

Friendship Issues We Face and What to do About Them

- A **toxic** friendship **sucks** the **life** out of you.

Toxic friends can be controlling, demanding, manipulative, draining, and ungodly. Ask God to give you wisdom about friends who are toxic in your life.

Learn how to both **Give** and **receive** grace. Some of us are great **depositors** of grace but don't let ourselves **receive** grace from others. Others do a lot of receiving but not a lot of giving. Learn how to do both.

We can all be so different. Everyone is their unique blend of temperament and personality. Learn how to **assume** THE BEST ABOUT OTHERS!

- EXPECTATIONS.:

There may never be an **all-in one** kind of friend like you had in JR. High.

Let me share with you a freeing concept: You can enjoy the **company** of more than **one** friend. You may have a great shopping friend, or coffee friend, or Bible Study friend, or crafting friend. Learn how to enjoy what each friend brings into your life without expecting your friends to bring **everything** you need into your relationship. Get that from JESUS!

- Speak Out

Am I able to speak out in my friendships? Do I have a trusted friend who has my back? Do I have a trusted friend who can call me out on my sin? How **honest** can I, should I be? Can I **rebuke in love**? Can a friendship **withstand** a rebuke or a misunderstanding? How quick am I to leave friendships **behind**? These are questions you must ask and pray that God will give you a friend that can handle these things.

- Alone-ness in friendship :

We can feel alone even when we are in a room full of women. Most often it is an **internal** struggle.

This can lead to **isolation** which often leads to **loneliness & insecurity**. These invite **lies** from the enemy about who you are, the decisions we make as to whether or not to let people **in**.

Discern what to do about **one-sided friendships**. You can learn to **be** a friend as much as you **want** a friend.

The purpose of a man's heart is like deep water but a man of understanding will draw it out. Proverbs 20:5

Ask questions to get to know people. **Offer** something of yourself to invite your friend in. Know the **difference** between friendship and a ministry/serving relationship. **Stick it out** if it is a long haul relationship but is in a season of one-sidedness because of a tragedy or difficult time. Your friend may not have much to give you for a season, but don't be quick to walk away.

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Wisdom in Friendship

Be **cautious** in friendship . (Proverbs 12:26) **Guard** your heart. (Proverbs 4:23)

Guard your **tongue** (Psalm 34:13, Proverbs 13:3)

Honor God with your friendships so God can **honor** your friendships.

- Choose to have Biblical affections and practices of a godly woman:

Love everyone. (the whole Bible). Trust **some** people. Live at **peace** with everyone. (Romans 12:18)

Pray for those who **mistreat** you.

- What about offenses

Get **over** it (1 Peter 4:8)

Love covers over a multitude of offenses

Or, get **over** it, but get **away** from it.

- Beware of scary stuff in friendship

Have nothing to do with the poison of **envy** and **jealousy**. (James 3:16) Jealousy is scarier than many things because it destroys the work of God in a person's life when you envy the blessing and goodness of the Lord that you see in someone else.

Be happy for others! *Rejoice with those who rejoice...* (Romans 12:15)

Don't call something evil that is actually good. (Isaiah 5:20) Is it really a clique? Don't call something a clique that is really just the blessing of people loving each other deeply in the church. This is not a clique. This is God-given community. Instead of calling it a clique and being angry, ask God to give you the same kind of community/friendship and then put yourself out there so you can receive it.

Closing Insights:

So, do we want a Friendship Commitment, one that is patterned in God's design?

What does that **look** like? What does it **require** from you? What does it **provide** for you?

