**Relationship Topic** – What Should Friends Do? hearwelldone.org

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| When you spend time with friends, what should you be doing?  You can’t have a Bible Study twenty-four hours a day, and some friendships are more accurately "associations focused on an activity," like a ball team, or 4H Club.  Clearly the Bible speaks of things you should not do with your friends, but during your activity time with friends, or conversation time with friends; what should you do?   The Purpose of Friendship:  To Influence Others From Worldliness To Godliness  Why did God create friends? and what is the purpose of Godly friendships?  The world’s friendships are companionship focused. Sinners love to participate in sin together, they love company.  Not just the ‘big sins’ like getting drunk or robbing banks, even the things that just fall short of the glory of God.  Friendships can be consumed with activities that encourage focus on the pleasures of life that the world offers; that compromise God's standard of holiness, or separateness from the world that He desires for his people.  Friendships like this make it impossible to be salt and light in the world.  God wants you to be a shining example of the blessing He brings on the righteous!     God’s purpose for friendship is to help each other to walk straight, to live a life pleasing to God, to guard against falling away, or becoming deceived by the cares and riches and the pleasures of this world.      **Luke 8:14** - The seed that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity.  God desires friendships to always point us **away** from the things of the world, and point us **to** the things of God, so we can walk in His blessing!  That is why so many Christians never grow to maturity in Christ, they are caught up in the cares, the riches, and pleasures of this life.  Even if they are thankful for God's material blessings, God has so much more for you than that!  God wants more for his children than just enjoying life, he wants them to bear fruit - fruit that will last! That's why Godly friends are so important.    **Proverbs 27:17** - As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. |

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**Relationship Topic** – What Should Friends Do? (2) hearwelldone.org

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| The Activities (or actions) of Friendship  To Exhort, Turn, Provoke, Help, Defend, Comfort and Counsel others, to live like Jesus.  #1 Exhort Them:   A Daily Relationship of Encouragement and Warning  **Hebrews 3:13** - But **exhort one another daily**, while it is called today; **lest any of you be hardened** through the deceitfulness of sin.      [Other versions say exhort or encourage, or warn one another daily]  **Exhort: G3870** parakaleō    par-ak-al-eh'-o  ***to* callnear***,* that is,invite*,* **invoke*,*** beseech, entreat, to ask earnestly, or petition urgently, call for, (be of good)comfort, desire, give exhortation, pray.**To come alongside**.    “Come with me!  Let’s do this together!”  **Why is it so important to exhort one another every day?**    Because sin is deceitful and it will harden you to the things of God, and the voice of God.  That still small voice, that can so easily be drowned out.  That’s why friends need to encourage, and warn each other daily!    Deceitfulness is a word that has always scared me.  Because if you are struggling with deception, you can’t see it.  Deceitfulness always leads to sin, and sin hardens you – it makes you calloused and dull, insensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.  Is your heart hardened toward something or someone?  Is it possible that you might be suffering from deception in some area?  If so, you are unaware of it.  Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any area of your life that needs to be conformed to God’s Word.   That’s why it is so important to have **someone in your life** who is **also seeking to obey God every day**, and learn discernment, so that God can use both of you to guard against the Devil’s attempts to deceive you.  Walk with the wise and grow wise, don’t have many companions, or be the companion of fools, or you will be destroyed. Instead choose friends that build each other up daily.  **Proverbs 18:24** - A man of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. (NASB)  **Proverbs 13:20** - He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools will be destroyed.  **I Thessalonians 5:11** - Therefore **encourage** one another and **build each other up**, just as in fact you are doing.  The first activity of friendship is to exhort them. |

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| #2 Turn Them:   Friends are to **turn each** other from things that lead to death, or separation, in their relationship with God.   **James 5:19-20** - My brothers and sisters, if one of you should **wander from the truth** and someone should bring that person back, be sure of this: Whoever turns a sinner **from the error of their way** will **save them from death** and cover over a multitude of sins.  **Proverbs 24:11-12** - **Rescue those being led away to death**; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.  If you say, "But we knew nothing about this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?  Does not he who guards your life know it?  Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?  **James 5:16** - Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.  **Sin will separate you from God**.  **You will not hear him**.  A Godly friend can prevent this.  It’s just that most friends are either unaware of their responsibility in this area, or unwilling to call out their friends on compromising behavior.   This is usually because  a) They are afraid their friend will accuse them of being judgmental, or b) they don’t recognize the compromise of sin, and enjoy participating in it themselves.     The truth is that we can never obey God’s commands to rebuke, or warn, or save from or turn others from sin, **without** **making** a judgment of some kind.  Not judging people, but a righteous judgment of ungodly behaviors must occur if we are ever to turn people from sin in their life, to the blessing God has for them.   **2 Thessalonians 3:13-15** - As for you, brothers, **do not grow weary in doing what is right**. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person.  **Do not associate with them**, in order that they may feel ashamed.  Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but **admonish him** as a brother.   **Admonish**:  **G3560**  noutheteō  noo-thet-eh'-o **To call to attention**, to put in mind, to caution or reprove gently: - rebuke warn. **Rebuke**:  to stop the mouth of, to check, to silence, to restrain, to scold them, find fault with **Reprove**: to disapprove of their behavior, to refute, come against, to confront to their face as blameworthy, to censure, to accuse as guilty.  The Bible clearly instructs us as followers of Christ.  If one of our friends, who claims Jesus as their Savior; if they are conducting themselves in a way contrary to God's word; to the Fear of the LORD; in a way contrary to How God’s Word tells us to live or to treat others: we as their friend are responsible to call them on it.  TO TURN THEM -  Not to continue to hang out with them.  Their life is at stake!  Their relationship with God is at stake!  Their ability to be blessed by God is at stake!  Don’t you love them enough to say something? |

