



## Part Two - Friendship: Something to Build On

*"There is a friend who sticks closer than a sibling." Proverbs 18:24*

### Week One Discussion Guide

#### Attraction

1. *What are the characteristics that are most appealing to you when developing a new relationship with someone? How are they evident?*
2. *How has the media negatively influenced, or even shaped, the characteristics that society values in relationships and marriage?*
3. *Over the years, what characteristics of your friendship, relationship, or marriage have become most valued or appreciated as it has progressed and matured?*

**\*Questions for private conversation:** *What friendships in your life right now are worth investing in? For those of you who are married, what friendships interfere with your marriage?*

#### Companionship

**READ Ecclesiastes 4:8-10**

1. *What are some things you do together that you can't imagine doing alone?*
2. *Describe the things that positively feed your relationships?*
3. *Reflecting on your experiences and on the passage in Ecclesiastes, why are two better than one in a friendship or in a marriage?*

**\*Give an example** *of an area in your life where you are definitely better off working as a team...you have "a good return for your work" when you do it together.*

## **Fun!**

***"...the family that plays together stays together, too."***

1. *What are the things that make you and your spouse, or best friend, boyfriend, or girlfriend really laugh together?*
2. *What gets in the way of the fun in your relationships?*
3. *Did you ever observe your parents having fun together and enjoying each other's company? How does their marriage influence you?*

## **Transparency**

**READ 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (See also Ephesians 4:29)**

1. *In what ways can you become a better encourager of the people in your life? To your spouse or to your close friends?*
2. *What words or deeds from your friend or spouse encourage you the most?*

## **Acceptance**

***"For better or worse...?"***

**READ Romans 15:7**

We don't just hurt others with non-acceptance. We hurt ourselves. Why can it be so tough to accept the imperfections in our friends or spouses? Are there any practical steps toward acceptance?

1. *In regards to the most important people in your life, are you accepting them for who they are, or for who you want them to become?*
2. *For those who are married or considering marriage, could you be happy if the other person remained fundamentally the same person for the rest of your lives together?*

***\*Question for private conversation: Ask your spouse or friend, "Are there things I need to change that are just too challenging to accept?"***

## **Loyalty**

*Most people would say that loyalty and trust are absolute cornerstones of a healthy marriage and/or friendship. What are the behaviors that lead to trust and loyalty?*

*When I trust someone, I feel peace, confidence and freedom. When I don't trust someone, I worry, stress and micromanage circumstances—even people.*

*How do you feel about the trust and loyalty in your relationships? Do you feel peace? Confidence? Freedom?*

***\*Question for private conversation:*** *Ask your friend or spouse the question, “Is there anything I can do to increase your trust and to prove my loyalty? I want you to live in peace, confidence and freedom.”*

## **NOTES**