

Study 5

Topic: Made to have friends

Sub-theme: Made for relationships (2)

Sunday date: May 26

Key ideas: Social, corporate, the church, friendship

Key texts: Acts 2, Eph 4, Heb 10:24-27

Further reading/resources:

Recommended pre-reading: <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/5851d4ed1b631b55ebaed251/5854ece42109d3b3e19f12cc/5854ed482109d3b3e19f1d06/1481960776731/Spiritual-Friendship-Tim-Keller.pdf?format=original>

“To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable.”

— C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*

Read 1 Sam 18:1-4 and 2 Sam 1:26. What is beautiful in this depiction of friendship? Is there anything here that you think our culture has lost?

Read 1 Sam 20:24-34. How was his faithfulness to David costly for Jonathan? How does that make you feel?

Read Eccl 4:9-11 and Prov 18:24 & 27:6. What are some of the benefits of friendship? What marks out a true friend?

Read Prov 13:20. What impact does our choice of friends have? How are your friends influencing you now?

Read Prov 17:17. How does this reflect your vision for you as a friend? Your longing for friendship with others? How are you going at being this kind of friend?

Of course, friendship isn't always like this. Friends often fail. Read Job 19:19 & Ps 41:9. How does this reflect your experience? How does this describe you as a friend to others?

Read Gen 3:1-7. What is broken in human relations? And how does this affect friendship? Can you think of some ways that your friendships have been impacted?

Read Job 16. What special role does Job give to friends?

Read Matt 11:19, Luke 5:20, and John 15:9-17. How does Jesus fulfil this vision of friendship? What does it mean to you to have Jesus as your friend? What do you think is still missing in your acceptance of Jesus as your friend?