

Prayer Concerns:

Friendship
Ecclesiastes 4:7-12 [Page 1038]

A. The high price of going it alone. [Eccl. 4:7-8; Gen. 2:18-25]

1. God created us to _____
2. As fallen people, we attempt to _____
by _____

B. The blessings of true Christ-centered friendship. [Eccl. 4:9-12]

1. _____ in our _____ with _____. [12]
2. _____ in our _____. [9]
3. _____ when we _____. [10]

True friends...

- _____ when we've _____
- _____ when we're _____ to _____
4. _____ when life _____. [11]
 5. _____ when we're _____. [12]

C. The fine print about friendship.

1. _____ relationship has a _____ of _____
2. _____ is the _____ who _____

Personal Study/Growth Group Discussion Questions

Getting Started:

1. What job or problem have you tackled by yourself that you should have asked someone to help you do?

Digging Deeper:

1. As a group, share your answers to the following questions:
 - a. Do you have several people with whom you can share recreational activities?
 - b. Do you have several people with whom you can visit with little advance warning, without apology?
 - c. Do you have at least one person *nearby* you can call on in times of personal distress?
 - d. Do you have people who will care for you in practical ways if the need arises?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 4:7-12. What is the status of the man in verse 8a? How materially successful is he? At what cost? What is he questioning?
3. Read Genesis 2:18. Some Christians claim God is the only friend they need. Why is that untrue?

4. What qualities do you look for in a friend? How well are you living out those qualities in your own life?

5. A true friend will help lift us up when we've fallen. But a true friend also speaks corrective words when we've gotten off track. Read Proverbs 27:6 and 17:10. Why do we shy away from calling each other out?

6. What is the point of verse 12? Many believe the third stand is a reference to Christ. How is Jesus that third strand in your most important relationships?

Taking it Home:

1. For whom (yourself, God, others) do you toil in the different areas of life (work, home, school, church)? How much satisfaction do you derive from your toil and companions?
2. How did you score on the Friendship Test (at the beginning of the group time)? How can you seek out true Christ-centered friendships? How can your existing friendships deepen?