Fearless Series - Friendship

Becoming a Friend who Helps Others Succeed

Introduction

"You are my friends if you do what I command."
John 15:14 NIV

Friendship starts by listening. You can't be a great friend if you don't take the time to listen and hear what you're friends are saying. The place to start is start listening to God, reading the Bible and obeying. How is your friendship with God? How do you view a relationship with God?

What is friendship?
The emotions or conduct of friends; the state of being friends. A state of mutual trust and support between [friends].

What kind of friend are you?
Friendship is not something that is earned, but given to people. Choose to be friends with who God has put in your life.

- What are the qualities of a great friend?
    - Think of who you like to spend time with, how you want to be treated, and who you want to become.
- Would someone describe you as a great friend? Why or why not?
    - Think of those qualities discussed above. Do those describe you?

Rudy - 1993
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdYI9hwf-tk
"Rudy: You're the only one that ever took me seriously Pete.
Pete: Well, you know what my dad always said, Having dreams is what makes life tolerable."

In the movie Rudy, Rudy has always dreamed of playing for the Notre Dame Football Team, "The Fighting Irish." But he is short, slow, has trouble academically (dyslexia) and no one believes in him. His dream seems more and more unrealistic, but his best friend Pete continues to believe in Rudy's dream and does whatever it takes to inspire him to overcome the odds.

Your goal
How can God help you become a friend that is willing to sacrifice for others to succeed?

Know Your Friends

After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond between them, for Jonathan loved David. [2] From that day on Saul kept David with him and wouldn't let him return home. [3] And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself.
1 Samuel 18:1-3 NLT

- **Who is your friend?**
    - The first thing you have to do is identify who your closest friend is. Who will you trust more than anyone? Who has God put in your life?
- **Decide to trust your friend**
    - It is a decision to trust, and make that person your closest friend. No one can earn your trust, it is something you choose to give. Jonathan decided to love David.
- **Who can you decide to trust?**
    - What can you share with your close friend that will bring you closer, and build a foundation of trust and honesty?

Teacher's Note:

- *Share about a time you decided to share something with someone you never shared before. How did that go? What was the result on your friendship? Did it bring you closer?*

Friends Point Each Other To God

Now David became aware that Saul had come out to seek his life while David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh. [16] And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David at Horesh, and encouraged him in God. [17] Thus he said to him, "Do not be afraid, because the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be king over Israel and I will be next to you; and Saul my father knows that also." [18] So the two of them made a covenant before the LORD; and David stayed at Horesh while Jonathan went to his house.
1 Samuel 23:15-18 NASB

- **Friends point each other to God**
    - Everyone needs friends who are going to bring God into the conversation. To help the other person work whatever they need to out with God.
- **Friends sacrifice**
    - Jonathan sacrificed his birthright to be king for David to succeed. He trusted God with his future enough to sacrifice it.
- **How do you feel about God? Is he someone you want to pursue?**
    - What can you do to help you friends be encouraged to seek God? (i.e. relational, honest, vulnerable)

Teacher's Note:

- *Share about how you point your friends to God. Break it down and teach step-by-step. Listen, ask questions, share a scripture, pray together, follow up.*

Sacrifice For Your Friends

"So this is my command: Love each other deeply, as much as I have loved you. [13] For the greatest love of all is a love that sacrifices all. And this great love is demonstrated when a person sacrifices his life for his friends.

John 15:12-13 TPT

- **Love deeply**
    - We are meant to love our friends deeply. Do you think about your friends and what they need more or less than you think about yourself?
- **Love sacrificially**
    - Friends are meant to sacrifice for one another. If we can't sacrifice the simplest things, then how can we call ourselves friends?
- **What is your response to "sacrifice"? What comes to mind?**
    - What have you been unwilling to sacrifice to make your friend better? (i.e. comfort, a possession, a position/status, etc.)

Teacher's Note:

- *Share about a time you decided to sacrifice (or risked) something for a friend. How did that work out? Did it help that person grow?*

Decision

"A friend is one that knows you as you are, understands where you have been, accepts what you have become, and still, gently allows you to grow."
William Shakespeare

- **Talk it through**: How can being closer to God help you conquer your fears?
- **Take action:** What can you start doing in your relationship with God to become courageous?
    - *Teacher's Note: Walk through step by step what it would take to change. The leader should think through some of this ahead of time. Be as detailed as possible.*
        - *What steps will this decision involve?*
        - *When will you do them?*
        - *Possible pitfalls?*
        - *Who will you ask to help hold you accountable?*

Next steps

This section is meant to be done together over the next 1-2 weeks. Set up times to do some of these together or to do them separately and then talk about what you learned.

- **Read together**: Read the book of Ruth: watch how Ruth and Naomi's friendship grows because they choose to sacrifice for one another
- **Watch together**: Watch *The Sandlot*: look for how their sacrifice created lasting bonds. Talk with a friend about what you learned
- **Do together**: Find a local trail, go on a hike with your closest friends and talk about your friendship and what needs to change to become great

Further study

- 2 Kings 2:2 GW
- Proverbs 18:24 ESV
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 NIV
- Proverbs 27:5-6 NIV
- Proverbs 17:17 MSG