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| **Proverbs 27:6** - Better is open rebuke, than concealed love.  **Faithful are the wounds of a friend**, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.   Another version says, “wounds from a friend can be trusted.”   **If you are not willing to confront your friends** on behaviors that are not Godly, humble or kind, by speaking the truth in love… **you are not a friend**.  You allow them to continue in the very things that will separate them from God.  You are a ‘willing party to their death’ like a parent who won’t discipline their son.   The risk is they may accuse you of judging them, or thinking you are better than they are.  But if you Fear the LORD, rather than men, **if you love them** and want God’s best for them, you will have the courage to confront them in love.  Even to not associate with them as you did before, in order to obey God’s Word, and to turn them from worldliness to Godliness, so God can bless them.   Ask God to give you courage.  Walk with someone who Fears the LORD, and love your friends enough to speak the truth in love.   The second activity of friendship is to Turn Them.  #3 Provoke Them We are to poke, prod, provoke each other, and look for ways to motivate each other to acts of love and good works.    Love for God is obeying what he says.  **John 14:15** - If you love me, you will obey what I command.    Good works – are doing the things God tells us to do.  Friends help each other do these things!  **Hebrews 10:12-13** - And let us **consider** one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.  Consider:  katanoeo.  to observe fully: - behold, consider, discover, perceive what they're doing.  Provoke:  even implies a little discomfort if needed, to push each other towards Godliness.  The New Living says :  Let us **think of ways to motivate one another** to acts of love and good works.  And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.    The third activity of friendship is to Provoke Them - to love and good works. |

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**Relationship Topic** –The Devil’s Lie to Young Adults (5) hearwelldone.org

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| #4 Help Them Friends are there when you need them, not just physically and practically, but also emotionally and Spiritually.   **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10** - Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed.  If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.  Do you know that **if you will not confront your friends in love**, on the things they are doing that are not pleasing to God...  They will fall!  and they will fall alone!  even though you are there.  Help them.  Two are better than one.  Help each other!  The fourth activity of friendship is to help them - practically, but also help them to be in position to be blessed by God.   #5 Defend Them Friends have your back.   **Ecclesiastes 4:12** - Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.  Defend each other - not just from other people, but defend them from the devil's plan to separate them from God!   The fifth activity of friendship is to defend them.  #6 Comfort Them Not just sympathize and empathize, but actually come alongside them.  **Galatians 6:2** - **Bear ye one another's burdens**, and so fulfill the law of Christ.  **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, **so that we can comfort those in any trouble** with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.  (Comfort here is the same word as EXHORT)  **Exhort: G3870** parakaleō    par-ak-al-eh'-o  From G3844 and G2564; **to call near**, **invite,** invoke  - beseech, call for, (be of good) comfort, desire, (give) exhort (-ation), intreat, pray. **Come alongside**.   The sixth activity of friendship is to comfort them, like the Holy Spirit is our comforter - He comes alongside. |

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| #7 Counsel Them  **Proverbs 27:9** - Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel.  **The kind of counsel you give – determines the kind of friend you are**.   Is it Godly counsel?  or the counsel of the world?  Only if you are faithful daily in God’s Word will your mind be transformed, to be able to give Godly counsel by the Holy Spirit, otherwise your counsel will be worldly (coming from the inputs that you allow in your life).    And **finally is it earnest counsel? timely, not delayed or avoided**?  Urgent, because it is that important!  Some friends have Godly counsel they could give, they know what’s right, they know what the Word of God says, but they won’t confront their friend for fear they may offend them, or that friend will turn on them.  They prefer the praise of men over the praise of God.  They don’t want to risk the relationship.  But God tells us to be a friend that loves them enough to tell them the truth; to give earnest, timely counsel to turn them from worldliness to Godliness.   **Your friend needs your help!**  Sometimes they don’t see things!  They can become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin!   Why do you think God has put you in their life as their friend?   **Help your friend** to always be in position to be blessed by God!  The seventh activity of friendship is to counsel them.  Good counselors know what God says, and put it into practice.  They counsel out of their experience, their faith, and their obedience.   Make sure your friendships focus on these activities that bring much fruit.  **Don't just participate in events as companions, form partnerships that pursue God's purpose and plan's for each other.**  God will use you!  You will be iron sharpening iron. |

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