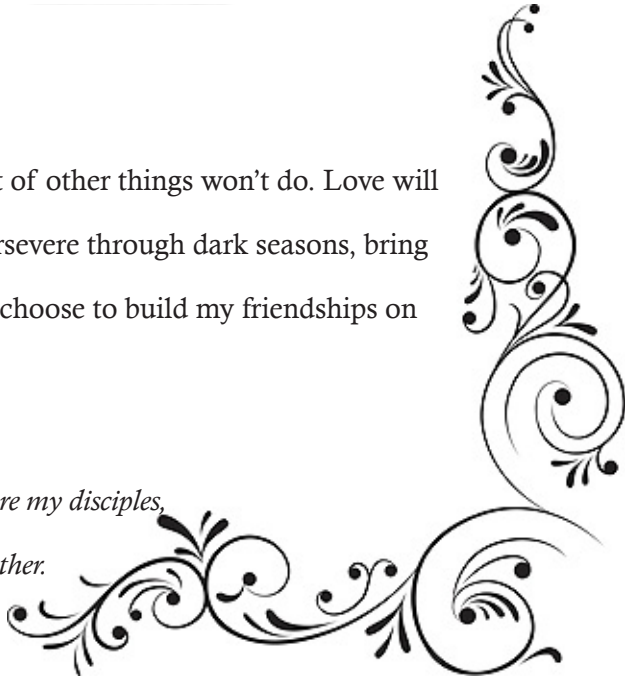
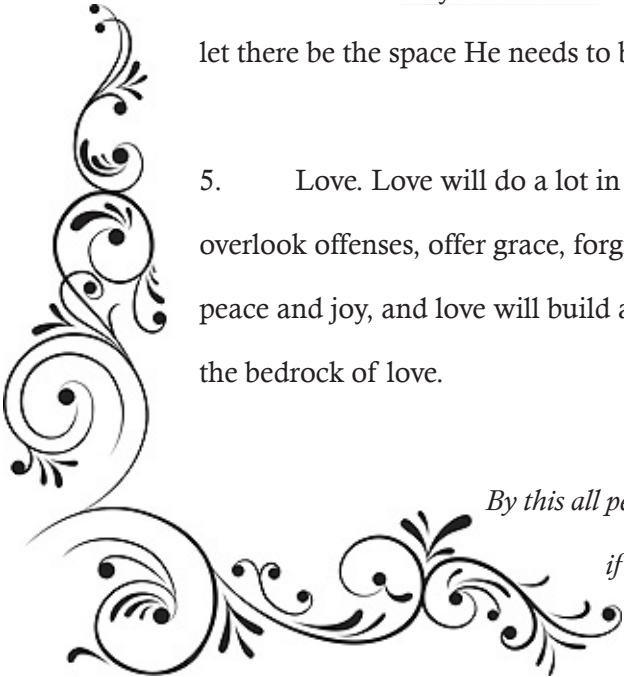
1) Take a look around you----Know who your friends are. (Take Jesus' example) Jesus had a Larger outer circle (this is your Facebook world, home-school group, mom's groups), a Smaller circle of 12, and an Inner circle of 3. Jesus gives us a pattern for our relationships: Not every relationship **deserves** covenant status.

Smaller Circle of 12: Who are my 12? Inner circle of 3: Who are my 3?



Make a Friendship Commitment

1. Time. Plain and simple, relationships need time to both develop and keep going. I accept that I have to be willing to make the investment into friendships if I want to be or have a great friend.
2. Prayer. The best thing I can do is take my friendship desires, difficulties, and joys to the Lord in prayer. If I don't have a trusted friend I can begin praying for one. If I have been already blessed with one, I can pray for my friend and thank God for our friendship. I can ask Him to protect our friendship at all times.
3. Show Up. I can know that what most friends want and need is a trusted person who will listen, love, and "be there" through the thick and thin of life. I don't have to have all the answers or be the most spiritual woman around to be a great friend. I can show up and let God use me to love and care for my friend.
4. Get Out of the Way. I can rejoice knowing that I don't have to have everything my friend needs. I can know that I was never meant to be her Savior and carry all her burdens for her or be there every moment that she needs someone. That is Jesus' role in her life so I will let there be the space He needs to be her all-in-all.
5. Love. Love will do a lot in my friendship that a lot of other things won't do. Love will overlook offenses, offer grace, forgive again and again, persevere through dark seasons, bring peace and joy, and love will build and cherish trust. I will choose to build my friendships on the bedrock of love.



*By this all people will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.*

John 13:35