

The Wise and Friendship

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- [0 : 00] Good morning. I'm David. And Karen. We are David and Karen.
- We're both involved in the Mandarin ministry here at Watermark. And we are sharing on the topic of friendship this morning.
- This is part of our series on the book of Proverbs. Last week, we talked about money. Today, we're talking about friendship.
- Perhaps there's a relationship between these two topics. They could be complementary or in conflict.
- Why do I say this? Some people say, friends should not talk about money.
- [1 : 12] It can destroy the relationship. But others say, we should be careful to spend a lot of time on relationships because it uses a lot of money.
- There are many different opinions about friendship. Some people say, friendship is like a luxury.
- Others believe that it is essential. It's a necessity. What does that mean? A luxury item, it's very expensive.
- You have to spend a lot of time as well as a lot of money in order to have it. I have a friend who went to be a pastor in a new city.
- There's a lake in that city. And a common activity there is to go fishing in the summer. And so he said, come and let's go fishing together this weekend.
- [2 : 44] And so he went. And he was asked, oh, where's all your equipment? Oh, I thought, you know, you just grab a stick, tie some string, and you go fishing.
- And his friend said, no, no, no. Let me take you to the store, and we need to buy all the necessary items. And you have to spend, you know, minimum 2,000 U.S.
- This is a very expensive friendship. So he said, this is a very expensive friendship. And so he thought, oh, maybe friendship is a luxury.
- There are people who think it is a must. Because if you have no friends, you can't do anything. But others see friendship as a necessity. Without friendship, you can't get anything done.
- I want to ask you to have a friend. Because if I want to play ball, I need friends. If I want to play chess, I need friends. Even to go shopping, I need to go with some friends.
- [4 : 04] Because if I'm trying on a dress, I need to ask somebody, how does it look on me? You feel so empty if there's no one next to you to say, wow, it looks so good.
- So to some people, friends, you have to have friends. Actually, in our lives, we all need friends.
- When you're thinking about getting married, you think, oh, who's going to be my bridesmaid or my groomsman?

In the end, we already know that. In the end, we already know that. We already know that. We already know that. We already know that. And if you are already married, I'm sure you will always remember those people. Friends and friendship is part of our lives.

They have a great impact on our lives. Now, also, we influence our friends. Proverbs 13, 20 tells us, Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

[5 : 38] We hope that those who influence us in our lives, that they are wise people. That we may also become wise. But if we're a companion of fools, we will also be influenced by them, and we may end up doing some very foolish things.

I have a friend of mine. He's physically very weak. If you look, who is the skinniest person here?

My friend was even thinner. But there's a time when he went out with a friend. And he had a drink. And he had a drink. And he had a fight. And he had a fight. One day, he went out with some of his friends after they drank a little bit.

And he got into a big fight. And he had a fight. And his head was five stitches to the head later. If he went by himself, there is no way he would get into a fight.

But because of his friends, that's the situation in which he found himself.

[6 : 55] So this illustrates how, you know, if you're a companion of fools, you will suffer harm. In order for friends to influence one another, it does, friendship takes time, and it takes effort.

In Hong Kong, this is a very high cost. Because we have a lot of time. We are always working on a lot of things. Now this is quite costly in Hong Kong, because the opportunity cost of our time is high.

We often need to work late, and there are so many things to do. So to build friendships in Hong Kong, it takes our valuable time, and also it takes money.

So sometimes, yeah, it feels like you're spending on a luxury item to invest in friendship.

In this relationship, we need to invest in time. So in the 17th chapter, it tells us, We see in Proverbs 17, 7, how building friendship takes time.

[8 : 24] It says, a friend loves at all times. Because if you love at all times, that means you're probably investing significant time.

And then, it says, a brother is born for adversity. We all know in our lives, we experience highs and lows.

We all know in our lives, we experience highs and lows. He is able to experience highs and lows. He is able to experience highs and lows. Some friends are great for being with you when you're doing great. Some friends are great for being with you when you're doing great.

And some friends, they're able to walk with you when you're going through a low time. In the Old Testament, there's a man named Job.

He was going through adversity. Several of his friends came to be with him. Seven days, seven days, not eating, not drinking.

