

BUZZ GROUPS: Are you wise in the way you choose your friends?
How do you show them loyalty and graciousness?

2. The blessing of friendships (27:6,9,17)

⁹Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:¹⁰ If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no-one to help him up! ¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

BUZZ GROUPS: Do you feel that you are experiencing the blessing of friendships at the moment? Are you supported, given counsel, being sharpened by your friends – at pastorate, at HTB, outside of church? Be honest about where you are feeling that your friendships are not providing you with blessing.

3. The battle of friendships

“The perverse stir up dissension, and gossips separate close friends” (16:28)

“Whoever covers over an offence promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends” (17:9)

“The poor are shunned even by their neighbours, but the rich have many friends. To despise the poor is to sin, but blessed are those who are kind to the needy” (14:20-21)

“Like clouds and wind without rain is the one who boasts of gifts never given” (25:14)

BUZZ GROUPS: How do you bless those who are your close friends?
Where have you not been investing the right amount of time/energy in others to encourage and help them?

4. The best friendship

“A person of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (18:24)

“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and “sinners”.’ But wisdom is proved right by her actions” (Matthew 11:18)

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they with me” (Revelation 3: 20)

“Greater love has no-one than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:13-15)

“Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters” (Hebrews 2:11)

MINISTRY TIME:

Living a Wise Life

Six sessions applying Old Testament Wisdom Literature to 21st Century Living

Week 3: Wisdom about Friendship (Proverbs 27)

⁶Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

⁷He who is full loathes honey, but to the hungry even what is bitter tastes sweet.

⁸Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who strays from his home.

⁹Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one’s friend springs from his earnest counsel.

¹⁰Do not forsake your friend and the friend of your father, and do not go to your brother’s house when disaster strikes you— better a neighbour nearby than a brother far away.

¹¹Be wise, my son, and bring joy to my heart; then I can answer anyone who treats me with contempt.

¹²The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

¹³Take the garment of one who puts up security for a stranger; hold it in pledge if he does it for a wayward woman.

¹⁴If a man loudly blesses his neighbour early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse.

¹⁵A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day;

¹⁶restraining her is like restraining the wind or grasping oil with the hand.

¹⁷As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. (Proverbs 27:6-17)

1. The basis of friendships (27:10)

“A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray” (12:26)

“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered” (22:24)

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” (17:17)

“He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the king for his friend” (22:11)