



BIBLE

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **11th Grade | Unit 7**

BIBLE 1107

FRIENDSHIP, DATING, AND MARRIAGE

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Friendship, Dating, and Marriage

Introduction

The purpose of this LIFE PAC® is that each of you will come to know the full joy and blessing of God in every vital area of your life. In your friendships, in your dating, and eventually in your marriage, you will recognize the potential for godliness and the potential of blessing to others that is inherent in the scriptural exercise of these relationships.

In contrast to the emptiness that the world has to offer, you can know fullness in Christ. In contrast to spiritual poverty, you can be rich. As a Christian you can taste of the savor of Christ in all of your divinely appointed relationships. As a believer you should remain teachable in the areas where you cannot afford to learn by experience, and you should increase in confidence in the revealed truth of Scripture. God's grace abounds towards those who are open to Christ and recognize their need for wisdom and direction from their heavenly Father. The heavenly Father is aware that Satan will deceive those who turn a deaf ear. Through the study of the Word of God, a thirst for holiness will be stimulated and courage will be provided.

The *fear of the Lord* is the beginning of both wisdom and knowledge. The fear of the Lord will keep Christians from sin. Your relationship with Christ becomes more personal as you purpose to honor him in your friendships and strive to be more friendly, to plan more wisely, and to enjoy more fully your interhuman relationships.

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFE PAC. When you have finished this LIFE PAC, you should be able to:

1. Describe the nature of true friendship.
2. List the exhortations of the Scriptures relative to friendship.
3. Explain the ultimate role of friendship.
4. Identify the personal responsibility in selecting friends.
5. Compare the alternatives and consequences of failing to accept responsibility.
6. Explain dating in its true perspective.
7. Relate the dangers inherent in dating.
8. List the potentials for good dating.
9. Explain the principles of personal relationships found in Scripture.
10. Identify the consequences of holding non-scriptural attitudes and relationships in dating.
11. Describe the true nature of marriage.
12. List God's stated principles of marriage.
13. Explain the scriptural basis for marriage.
14. Relate the conditions for divine blessing in marriage.
15. Categorize the consequences of failure in marriage.

1. FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is a relationship between two individuals that is basic to other human relationships. Friendship allows a climate where a person can grow and mature. Friendship is the context of Christian service and fellowship. Friendship is the spirit of teachableness.

Friendship involves the attitude of unselfishness. In this brief discussion of friendship, you will look into the meaning of friendship, the necessity for friendship, the possibility of friendship, and the responsibility of friendship.

Section Objectives

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Describe the nature of true friendship.
2. List the exhortations of the Scriptures relative to friendship.
3. Explain the ultimate role of friendship.
4. Identify personal responsibility in selecting friends.
5. Compare the alternatives and consequences of failing to accept responsibility.

Vocabulary

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

adversity

composite

publican

sovereignty

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.



Read Proverbs 17:1–28; 18:1–24; and 27:1–27

THE MEANING OF FRIENDSHIP

As in every relationship, the Christian does not have the same view of friendship as the unbeliever. Although these two views may include some common concepts, the meaning and motivation and goals do differ.

As in many human relationships, Christians can learn the true picture of friendship from our relationship to God. We learn what true fatherhood is when we become a child of God. We know what true friendship is when we become a friend of God. Although finding a definition of friendship in the Scriptures may be difficult, finding references to the characteristics of friendship or examples of friendship is not difficult.

