



Today, we begin a new series in the book of Proverbs called “Getting My Life In Order,” and we start with a focus on friendship. Friendships have the power to shape our lives in profound ways, influencing our decisions, character, and future. As we dive into this study of Proverbs, we will explore what God’s Word teaches about building meaningful, life-giving friendships. In a world experiencing an epidemic of loneliness, the right friendships can provide wisdom, direction, and protection. Proverbs reminds us that wise friendships lead to success, while unhealthy relationships can bring harm. Through this study, we will learn how to cultivate godly friendships that strengthen our faith and help us grow into the people God created us to be.

Key Passage: Proverbs 13:20

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the current “epidemic of loneliness” affect people of all ages, and why is this significant?

Loneliness is affecting people of all ages, from teenagers to older adults, with studies showing an alarming rise in those who feel disconnected. Studies reveal that:

- 3 out of 5 Americans (61%) sometimes or always feel lonely
- 73% of younger Americans sometimes or always feel lonely
- 70% of heavy social media users report feelings of loneliness.

This matters because loneliness is linked to serious health problems, including depression, anxiety, and even physical ailments. Despite the rise of social media, which was intended to connect people, many heavy users report feeling even lonelier. Recognizing this epidemic should compel us to seek biblical solutions, such as prioritizing deep, godly friendships.

2. What is the difference between casual and close friends, and why is it important to distinguish between them?

Casual friends often come into our lives due to circumstances, such as shared activities, workspaces, or social gatherings. Close friends, however, are chosen intentionally and deeply influence our character, much like Jesus’ inner circle of disciples. Proverbs emphasizes that walking with the wise makes us wise, while foolish companions bring harm. Being intentional about close friendships helps shape our spiritual growth and overall well-being.

3. How does Proverbs 13:20 and Proverbs 27:17 illustrate the power of friendship? What does it mean when people say, “Show me your friends, and I will show you your future”?

Proverbs 13:20 states that walking with the wise makes one wise, but associating with fools leads to harm. This demonstrates that friendships are not neutral; they actively shape our values, decisions, and direction in life. Evaluating our closest friendships helps us determine whether we are being led toward wisdom or destruction.

Proverbs 27:17 teaches that iron sharpens iron, meaning that friendships refine and mold us. Recognizing this truth urges us to choose friends who will push us toward spiritual and personal growth rather than lead us astray.

The phrase “Show me your friends, and I will show you your future” suggests that our future success, struggles, and spiritual health are largely influenced by the people we surround ourselves with. We are more likely to walk in wisdom when we surround ourselves with wise, godly individuals. Conversely, unhealthy friendships can pull us away from God’s best for our lives.

4. Why does Proverbs emphasize the importance of seeking counsel from friends, and how does this apply in daily decision-making?

Proverbs 27:9 and 11:14 highlight the value of wise counsel, likening it to the pleasantness of perfume and the security of good guidance. Life often presents difficult choices where both options seem reasonable, making wise input crucial. Trusted friends help us process these decisions, offering perspective and support rather than just giving direct answers. Seeking counsel ensures we make informed choices while also experiencing the comfort of not navigating challenges alone.

5. How do godly friendships serve as a shield, and why is this especially important as we grow older?

As people grow older, they often drift away from friendships, which can lead to isolation and a lack of accountability. Proverbs 27:5-6 teaches that faithful friends lovingly correct and protect one another, even when it is uncomfortable. Having godly friends who speak truth into our lives prevents us from slipping into harmful behaviors or becoming spiritually stagnant. Maintaining these friendships ensures we have support, encouragement, and correction when needed.

6. What does Proverbs say about accountability in friendships, and how should we respond when confronted by a friend?

Proverbs 27:6 states that “faithful are the wounds of a friend,” meaning that true friends correct us in love rather than ignoring our faults. However, accepting correction requires humility, as our natural response is often to feel defensive. Godly friendships involve mutual accountability, where both parties commit to helping each other grow. When a friend confronts us, responding with openness rather than pride allows us to experience the refining work of biblical wisdom.

7. Considering today’s discussion, what kind of influence are you on your closest friends? How can you intentionally become the kind of friend we have discussed?