

# Developing Healthy Friendships

## (Living Pure Series: Part 2)

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Ask: Does anyone remember what we talked about last week???

Purity in our thinking...

Tonight we're going on with our study on purity...

Illustration: Brother Richard was the president of BRSM when I was there. He was also one of our teachers... and personally he was my favorite teacher. Brother Richard was awesome. His classes weren't only about things that he had learned in a book... he always talked about what he'd learned in real life. He would speak out of his experience. I can still remember many of the lessons he taught, though I've forgotten some of my other classes.

Brother Richard said, "Life is all about relationships. The most important things in life are our relationships with God and with people."

And not only did Brother Richard tell us that... he showed us with his life. He was totally consumed with God, and he worshiped and prayed like if he didn't talk to God he would die... He also showed us how important relationships with people are. He would walk slowly through the campus, and take time to stop and talk to students. Whenever he talked to a young man, Pastor Richard would call him, "son" and often when he spoke to the girls he would call them "sweetheart" or "love". He also took the time for his own family. He wouldn't work on Saturdays because that was the day he always spent with his son. He would go to his basketball games or they would go on a bike ride together. Brother Richard lives his words, "**Life is all about relationships.**"

Tonight we're beginning a study about purity in relationships. We're going to be talking about healthy friendships. Don't worry... we'll be getting to the dating stuff later. **OPEN IN PRAYER**

### **1. There Can't Be Friendship Without Kindness**

"The Bible says that seedtime and harvest govern everything in life. If you want friends, show yourself friendly. ... By sowing seeds of love and righteousness into the lives of others, you will reap a harvest of the same."

–Dr. Creflo Dollar

[www.creflodollarministries.org](http://www.creflodollarministries.org) accessed on 9/14/06

It's true with relationships just like with anything else that when we sow good seeds, we get good results, and when we sow bad seeds we get bad results. Our words and actions always affect the outcome. What we do now affects what we experience tomorrow. Just like with a garden... if you plant tomato seeds, you're not gonna' get corn! You're going to get tomatoes. When we sow kindness, we'll get kindness in return. The only way to have friends, is to be a friend.

### **Ephes. 4:32a NIV**

Be **kind** and compassionate to one another...

**Ask: Do you like spending time with people that always talk smack about you, and mistreat you??? OF COURSE NOT**  
Nobody's gonna' want to be around us if we aren't kind.

Kindness sometimes means that we have to put other people first. That type of servant's heart is shown to us by Christ's example. He washed his disciples feet, and then gave this command...

### **John 13:14 NIV**

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

Jesus showed us that serving other people is important. He set the example... and now we should follow it.

It's not in our culture to literally wash people's feet, but there are things we can do to serve others. **ASK: What are some ways we can "wash someone's feet" in today's world.**

- Help them with their homework, -Hold the door for someone,
- Buy them a cheeseburger, -Help someone who doesn't know computers to install a new program (especially older people),
- Carry their trash to the can @ school lunch... etc...

Serving people is an awesome way to build strong relationships. By the way... when you get married... serving the other person, and putting their needs first sometimes is SO important. One reason so many marriages fail today is because people are self-centered and don't know how to serve the other person.

### **Eccles. 4:9-10 NIV**

Two are better than one,  
 because they have a good return for their work:  
 [10] If one falls down,  
his friend can help him up.  
 But pity the man who falls  
 and has no one to help him up!

### **2. Friends Are There When You Need Them**

Being a friend to someone, means that when they're in trouble, you are there to help them. When your friend needs someone to talk to... you're all ears. A good friend learns to be a listener...

Sometimes all someone needs is to get something off their chest... and when they do, a friend should be there to let them spill their guts.

And by the way... a good friend doesn't gossip about their friends... A good friend can always be trusted.

### **Proverbs 27:6 NIV**

Wounds from a friend can be trusted,  
but an enemy multiplies kisses.

