

HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Lesson Nine

Friends (2): How to Make and Keep Friends

Burden to Impart:

God desires that men would not live selfishly, only caring about themselves. He wants us to love our neighbors as ourself and treat them as we desire others to treat us (Matt. 22:39; 7:12). These are the basic principles for us to live happily in this world with others. To make friends and keep good friendships we must learn to be friendly and loyal (Prov. 18:24; 17:17), and we must also learn not to listen to or repeat gossip about our friends (Prov. 16:28; 17:9). To build up a good friendship we must learn to willingly share with our friends (John 15:13).

Memory Verse: A man who has friends must himself be friendly.
Proverbs 18:24b

Facts to Teach:

1. The basic principle that God gave us for dealing with others is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39). In the same way that we need love and care so do others. We should be just as concerned with other's needs and interests as we are for our own.
2. Based upon this we can realize that God expects us to treat others in the same way that we want them to treat us (Matt. 7:12).
3. Real friendships are not simply "found." They are "made." If they are not taken care of properly they will soon be destroyed.
4. In order to make friends we need to be friendly toward others. When we smile we express warmth and kindness toward others. When we show others a frown or ignore greeting them they will feel that we do not like them, or at least that we do not care for them (Prov. 18:24). In what other ways can we be friendly?
5. In order to keep friends we must be loyal to them (Prov. 17:17; 27:10). We all have ups and downs, good points and bad points. If we get upset with our friends for their mistakes or failures and act unkindly toward them instead of showing love and forgiveness we will not be able to have a very long or deep friendship.
6. In order to keep friends we must learn not to listen to people who like to spread gossip and bad talk about them (Prov. 16:28). Some people purposely try to damage friendships so that they can cause others to leave their friends and follow them. Also, we must not gossip about our friends and expose their weaknesses to others (Prov. 17:9). This will deeply hurt their feelings and cause them to not trust us any more.
7. If we want to build up friendships with others we must learn to share what we have with them. It is not easy to be friends with a selfish person. Also, we must learn to be helpful to our friends. A person who is bossy and pushy will not have friends for long.