[9 : 25] They sat with him and did not eat nor drink for seven days and seven nights. They fasted with him. I don't know if you have any friends like that.

There are friends in our lives, we bring to our lives and we bring to our lives and we bring to our lives. So some friends, they really can comfort us when we're going through a difficult time. The Bible actually has a very high view of friendship.

And Abraham was called a friend of God. And the Bible says that when Moses was on the mountain and speaking with God, it was face to face as a man with his friend.

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maybe lower down on the, or near the bottom of the ladder of friendship are new friends,
people you might just have made an acquaintance of.

[illegible]

And so there's a ladder of friendship that is part of your life, as you go through all the many different experiences in your life. In my life, there are two friends. Now it's been 30 years of this relationship.

[12 : 41] We experienced these experiences together. Lived in Beijing, we would get together every single weekend, even if just for a brief period.

I experienced from them where Proverbs 17, 17 says, a friend loves at all times.■■■■■. Of course, this took a great investment of time.

■■■■■■■■■■. This verse also says, a brother is born for adversity. So I also thought about, how did my friends help me when I was going through a hard time?

I remember when I was in college. I was going through. I was in financial difficulty.

I needed some money. I needed some money. I couldn't get in touch with my dad. And so I asked my friend. I asked my friend.

[13:58] I was going to give her a number. So I estimated, how much money do I need to get me, to tide me over? And I told him what I needed. He asked me a question.

He said, will it be enough? This was a friend from my time of adversity.

Now, some of you may have some bad friends in your lives. Maybe when you go and say, oh, may I borrow some money? They reply. He will answer you, I have to ask my husband.

Maybe she'll reply, I need to ask my husband. But then you think about it. Wait, you don't have a husband yet. In other words, don't even ask.

This is a friend. This is a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. It's a friend. But friendship, it takes time. And it needs to pass the test of time. And experiences.

[15:13] It's a friend. Our friends actually also end up having a great influence and impact on our lives. My friend, he loves to play the guitar.

My friend, a friend of mine loves to play the guitar. There's a time to give me a guitar. And then I started to play the guitar. And once he left his guitar with me.

And then so I began to learn how to play and try to figure out the chords. I really think without his influence in my life, I would have never learned to play the guitar.

So, we all know friends have a great influence and impact on our lives. If you have a child from their friends that are more influenced by their friends than what you are trying to teach them.

In Chinese history, there's a very famous mother. And she knew that friends were very important to her children.

[16 : 34] So, for the sake of building her child's character, she moved three times geographically. For the sake of building her family, she moved three times geographically.

And she moved three times to move your house. But this mother sacrificed a lot. And moved even geographically three times for the sake of her child.

Because it's very important for us to think about how to leave the companionship of fools.

And how to walk with the wise. The brother is born for adversity. A brother is born for adversity.

A friend loves at all times. In the same time, I thought about the family. When I hear about adversity, this also makes me think of my father.

[17 : 36] They are a friend of his brother. Actually, it was one of his drinking buddies. They would talk about his job and life.

Sometimes they would talk about their jobs or life. But mainly, they just drink together. And one time, my father's friend got drunk.

And when they get separated, they go back to their respective homes. And as they separated, they go back to their respective homes.

Or maybe you know, I'm from northern China. And it gets really, really cold in the winter. Or it gets really, really cold in the winter. In the winter, it can get to be negative 20 or 30 degrees.

You even hear stories about people losing their ears, losing their fingers, or even dying because of frostbite.

[18 : 46] It is very foolish to get drunk in this type of weather. So my father felt very concerned for his friend after they parted ways.

And so my father felt very concerned for his friend after they parted ways. So he went, he circled back to look for him. And on the path back to his friend's house, he didn't see his friend.

And when you're looking for someone who's staggering and sort of stumbling along, So my father, if he didn't find the weather, he would be very cold.

He would be very cold. How did he do it? He would be able to get a car. So he tried to look for him. He couldn't find him. And so he called the cab. And the driver would be able to look to search with him.

The driver would be a little scared. He would be able to get a car.

[19 : 54] And the taxi driver was concerned because he's like, Well, you know, how long are you going to try to look for this guy? And also, do you have enough money to pay me? You look kind of not doing so well yourself.

