

Homegroup Questions for Sunday 30th June.

Relationships from Proverbs

- 1 Flip through the book of Proverbs and find the funniest ones you can to share with one another.
- 2 As a group, decide what are the 4 top attributes that you appreciate in a friend.

Relationships with Friends.

This is what Proverbs has to say about friendships.

27.6 Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.

27.9: Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice.

18.24: Friends come, and friends go but a true friend sticks by you like family.

18:19: Do a favour and win a friend forever; nothing can untie that bond

- 3 What can we learn about friendship from these verses?
- 4 In two's or three's, share examples of when people have shown real, sacrificial friendship to you or members of your wider family.
- 5 Individually, take a moment to look at your friendship group - is it mainly people like you, people from your own socio-economic group, all Christians? Subconsciously this is often what happens.

Here's what Proverbs has to say about this:

19:4-7 Wealth attracts friends as honey draws flies, but poor people are avoided like a plague.....

Lots of people flock around a generous person; everyone's a friend to the philanthropist.

When you're down on your luck, even your family avoids you—yes, even your best friends wish you'd get lost.

If they see you coming, they look the other way—out of sight, out of mind.

14.20 An unlucky loser is shunned by all, but everyone loves a winner.

- 6 We're not all rich obviously, but thinking in terms of similarities, is your friendship group, or your homegroup full of people who are 'like you'? If so, what could you do to change this, or is it ok?
- 7 Tricky question here which may spark a healthy debate: In Acts 2 we see the disciples fearful and anxious because their friend and leader had died but they still chose to gather and support one another. When we're having a bad time, do we take the easy route and duck out of church and homegroup night to make our life easier for ourselves? (Obviously, sometimes this is the right thing to do when big problems hit.) But being prepared to step up, to be there ready to support others even when we're hurting ourselves demonstrates true sacrificial friendship.

Relationships within Families.

- 8 Share your childhood memories of Christmas with another person in your group.

Families can be complicated and complex but worth time, effort and communication in order to build relationships. Your family life may not have been great but we can all put some of what we learn here into practice in our church family. Here is some of what Proverbs has to say about family relationships:

1:8-9 Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They are a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.

10.1 A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.

A different version says it even more concisely. *10.1 Wise son, glad father; stupid son, sad mother.*

13:1 A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not respond to rebukes. Intelligent children listen to their parents; foolish children do their own thing.

17:6 Children's children are a crown to the aged, children take pride in their parents.

19:18 Discipline your children, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death

29:15 Sensible discipline creates wisdom, spoiled adolescents embarrass their parents.

15.20: a wise child makes their parents proud; lazy students embarrass their parents.

17.21: To have a fool for a child brings grief; there is no joy for the parent of a godless fool.

17.1: A meal of bread and water in contented peace is better than a banquet spiced with quarrels.

- 9 Discuss what can we learn from the above about relationships within the family for children and for parents. If your family relationships were, or are, difficult please take the opportunity to share with the group things they could pray about for you.

Relationship with Jesus.

3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. **Matt 6:33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

10 Jesus is better than our brother, our friend, our parents, our everything. If our relationship with Jesus is right then all the rest of our relationships will fall into place. So we need to prioritize HIM. We need to consecrate ourselves to him. Set apart time with Him to walk with him, talk with him, listen to him, read what he's written. We all know this stuff. How can we make ourselves accountable in our groups to support each other as we try to put this into practice?

Sharon Blair