

**8. Risks All**

John 15:13, NIV – “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

Proverbs 17:17, NIV – “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”

Proverbs 27:9, NIV – “... the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel.”

Proverbs 27:6, NIV – “Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.”

**9. Selective**

a) The Hot Tempered - Proverbs 22:24, NIV – “Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered.”

b) Perverse People - Proverbs 16:28, NIV – “A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.”

c) The Wicked - Proverbs 12:26, NIV – “A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.”

d) Friends Of This World (Haters Of God) - James 4:4, NIV – “You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

**THE BIGGER PICTURE**

**1. They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love!**

John 13:34-35, NIV – “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

**2. Gethsemane Prayer**

John 17:20-23, NIV – “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

True friendship is powerful evangelism, it brings God's love to earth

**CONCLUSION / CHALLENGE**

1 John 4:20, NIV – “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.”

Be an investor, you will reap dividends, but if you go and look only for what people can give you, you'll miss out

They will know we are Christians by our love – the world can't see what you won't risk

**HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**

**Part 1 – The Need For Friends**

Kathy Hibbert – November 22, 2003

**FRIENDSHIP – WHAT IS IT?**

**1. Friendship (Def'n)** – A relationship of mutual regard; a feeling of liking and esteem

**2. Friend (Def'n)** - One attached to another by affection, or regard  
 An intimate; acquaintance; a patron (investor with no demands)

**3. Regard (Def'n)** – To look upon or think of in a particular way; to view or consider; as, to regard a person as a friend

To have or show consideration, respect or concern for; to heed; to esteem or think highly of; to take into consideration or account; to look at, contemplate, or observe

God needs (wants) to be our “First Friend”, but since He knows we NEED “hugs with skin on”, He has given us the gift of human friends.

**THE PROBLEM (DILEMA)**

We are compelled towards others, but the pain can drive us away

**THE BEGINNINGS – CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE**

**1. We Were Created in God's Image and Likeness**

Genesis 1:26, NIV – “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness ...’”

**2. God Is Love – We Should Live By Love**

1 John 4:16, NIV – “And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love ...”

Ephesians 5:2, NIV – “and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us ...”

1 Peter 3:8, NIV – “... all of you, live in harmony with one another ... love as brothers ...”

**3. God Is In Constant Relationship (3 in 1); We Should Live In Relationship**

John 17:20-21, NIV – “... I pray ... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.”

#### 4. We Are Designed For Relationship / Friendship:

- a) With God - Genesis 3:8, NIV – “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day ...”
- b) With Each Other - Genesis 2:18, NIV – “The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. ...’”

#### THE FALL AND FIG LEAVES – SELF-PROTECTION

Genesis 3:7, NIV – “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”

- They felt fear and shame for being seen as who they really were!
- We ALL have developed our own strategies to keep ourselves feeling safe in relationships, our fig leaf outfits
- Often we use different outfits for different situations and the layers pile up ... to the degree that we don’t even know who we are
- We might feel safer with our outfits, but leaves are not arrow-proof or bullet-proof, no matter how many layers

#### THE SOLUTION

##### 1. Accept God’s Covering

Genesis 3:21, NIV – “The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.”

- We have the blood of Christ as our sacrificial covering

##### 2. Avoid Risky Behaviour – ie. Going back

James 4:4, NIV – “You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

##### 3. Wear Spiritual Clothing

- a) The Garment of Praise - Isaiah 61:3, NIV – “... a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair ...”
- b) Robe Of Righteousness - Isaiah 61:10, NIV – “I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness ...”
- c) Full Armour Of God - Ephesians 6:13-18, NIV – “Therefore put on the full armor of God ... with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ... with the shield of faith ...”

the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit ...”

#### PRACTICAL POINTERS FROM PSALMS AND OTHERS

1. **Polite, Considerate**  
Titus 3:1-2, NIV – “Remind the people to ... be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.”
2. **Mutuality**  
Hebrews 13:16, NIV – “And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”  
Romans 12:13, NIV – “Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”
3. **Respect**  
1 Peter 2:17, NIV – “Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.”
4. **Discrete And Loyal**  
Proverbs 18:24, NIV – “A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”  
Proverbs 27:10, NIV – “Do not forsake your friend ...”  
Ecclesiastes 4:10, NIV – “If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!”  
1 Samuel 20:42, NIV – “Jonathan said to David, ‘Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the LORD’”.
5. **Cover Sins**  
Romans 4:7, NIV – “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.”  
Proverbs 17:9, NIV – “He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.”
6. **Rejoice In Their Blessings – No Envy Or Possessiveness**  
Luke 15:6, NIV – “Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’”  
1 Peter 2:1, NIV – “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.”
7. **Empathy - We Can Grieve Deeply With Them**  
Job 6:14, NIV – “A despairing man should have the devotion of his friends, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty.”  
Romans 12:15, NIV – “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”