

Close to Him = Close to Them

- The spiritual truth that we are unpacking this month is...
- **QUOTE:** *The health of our vertical relationship with God is reflected in our horizontal relationships with people*
- **I John 1:7 NLT** - *But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.*
- Real fellowship with God inevitably affects the way we function in our relationships with others.

WEEK THREE: FRIENDSHIP 101

- **NOTE:** Most of our issues relative to relationships go off the rails at the family and friends level. While we may have relational issues at work, those people don't go home with us. And most times, we can compartmentalize problematic work relationships without them being all consuming. But family and friends have the potential to bless our lives or wreck our lives, if we don't manage those relationships well. To that end, let's acknowledge that most of us have never been taught how to be a friend or how to have a friend. In school, we learned math, English, science, and social studies...but we never learned FRIENDSHIP the right way. Consequently, most of us don't truly know what healthy friendships look like. But just like everything else in life, the Bible can teach us how to be friends if we're willing to abandon our way and embrace His way.
- **I Samuel 18:1 – 4 NIV** *After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ² From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³ And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.*
- David and Jonathan set the Godly standard for what true friendship should be.
- **QUOTE:** *God needs us to empty ourselves of anything or anyone that hinders His capacity to fill us up.*
- The spiritual truth of how to be friends is true for marriage, family members, best friends, and any other relationship where there is a need or a desire to go beyond a surface engagement.

I. FRIENDSHIPS MUST HAVE COMMONALITY

- **Amos 3:3 MSG** - *Do two people walk hand in hand if they aren't going to the same place?*
- **QUOTE:** *Where there is no mutual growth in a relationship, there develops a natural divide.*
- **QUOTE:** *Don't ever let someone who doesn't want to grow make you feel bad for wanting to be better, do better, and have better.*

II. FRIENDSHIPS MUST MAKE ONE ANOTHER BETTER

- **Proverbs 27:17 MSG** – *You use steel to sharpen steel, and one friend sharpens another.*
- **QUOTE:** *Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay awhile and leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same. – Flavia Weed*
- **QUOTE:** *The purpose of covenant is to GIVE advantage, not TAKE advantage.*
- As empty vessels, let's ask ourselves: How has my life changed since I first called _____ my friend?
- **Proverbs 18:24 NIV** – *One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

III. FRIENDSHIPS ARE FORGED IN TIMES OF ADVERSITY

- **Proverbs 17:17 NIV** – *A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.*

- It is in times of great difficulty where we learn to thank God for real friends.

IV. FRIENDSHIPS REQUIRE MUTUAL RESPECT

- **Philippians 2:3 – 4 NIV** *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility VALUE OTHERS ABOVE YOURSELVES, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*
- Friendships require MUTUAL RESPECT – your life, your dealings are just as important as mine.
- *Respect (Dictionary.com) – esteem for the worth or excellence of a person; to hold in esteem or honor.*
- **Luke 6:31 NIV** – *Do to others as you would have them do to you.*
 - Mutual respect means letting each other be who God created them to be.
 - Mutual respect means Motivating one another, not Manipulating one another
 - Mutual respect means both parties have an equal voice in the friendship
 - Mutual Respect means Friends Must Give Each Other SPACE

V. FRIENDSHIPS MUST HAVE TRANSPARENCY

- **James 5:16 NIV** - *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*
- True friendship should allow you to be yourself without concealment.
- **QUOTE:** *God wants us connected with believers we can trust enough to **lose our mask and find our freedom***
- An Impact Small Group is a place where you can be healed.