Scriptural characteristics. Solomon, writing in the book of Proverbs, frequently described some of the traits of a friend. A **composite** of a friend can be made from such references by Solomon and other writers of Scripture. In Proverbs 17:17, Solomon stated, “A friend loveth at all times ...” A true friend is not merely a fair-weather friend. Changing circumstances do not influence this relationship. A true friend’s love is unchanging. Solomon continued by saying (Proverbs 17:17) “... a brother is born for **adversity**.” The proving grounds for friendship is adversity. Many things are weeded out in adversity, but friendship thrives in adversity. One of God’s provisions for us in this life, which is full of adversity, is friendship. Friends are faithful, according to Solomon, and (Proverbs 18:24) “... sticketh closer than a brother.” Blood may be thicker than water, but nothing is as close as friends. Solomon stated (Proverbs 27:6), “Faithful are the wounds of a friend ...” The discerning hurt of a friend is designed to help. The correction of love is the correction of a friend. In Proverbs 27:10, Solomon stated, “... for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.” The proximity of a friend is much to be desired over a relative who is at a distance. In Proverbs 27:9, the writer stated, “Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so cloth the sweetness of a man’s friend by hearty counsel.” No counselor can be found like the one who loves you and in whom you can trust.

Amos asked the question (Amos 3:3), “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Fellowship is a maker of true friendship. The identification with a friend is so close that you cannot distinguish him from your own soul. According to Proverbs 11:13, “A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.” Friends pass on neither rumors nor information that is either damaging or unprofitable. In Jesus’s parables of the lost sheep, coin, and son (Luke 15:3–32), friends were the ones with whom the people of the parables desired to rejoice when the lost items were returned. The teaching of the Scriptures is obvious: A friend is neither an enemy nor a stranger. A friend is faithful and is neither passive nor insensitive. A friend is one who is closer than a brother and is a companion, a comrade, a helper, and a counselor. A friend is one who hurts us if it helps or sharpens us and is one who walks with us.

The closest relationship we can know is the relationship we can have with our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus gave us insight into friendship. In John 15:13–15, he underscored the characteristics of a true friend. A true friend is one who loves his friend in such a way that he would lay down his life for him. A true friend is also one who keeps Jesus’s commandments. A true friend is one who shares with his friends all that the Father has made known to him.

Scriptural examples. In Exodus 33:11 we read, “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend ...” Something more can be found than just nearness in the phrase *face to face*. The context indicates that God wanted Moses to know him and to respect him, yet to commune with him unafraid. This principle underlies the examples of true friendship in the Scriptures. Read 2 Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8, and James 2:23 for another scriptural example of true friendship.

Complete this activity.

1.1 In each of the following passages, an example of friendship is given. Using your Bible, identify these friends in each passage. Write the names of the friends and what appears to be the most obvious characteristic of that friendship.

- a. Ruth 1:16–17 _____

- b. 1 Samuel 22:23 _____

- c. 2 Samuel 10:2 _____

- d. 1 Kings 5:1 _____

- e. 2 Samuel 9:1–13 _____

- f. 2 Samuel 15:32–37 _____

- g. 2 Samuel 15:19–21 _____

Match these items.

- | | | |
|------------|----------------------|---|
| 1.2 | _____ Luke 15:3–32 | a. a friend is closer than a brother |
| 1.3 | _____ Proverbs 17:17 | b. friendship grows in adversity |
| 1.4 | _____ Proverbs 18:24 | c. refers to faith |
| 1.5 | _____ Proverbs 27:9 | d. refers to agreement |
| 1.6 | _____ Amos 3:3 | e. parables of things lost |
| | | f. sweetness of a friend's counsel |



Read John 15:9–27 and 1 Corinthians 13:1–13

THE NECESSITY FOR FRIENDSHIP

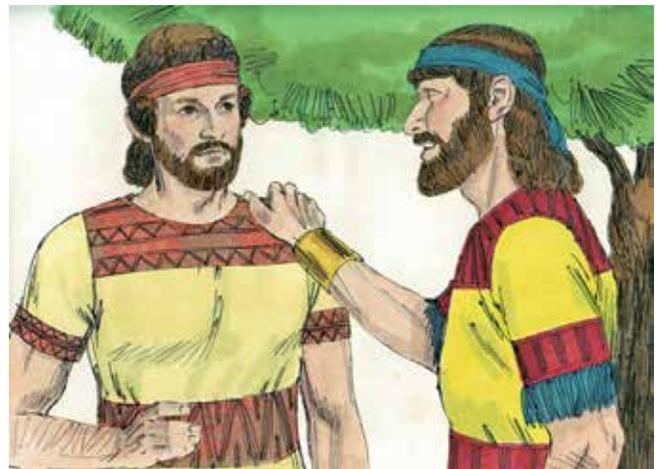
Friendship for a Christian is not only desirable but is also needful. A Christian cannot develop fully without the input of friends and the output of friendliness. A desire for growth in the Christian life makes friendship a necessity. First, friendship is necessary because it is in obedience to the commands and admonitions of the Scriptures. Second, friendship is necessary because the believer cannot mature and develop fully without it.