And my father, he emptied his wallet. And he's like, look, take this money, but you've got to help me find my friend.

And they drove along that path several times.

And finally, they saw a little pile off to the side. That was a little bit of a move. It was a little bit of a move. There was no movement.

It was in the snow. In the snow. And my father saw it was his friend. And with the driver, they brought him into the car. And they drove him home. They covered him with layers of blankets.

[20 : 54] And the next morning, his friend woke up. And he was very confused. And he was very confused. And he said, hey, I thought I was in my house. How did I get to be in your house?

And my father said, do you know where you were sleeping last night? And he said, I'm back home. And he said, do you know where you were sleeping last night? And my father said, do you know where you were sleeping last night?

And he said, I'm back home. And my bed is still pretty comfortable. And my bed is still pretty comfortable. And I'm going to go to bed. And he said, I walked home. And I got into my comfortable bed.

I took off my shoes. And I went to sleep. This is a friend in the situation. So this was a friend. My father was a friend to him in his time of adversity.

This friend was even closer than a brother. Actually, my father's friend had three older brothers and one younger brother.

[22 : 11] But at that moment, it was only his friend who could save him or not.

So we were in our lives. Actually, in our lives, sometimes it's that way. We were in this world. We were in this world. We were in a world that was more comfortable. We were in a world that was our home.

Sometimes we were so comfortable in this world. And we think that this world is our home. But Jesus came to the world to tell us, no, this world is not our home.

Sometimes we're like that drunken friend of my dad's. We think, oh, this is our home.

A brother is born for adversity. So in this situation, my father became his friend. My father became a friend for adversity for his friend.

[23 : 17] So in this situation, you have to spend time and experience to help him. Obviously, it took time and money to help him. Do we say that we are in our friends' lives?

Now, would we be willing to be a friend to others in this way? I mean, my father saved his physical life.

Maybe he could live for another 10, 20 years. But when Jesus came to save us in this world, he saved us for eternal life.

When Jesus was preaching and teaching on earth, There was a lame man, a crippled, who was brought before Jesus.

So this place, if he was to see him, he would have been impossible for this man to make his own way to Jesus. But he had some friends.

[24 : 34] And they brought him before Jesus. They brought him before Jesus. When he came to Jesus' friends' house where Jesus was preaching and teaching, The house is where he was pushing and teaching.

. It was surrounded. It was packed with people. There's no way they could get in to be with Jesus. And so these friends of that crippled man, They made their way onto the roof.

To put the roof on the roof. From the roof on the roof. To put the roof on the roof. And they dug open the roof. And they lowered their crippled friend down through the roof.

When Jesus saw them. Jesus saw their faith.

And spoke to the crippled man. Often we see that Jesus. We see in the Bible that it says.

[25 : 44] Jesus saw someone's faith. In this situation. Jesus saw the faith of those friends. Obviously today.

It might be much more difficult. To have this exact same scenario. You said, If you say to your friend, Please take me to go see Jesus.

If you're the lame person. If you're the cripple. And you say to your friends, Please take me to see Jesus. Your first friend may say to you.

That's a very good idea. I will like it on Facebook. And I'll give you a star.

And I'll give you a star. Maybe your second friend would say to you. Recently, I have a big exam coming up.

[26 : 50] Hey, yeah. This is a big exam coming up. And I really need to really study. I will definitely help you when I finish the exam.

And the third friend may say to you. I'm off on a business trip this afternoon. I'm so sorry I can't help you.

I can't help you. But when I come back, I'll help you. And the fourth friend may say, I'm not sure that idea is really workable.

You've been crippled. I mean, you're crippled. And you've been crippled for many, many, many years. That Jesus really can ■■■ you.

Even if we can get you to Jesus, can he heal you? I think you should just give up. When we think of the friends in our lives today, how can we help them?

[27 : 58] That's the one that he has four friends. Now, this cripple, he had four friends. And they worked as a team to get him to Jesus. This is not one person.

Sometimes, you know, one person is not enough. I don't know if you have ever tried to pick up somebody. If you have ever tried to pick up somebody, if one person, you try to pick up one other person, you'll find that that person may be very heavy.

