

# Practicing the Christian Life: Friendships

## Galatians 6:1-5

7/30/23

### Discussion Questions

#### Prepare

Have you ever thought of friendship making as a spiritual practice? Do we value friendships as much as the ancients did?

#### Prepare

*Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. <sup>2</sup> Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup> If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, <sup>5</sup> for each one should carry their own load.* Galatians 6:1-5

1. *"There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."* Proverbs 18:24 Do you have a friend who is closer to you than a brother or sister? Do you have a friend who is closer to you than your spouse?
2. Reflect on Jesus telling his disciples (And you, if you know him): *"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not understand what his master is doing. But I have called you friends..."* John 15:15
3. One quality of being a friend is constancy. Share a story of a friend who is always there for you in the good times and the bad. Share a time when you did the same for them or another friend..
4. How hard is it to be there for others? What are the costs?
5. How can we carry a person's burdens without appropriating them entirely and without getting sucked into their burden so their burden ends up crushing us?
6. Share a time when you were caring for a person and their need(s) overwhelmed you.
7. How is this statement in Matthew 11:28-29 actually an offer of friendship to us?  
*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."*

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8. Brainstorm songs that capture what a true friend does, then play one of them.
9. How do we balance "*Carry each other's burdens*" (vs. 2) with "*for each one should carry their own load.*" (vs. 6)
10. "*Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently...*" (vs. 1) Have you ever been involved in an intervention or helped a person out of a sin that had entrapped them?
11. Share examples of people who fell from grace whose lives would have benefited had they had a friend close enough and loving enough to restore them.
12. How transparent of a person are you? How close to you let people get to you?
13. Are you investing enough of your time to develop friendships as defined by this passage?
14. Reflect on: "*If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else...*" (Vss. 3-4)
15. What does Paul mean by: "*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*" (vs. 2)
16. Reflect on Isaiah 53: 4-6 and the burdens Jesus carried for us.  
*Surely he took up our pain  
and bore our suffering,  
yet we considered him punished by God,  
stricken by him, and afflicted.  
<sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions,  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed.  
<sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
each of us has turned to our own way;*

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*and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.*

17. "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. John 15:13 Have you been able to pull this into your heart so that it empowers you to be a friend to others and allow others to be a friend to you?"