs 27.6 Wounds from a friend can be trusted. Oh, wounds from a friend can be trusted. But an enemy kisses you many times. So sometimes a friend warns you And sometimes a friend even hurts you.
They wound you. Not actually hurting your flesh, your body But saying words that are painful They sort of hurt you inside. And that's because they're telling you the truth Because you need to hear it.
So you see this go wrong all the time. How many of you ever seen the TV show X Factor? Have you seen X Factor? You don't know what it's about? In X Factor, people go on And try and show that they've got the X Factor That they can be a star They can be an amazing singer and dancer And in the early rounds You get these people who come on And it's painful because you realise No

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one's ever told them that they can't sing.
And so they get up and they sing in front of the judges And the judges say, you're terrible. You don't have the X Factor. In fact, you should never have auditioned. And sometimes they say to the judges No, you're wrong.
[14:54] I'm going to prove you wrong. And you think, what's going on here? And then they go out and they see their friends And their friends hug them and say Don't listen to the judges. You're amazing. And you realise they're not being a true friend To that person.

You need to be honest with friends sometimes. And in the same way We need to be good friends to others. Sometimes that means telling the truth. As long as it's kind. As long as it's kind for them And they need to hear it.
Saying, I love you So I need to tell you this. You shouldn't You don't look good in that. Or you shouldn't train for that job. Or the way that you There's this thing about the way that you talk to people That people find difficult.
Real friends are honest Because we care more about the person Even than we do about our friendship with them. We want them to grow And be the people God made them to be. That's how we care about them.
So our fifth point's a bit like it. Thanks Annie. Do you want to grab a seat for a minute? And who's got number five? Has anyone got number five? Ollie's got it. Great, thanks. If we just open that up.
[15:58] Yeah. True friendship gives counsel Just think Just listen to this next proverb Think what's special about friendship Perfume and incense Bring joy to your heart And the sweetness of a friend Comes from their honest advice Sweetness Does anyone here like sweet things?

Anyone like honey? Do you like honey? I love honey Anyone like sweets? The precious thing That's as good as that About a friend Is when they give you honest advice When they help you When they care more about your holiness Than your happiness And they give you good advice They point you in the right direction For life So those are the points About how to be a good friend And what to look for In a friend True friendship is crucial It's constant It's careful It's candid It's truthful Even when it's painful As long as it's kind And it gives counsel Honest advice Now as we hear that We might be thinking two things One is longing One is thinking I wish I had A friend like that Or more More friends like that Another thing we might be feeling Is sadness thinking You know I wish I'd been More of a friend like that To other people I've not managed to be As good a friend as that
To other people And that's That's our final point So Ollie Just grab a seat for a minute Thanks It's true friendship And Christ This is where we get the power To be a friend like that The night before Jesus died He shared a meal With his friends And he said this to them He said Here is my command Love one another Just as I have loved you No one has greater love Than the one who gives their life For their friends You are my friends If you do what I command I do not call you slaves anymore Slaves don't know their master's business Instead I have called you friends Now this week We got a new prime minister Did you see that?
Do you know who our new prime minister is? It's Boris Johnson And one of the things That came out in the news About Boris Johnson Was that when he was at school One of the things he said was That his dream Was to be the king Of the whole world I don't know if any of you Dream of that for yourself That you could be the king Of the world Well I tell you what If that man was king Of the whole world It would be a complete disaster Okay And if I was king Of the whole world It would be a disaster It's the same for any of us Any of us But thankfully That's a role That's already been taken By a wonderful king Jesus And yet incredibly Jesus Who's king of the world Calls his followers His friends And when you discover What a good friend Jesus is It gives you the strength To be a good friend To others Let's just look again At our headings I wonder if you could Come forward one more time Guys who've got the sheets And just hold them up again For people to see And we'll think about them
Together one last time And let's put them In some kind of order So Crucial Emily If you go over here That's brilliant And hold that nice and high And then we'll put This one here Anna if you go Next to Emily Okay And then we're going to put Sam next Brilliant And then And then you guys Swap round Brilliant Thanks Anna Brilliant Thank you Okay So we're just going to Think about them again Just hold them nice and high True friendship Is crucial And think about Jesus' friendship It's the friendship We were made for It couldn't be more Crucial than that True friendship Is candid True friends Tell us the truth And Jesus Came to tell us The most important Truth We'll ever hear That we've got a disease In our hearts Called sin And it's a problem So big That one of the things It does

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to you Is you can't even see it You can't even see Your sin problem So he came to [20:05] Tell us about it And he told people The truth Because he loved them Even when they They put him to death For that truth But what about this True friendship Is careful That's our next one And the verse We looked at Was about wounds From a friend Because they care for us Wounds from a friend Can be trusted But an enemy Multiplies kisses But you know When Jesus told us The truth about our sin The wounds Fell on him The wounds Were on his hands And feet As he went To the cross So our sin Had to be punished By God Jesus told us The truth about that But he bears the wounds Himself What a friend he is True friendship Gives counsel I'll leave you Hold that up There we go And that's what Jesus does for his people Now If we're his friends He's our shepherd And we're his sheep He speaks to us In the Bible And we can hear his words Every day We can trust him And true friendship Is constant That's our last one Now in the Toy Story films That's the biggest problem Isn't it

That's the big problem In all four Toy Story movies A toy is a child's best friend But what happens When the child grows up Or what happens When the toy breaks Friendship doesn't last forever It's the same for us With our own friends In this life Even the very best friend You could have Won't last forever Because people move on And because people die As well But this makes Jesus' friendship Extra special Because he is alive Forever And he offers us Life with him forever So that we can live forever And he'll never Grow tired of us In Hebrews 13 5 He says Never will I leave you Never will I forsake you He will never leave us We just need to stick with him And if you're here this morning Still making up your mind About Jesus Still thinking about him I just want to urge you To ask him To be your rescuer And king To be your friend Because that friendship Starts today And it lasts forever There really is nothing better Than being friends with him So my friend Mark Said this When we looked at What the Bible says About friendship You know what my friend Mark Said to me He said I've never known a friend Like this I was a bit sad Because I'm his friend But he said I've never known a friend Like this But you know what As we look at What the Bible says About friendship No Christian Could ever truly say that Because we all have that friend In King Jesus If you make him The friend you most want In your heart Then you'll have All the friends Your heart needs So now that we've thought About what a What a good friend He is to us Could we accept His invitation To go out And be good friends To each other Wouldn't that be great If churches were the places Where people thought Friendship really counts If St. Silas was marked By a place where Friendship is really valuable And really good Let's pray We're going to pray together Let's do a last prayer Father God Thank you that Jesus Calls us friends That is absolutely brilliant There really is nothing else like it Help us to have good friends Help us to be good friends And would our church family Be marked by good friendship That is careful Candid Constant And gives counsel We ask in the name Of our friend Jesus Amen Brilliant Thanks so much for helping That was so helpful Let's just thank our children You've listened so well Do you guys want to Head back to your seats And the band are going to Sing together Now there really was Only one song To follow that talk with And the band are going to Lead us in that Do come to Back to the entrance of church The front end We have our baptism font here Because baptism is a way To welcome people Into a church family So it's right at the front Of the church So do come forward
And you should have The sheet we're going to follow You should have been handed that On the way in Alongside the notice sheet So if you come round the chair Number five To whip Of the church So let me pull And put That one Like that We have a Outro On the way To normal

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