You can't go very far. This is not one person. You need four people. You know, this crippled person, he needed four people. And this is not one person.

And this is not one person. He needed four people. He needed four people. And all four of them needed to have faith. If they have no faith, they will not have the power to take up Jesus.

Without faith, they wouldn't have brought him before Jesus. Because it's a total waste of your effort. You've already tried all the best doctors on this earth.

[29 : 05] Like, you can't be healed. You're crippled. But his friends, they had this faith. And how do we see their faith?

Not only did they do this great thing together and bring him before Christ. They did a bad thing.

They destroyed someone's roof. In Israel in those days. If you're in the U.S.

In Texas, Dallas. If you're in Dallas, Dallas. If you're in Dallas, Dallas, Dallas. If you're in Dallas, Dallas, Dallas. If you're in Dallas, Texas today.

Maybe four bullets and the story is over. Because you know, in Texas, they have guns. And if you try to take their roof down, they'll get you.

[30 : 16] So you have four friends on the roof, one bullet for each friend, and the cripple just falls away. So we see the faith of these four friends as they brought him to Jesus.

So in our lives, can we be that friend who has faith? When Jesus saw this crippled, he said to him, your sins are forgiven.

He healed him physically. But the words out of Jesus' mouth were, your sins are forgiven. Sometimes we think the most important is our physical health and our physical bodies.

But Jesus tells us that it's more important that our sins are forgiven. Do you have a friend of God? Because so what? Your sins are forgiven. Do you have a friend of God?

Do you have a friend of God? Because if your sins are forgiven, you can be a friend of God. You can reach the pinnacle, the top of the ladder of meaningful friendships.

[31 : 48] Just like Abraham did. Just like Moses did. Just like Moses did. You can share your deepest secrets with truly the best friend.

Just like in the Old Testament, in the Old Testament, when God was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, he said, how can I hide this from my friend Abraham?

So in the Old Testament, he has this kind of■■■. In friendship, you have this intimate relationship. On Mount Sinai, Moses spoke with God.

And God shared with Moses so many things that the nation of Israel needed to know. To teach the nation of Israel how to draw close to God.

Because God is a holy God. If you don't know God's ways of how to draw near to him, then you'll just walk away of death.

[33 : 11] In the New Testament, Jesus also tells us this. You are to love each other. This is my commandment that you love one another.

As I have loved you. This is my commandment. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants. For the servant does not know what his master is doing.

But I have called you friends. For all that I have heard from my father, I have made known to you. All that we need to know, even of the mysteries of heaven, Jesus is telling us.

And it says he calls us his friends. There is no greater love than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

[34 : 36] Jesus is in the■■■■ for us. And we see that Jesus, he gave his life on the cross for us. Just like he said to that crippled, your sins are forgiven.

But that■ is Jesus. Because Jesus, he took our sins on himself. He gave his life, he laid down his life for his friends.

There is no greater love than this. Jesus is in the same way. And Jesus calls us his friends. He is the incarnation of all wisdom.

He is that wise person. When Proverbs says, whoever walks with the wise becomes wise. He is for our sick.

And he was actually born for our adversity. And he was born for our adversity. And who has saved us out of sin.

[35 : 44] He is that friend who sticks closer to us. He is more than a brother. Because he gave his own life for us.

He has a call to us. And he has a call to us. He is ready to be a true friend. Are you prepared to be a true friend?

There are many people around you in your life who are just like that lame or crippled person.

You are willing to spend that time and maybe that money to bring them before Jesus?

Hopefully, we can also have this impact on their lives. As we are influenced by the character of Jesus, let's also be an influence on our friends around us that they may also grow in this heavenly character.

[37 : 01] and may we be friends that can be friends in adversity. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Dear Father, Abba Father, we thank you. We are all foolish.

We are all foolish. We thought we're so wise. We thought, oh, this world is our home. But you tell us, no, our home is in heaven.

In your kingdom. Lord, please give us wisdom. How to go home. And how to bring friends home.

Lord, be with us and give us strength. Make us to be true friends who are willing to sacrifice for our friends. In Jesus Christ's name we pray.

[38 : 08] Amen.