

BBCB Bible Study Notes
From the Series: TRANSFORMED
“Transformed in Your Relational Health”
March 23, 2014

Important Principles

- God wants you to have close _____. (Proverbs 18:24, Eccl. 4:10)
- You are _____ by your friends. (Philippians 4:9, 1 Corinthians 15:33)
- Jesus is the _____ of _____. (Matthew 11:19)

Important Practices

We develop close friendships by:

1. Admitting our _____ for each other. (1 Cor. 12:12-27, Romans 12:5)
2. Making a _____ to each other. (Romans 12:10)
3. Being _____ with each other. (Ephesians 4:25)
4. Giving _____ to each other. (1 Peter 2:17)
5. Providing _____ for each other. (Galatians 6:2)
6. Living in _____ with each other. (1 Corinthians 1:10)
7. Being _____ with each other. (Ephesians 4:2, 1 Cor. 13:4)

BBCB Verse of the week: *“Most of all, let love guide your life, for then the whole church will stay together in perfect harmony.” Colossians 3:14 LB*

Recommended resource: Winning With People by John Maxwell

BBC Devotional Guide for March 23 to 29, 2014

SUNDAY: The first step in forming a friendship is to acknowledge that you need a friend. Read 1 Cor. 12:12-27. In these verses the church is compared to a human body where each part needs the other. We all need other people so that we can love and be loved, serve and be served, learn from others and share what we are learning. In a culture that prides itself on individualism and self-sufficiency, do you find it difficult to connect with others? If you have close friends thank God for them. If not, ask God to help you see how much you need other people and take the steps necessary to form some close friendships.

MONDAY: Read Romans 12:10. God is committed to us and He wants us to be committed to each other. Have you ever told a friend, "No matter what happens I want you to know that I will be there for you?" Spiritual and emotional maturity is demonstrated when you live by your commitments rather than by your emotions. When you are committed to someone you work through conflict rather than walking out on the relationship. Ask God today to help you keep your commitments.

TUESDAY: Read Ephesians 4:25. Friends tell each other the truth. Consistent honesty builds trust in a relationship but how you tell the truth is important. We need to be tactful as well as truthful. Ephesians 4:15 reminds us that we should "speak the truth in love." When you love someone you may need to tell them things that are painful or hard to hear but your goal is to heal and not to hurt, to build up and not tear down. Ask God today for the grace to consistently "speak the truth in love."

WEDNESDAY: Read 1 Peter 2:17. God wants us to respect each other. One of the ways that we show respect for others is by how we talk about them when they are not present. Gossip can destroy a reputation and a relationship very quickly. Another way that we respect others is by treating them the way we would want to be treated. Sometimes we are more polite with strangers than we are with our family and friends. Ask God to help you treat others with respect.

THURSDAY: Read Galatians 6:2. A friend is someone who helps carry your burden. One of the important ways that you can do this is by listening. This requires that we be gentle and not judgmental. People need to know that it is OK to have doubts about their faith. It is OK to have a bad day. It's OK to admit that you struggle with an addiction. The fact is that in order for you to share your burden you have to be willing to admit that you have one. Is there a burden that you need to share today?

FRIDAY: Read 1 Corinthians 1:10. Friends learn how to get along with each other. One of the ways we do this is by focusing on what we have in common. Followers of Jesus Christ are different in many respects and yet we have so much in common: we share the same Lord, the same hope, the same salvation, the same future. It is these issues we need to focus on rather than our personal differences.

SATURDAY: Read Eph. 4:2 and 1 Cor.13:4. Friends are patient with each other. The reason we need patience is that we are all different. We have different personalities and perspectives. We have different backgrounds and life experiences. We are in different places with respect to our spiritual journey. It is interesting that the very first characteristic of love mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13 is this: "love is patient." The path to patience involves understanding one another because the more we understand each other the more patient we become with each other. Ask God for the courage to pray for patience since God's answer typically involves an opportunity to develop patience.

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- You are influenced by your friends. (Philippians 4:9, 1 Corinthians 15:33)
- Jesus is the friend of sinners. (Matthew 11:19)

Important Practices

We develop close friendships by:

1. Admitting our need for each other. (1 Cor. 12:12-27, Romans 12:5)
2. Making a commitment to each other. (Romans 12:10)
3. Being honest with each other. (Ephesians 4:25)
4. Giving respect to each other. (1 Peter 2:17)
5. Providing support for each other. (Galatians 6:2)
6. Living in harmony with each other. (1 Corinthians 1:10)
7. Being patient with each other. (Ephesians 4:2, 1 Cor. 13:4)

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