Sometimes friends need a straight answer. If a blind man is walking towards a pit, and you don't say anything to stop him, you are a lousy friend to him. If we see our friends heading in the wrong direction, we also need to be willing to correct them in love. Remember even "wounds from a friend can be trusted."

Just like we need to help our friends, sometimes we need help. Every single one of us needs friends. People aren't designed to function alone all the time.

### **Genesis 2:18 NLT**

And the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him."

It's not good for people to go through life alone. Someday God will provide an awesome wife for you men, and God is going to bring a Godly man to you women at the right time... but you shouldn't be alone in the mean time. Everybody needs friends. Remember... those who want friends, show themselves friendly.

### **3. Godly Friends are the BEST Friends**

**Psalm 119:63 NIV**

I am a friend to all who fear you,  
to all who follow your precepts.

The Psalm writer knew that the best friends... are Godly friends. When we have friends that are believers in Jesus, we can relate to them. They can encourage us in our faith and help us to do the right things. There's something so AWESOME about hanging out with other Christians.

**Illustration:** Randy moved to PA and started coming to our church, and when he did I made an effort to get to know him. I remember what it was like being the new kid at youth group and how uncomfortable it can be, so I reached out to make him feel welcome. Little did I know he would become one of my best friends even to this day?

Taylor visited our church once on a Sunday night. I still remember how goofy he looked. He was going through a "cowboy" phase at the time... and he looked the part. He was six foot and change... and he wore a button down cowboy shirt with pearl buttons and tight fitting wrangler jeans complete with cowboy boots, and a big-rimmed hat that looked too big for his skinny head. I remember seeing him, and realizing that he was a new teenager at our church. Even though his style didn't fit in (I was wearing baggy JNCO jeans and skater shoes), I tried to make him feel welcome. Little did I know that he would become my closest guy friend to this day? (By the way... his style changed... he went through a couple more phases... and now he's kind of a cross between preppy and emo). So the point is, these two guys, and other Christian friends (like Ron and Tracie, Sam and Mary) have been my best friends through the years. If something's going on in my life I know that I can go to them. And they do the same thing with me. I know that my Christian friends will be there

when I need help, and that they will always encourage my faith. The best friends are Christian friends.

Does this mean that we should only have Christian friends?? I don't think so. We need to be witnesses, and if we don't know people that aren't Christians we won't have any influence on them. We should never get a "super spiritual" attitude that makes us think we're too good for people. Remember, Jesus hung out with sinners... He loves them and we should too. I do believe though that our closest friends should be our Christian friends.

### **1 Cor. 15:33 NIV**

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." **Who we hang out with affects who we become.** Someone once said, "Show me a man's three closest friends, and I can tell you what kind of man he is." -unknown

It all comes back to PURITY. It's important that we develop friendships, but it's also important that we develop the right kind of friendships. When you decide whom to spend your time with, you are making an important decision. Spend time with the kind of people that you want to be like. Good or bad, they're going to rub off on you.

You want to live a life of purity. To do that, you have to pursue pure friendships. The strongest relationships, whether friendships, or courtships, or marriage always have God at the center. Keep God in the middle of everything you do, and it will go well for you.

- 1. There Can't Be Friendship Without Kindness**
- 2. Friends Are There When You Need Them**
- 3. Godly Friends are the BEST Friends**

Conclusion:

**John 15:13-14 NIV**

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. [14] You are my friends if you do what I command.

Jesus laid down His life for us, and by doing that He was calling us His friends. He is the greatest friend of all to have. He said that if we are truly his friends, we would obey his commands. Tonight if you want to renew your friendship to Jesus, it takes a step from you. You have to admit you've not been obeying the commands of Christ and ask his forgiveness. When you do, your relationship can be restored. To continue having an awesome relationship with God, you must continue to obey His word. Anyone here want to be a friend of God?? I know I DO!!!

If you want to renew your friendship with God tonight... we're going to play that song again, "Friend of God"... as we do I encourage you to seek Christ's forgiveness and commit to changing the way you do things.