

Sermon Outline

FRIENDSHIP

MADE FOR IT SERIES | JOHN 15:12-13 | FEBRUARY 1/2, 2014 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

(John 15:12-13)

In the Beginning...Relationships

1. God is relational (*Genesis 1:26-30; John 1:1-3*)
2. We are made in His image as relational beings (*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:20-25*)
3. Relationship, with God and with others, is effected by sin (*Genesis 3:6-19*)

The Heart of Friendship

- Friendship as laying down one's life for another (*John 15:13; Luke 10:25-37*)
- Friendship as loving another like Jesus (*John 15:12; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7*)

Characteristics of True Friendship from the Book of Proverbs

- True friendship takes discernment (*Proverbs 18:24; 22:24-25*)
- True friends are sensitive to others' circumstances (*Proverbs 25:20*)
- True friends offer wise advice (*Proverbs 27:9*)
- True friends speak the truth, even when it is a hard truth (*Proverbs 27:6*)

Putting it into practice

- Surrender your friendships into God's hands
- Look for ways to build others up; look for ways to join in with what God is doing in others' lives
- Ask God to help you grow as a friend in self-sacrificial love

Discussion Questions

FOR LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION, CLARIFICATION & PRAYER

1. How would you describe a true friend? If you have an example from your own life, feel free to share that, too.
2. This week we begin a series entitled, "Made for It," which is an exploration of relationships in our lives. Before you begin your study, ask God to speak to you through the Scripture.
3. This series is built on the reality that God is relational and, therefore, we are relational beings. Read Genesis 1:26-30 and John 1:1-3. What do you see in these verses about relationship within God and relationships for human beings?
4. Because we were made by God for relationship, the entry of sin and evil into human existence changes everything about relationships. Read Genesis 3:1-20. How did sin and disobedience change or not change relationships between Adam and Eve?
5. We see a variety of relationships in the Bible. What are some instances of friendship that you know about in Scripture? How would you describe those friendships, either as godly or ungodly relationships? [You may want to look at relationships like Ruth and Naomi, David and Jonathan, Paul and Barnabas as examples.]
6. In this week's message, Pastor Matt outlined a series of characteristics from the book of Proverbs about friendship. Take some time to evaluate those characteristics, either by reading the Scripture references out loud again or discussing it in your small group. What do you think a real friend looks like?
7. On a scale of 1-10, how good of a friend are you in light of these verses? How might you grow as a friend?
8. How is God speaking to you now from this study of Scripture about friendship? If you are in a small group, discuss this together. If you are on your own, then perhaps you could write down some thoughts on this.

[Next week: We will continue the "Made for It" series with a look at love and dating. Prepare by reading 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 and Matthew 12:46-50.]