For obedience. In John 15:14 we read, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” We learn true friendship from our relationship to God. Christ has identified who his friends are by giving them certain basic principles. Friendship is based upon a scriptural relationship to another person. In the case of the Lord Jesus, that relationship is one of *master* and *slave*. We are to give Christ our total obedience. Our relationships to our fellow men will vary. Such relationships include husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, employer and employee, and king and citizen. In every relationship friendship is possible.

If we can be friends of the only true God based on a right relationship of obedience, surely every other personal relationship can be based on friendship through obedience to the Scriptures. If a son is disobedient, he cannot establish a friendship relationship with his father. However, if a son is obedient, a basis for friendship exists. Friendship has its base in the Scriptures, not in varied human relationships or in personality, but in obedience to God’s Word.

For maturity. John 15:12–13 records, “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Throughout Scripture love is a mark of maturity; such a standard is evident in Paul’s summary of love in 1 Corinthians chapter 13. In Paul’s statement in Galatians 5:14 he declares, “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Jesus said (John 13:35), “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

Love is a mark of discipleship and a mark of friendship. One of God’s attributes is love. The love for a friend that would cause one to lay down his life for that friend is a mature love. This kind of love could be, and will be, costly. This love has cost many their lives. One of the traits of friendship is that it does not count the cost. Friendship has been perfected when we love a friend as Christ has loved us.



| David and Jonathan

Answer true or false.

- 1.7 _____ Christian friendship is not necessary.
- 1.8 _____ Our friendship with Christ requires obedience.
- 1.9 _____ Friendship is possible in all our human relationships.
- 1.10 _____ Disobedience harms friendships.
- 1.11 _____ Friendship has its base in varied human relationships.

Complete these statements.

- 1.12 Christians are Christ's friends when they do whatsoever he _____ .
- 1.13 Every personal relationship should be based on the _____ .
- 1.14 A mark of maturity revealed in the Scriptures is _____ .
- 1.15 Love is a mark of a. _____ and of b. _____ .
- 1.16 Paul wrote a summary of love in _____ .



Read Luke 10:25–37 and Matthew 25:31–16

THE POSSIBILITY FOR FRIENDSHIP

A lawyer came to Jesus one day and asked him this question (Luke 10:25–37), "... Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus instructed him with two questions (Luke 10:26), "... What is written in the Law? how readest thou?" In response to these questions the lawyer gave a full and right answer. He said (Luke 10:27), "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." You will remember these are the exact words that Jesus gave in answer to the question (Matthew 22:36), "... Which is the great commandment in the law?" Of course Jesus accepted the lawyer's answer, and the Scriptures record this response from the lawyer (Luke 10:29), "But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" Surely the question could be interpreted to say, "To whom am I to be a friend?" Jesus

answered him in a parable, the one which we know as the parable of the Good Samaritan, found in Luke 10:30–37.

Jesus did not make a list of neighbors or friends for the lawyer. Neither did he give a list of characteristics of a friend so that the lawyer could find his own. Rather, the Lord Jesus showed the lawyer that friends are a certain kind of people; they are neighborly. Friends are neighbors who show mercy. They are the kind of people who react positively to the misery and hardships of others. One who was looked upon by the Jews as an outcast, a Samaritan, became a neighbor to a Jew in need.

Who is my neighbor? Everyone whom God brings into my circle of influence who needs me. If I am friendly, I will be friendly both to those I know and to those I do not know.



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