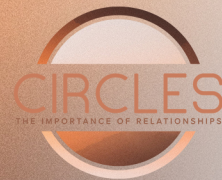


# INVESTING IN TRUE FRIENDSHIP



## PRECEPT

### JOHN 15:12-14

<sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command.

### PROVERBS 13:20

<sup>20</sup> Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.

## PROMISE

Do you have friends whom you can call in times of need? Friends whom you can call in times of emergency? Friends to whom you can cry on? You are indeed very blessed if you have these kinds of friends. Sadly, there are people out there without these kinds of friends. Those are the people God called us to invest more, to help them find true friendship.

As we experience the friendship Jesus offers us, let us offer this same love and camaraderie to other people around us. When we are prioritizing this friendship, we will naturally draw others to the Father as well. Jesus uses the word *philos* for friend, meaning "friend, associate, familiarly with one, companion, one of the bridegroom's friends." *Philos* is how we would identify those people we would select to be our bridesmaids and groomsmen, those who have been with us through thick and thin, and those who will support us in our big life decisions. Let's bring these people closer to God and love them by the example of Christ. John 15:12-13 tells us, "<sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." We must not be content with fewer friends and seasonal friendships. Once we get too comfortable with a few core and close friends, we can lose the ability to see our neighbour who is lonely or a co-worker or class mate who is struggling in life. Here are some practical steps for us to invest in making friends with others.

### INVEST MORE IN TRUE FRIENDSHIP: CONNECT AND CREATE

One of the ways that we can connect to our friends is by remembering special events in their lives. The simple gestures of greeting them during their birthday, anniversary, promotion, work or school achievements can mean a lot to them. Engage also in deeper conversations that can touch their hearts and make them feel loved. Create new memories and experience life together. Find adventures and take initiatives to plan trips together. True friendship is built and strengthened by meaningful experiences and unforgettable memories. Create an environment for each other that provides support and encouragement and try to speak their love language. Listen to them without judgement and offer practical help in times of need. Make your friendship an avenue to bring out the best in them.

Let us intentionally build relationships with others for the purpose of becoming more like Christ. We must also make it our mission to influence others to the likeness of Christ and to love Him with all our hearts and all our might. We are not able to tell others about Him if we remain in our selected social circles, never meeting new people who need to know him. Let us work to make space for people who do not yet know Jesus, and be intentional in how we spend our time with them. As we go and make this happen, Jesus, who is our friend, is our help and guide. This brings comfort when we live out our command to go and tell others about Him.

## PRACTICE

**1. Making Friends.** How can we change (as individuals or the group) to be more about making friendships for God's glory?

**2. Application.** How can you apply today's message in your circle of friends? What are some practical ways you can draw them closer to Christ?

## PRAYER

### I. Evangelism

- Pray that we will all take part in reaching the lost and sharing the Gospel to others.

### II. God's Word

- Pray that our church will commit to His Word and walk in His wisdom and humility.

### III. Faith

- Pray that we will all be strong in our faith especially in the hardships of life.

### IV. Peace

- Pray that we will always rest in the peace that Christ offers us.

### V. Missionaries

- Pray for protection & wisdom for our missionaries as they continue the Lord's work.

### VI. Government

- Pray for all our government officials to be protected from greed and evil.

### VII. Nation

- Pray for our nation and its leaders; that we may become a nation that follows and honours God.