



September 27, 2020

Pastor Eric Wakeling

Spiritual Friendship John 15:13-15

Why do we need spiritual friendship?

John 15:15 – “No longer do I call you slaves...but I have called you friends.”

- Jesus modeled this kind of friendship for us.
- Jesus called us His friends.
- We live out the love of God in friendship.
- We need the wisdom of each other.

What is spiritual friendship?

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

- Spiritual friendship is expressing the love of God to another person. Spiritual friendship involves cultivating a covenant friendship where I can naturally share about my life with God. It is grounded in relationship to God and a commitment to support, encourage and pray for one another.
- “The fountain and source of friendship is love. The word amicus (friend) comes from the word amor (love). A friend is called a guardian of love. Friendship is that virtue by which spirits are bound by ties of love.” – Aelred of Rievaulx - Spiritual Friendship (1150 AD)
- Loyal spiritual friends help one another experience their true belovedness in Christ.

How can I be a spiritual friend?

- Share your life with people. 1 Thessalonians 2:8 - “Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own very lives, because you had become very dear to us.”
- Be willing to sharpen and be sharpened. Proverbs 27:17 - “Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
- Love unconditionally through the power of the Holy Spirit. Proverbs 17:17 - “A friend loves at all times...”
- Practice the biblical “one anothers” in friendship.
Love one another, encourage one another, bear one another’s burdens, care for one another, accept, be kind to, live in harmony with, forgive, be hospitable to, honor, belong to, be devoted to, speak truthfully, teach, agree, look out, lay down your lives, do not provoke, do not grumble, do not envy one another.

How can I make a spiritual friend?

- Be honest with your fears and your longings and surrender them to God.
- Engage in community at church beyond the worship service: LifeGroups, Six Packs, Retreats, Serving, Discipleship, etc.
- Invite people into friendship casually and then grow in intimacy.
- Welcome people into your home.
- Don’t give up.

Response:

- Take a friend inventory: Draw a lifeline and divide it into seven-year segments. Put the initials of friends who have been important to you in each segment. What do you notice about your friendships? What kind of friends do you tend to gather around you? What does this tell you about yourself?
- Draw two columns on a piece of paper. Title one “Characteristics of a Spiritual Friend.” Title the other “Characteristics of Myself as a Friend.” Now fill the columns with your observations. What did you learn about yourself?
- Reach out and invite someone to coffee. Take the risk and reach out. Ask the deeper questions and see how God blesses your spiritual friendships.

Digging Deeper

John 15:13-15

1 Preparation

If possible, find a quiet and comfortable place. Rid yourself of distractions such as your phone, television, school work, interruptions from others, etc. Open yourself to God and intend to learn from Him. *"Lord, here I am, I present myself to You. Open my heart to the truth of what is going on in my life."*

2 Read the Text: John 15:13-15 & Proverbs 27:17

Read the text a few times until you have a clear understanding of what the passage is saying.

3 Contemplate + Journal

Spend time thinking about and journaling your thoughts to the following questions. If you meet with a LifeGroup, you can also share your responses with them and have a great discussion.

- What is a word or phrase the Lord impressed on you in this time? Meditate on that.
- Ask the Lord, "Remind me of my community...how has a discerning, encouraging, and challenging friend helped me in my journey?" Thank the Lord for this friend.
- Ask the Lord, "Lord, who is someone I can invest in as a spiritual friend?"
- How and what do you feel? Is there a specific situation in your life that relates to this passage today? Pray through this for a moment.

4 Praise + Worship

Worship is an act or mindset shift that realigns us to the reality of who God is. Find this song on Spotify, YouTube, AppleMusic, etc. and the lyrics if you would like to read or sing along. Make this song your prayer and declaration of praise and worship as you hear truths being sung over you. Allow the Lord to minister to your heart in this time.

Song Recommendation: ["Friend of God" by Israel Houghton](#)

5 Closing Prayer

Spend some time in prayer. Whether it is simply sitting in God's loving presence, expressing thankfulness and gratitude, and/or offering up supplication, pray what is on your heart in this time.

6 Blessing

May you know that you are a friend of God; You are His beloved and are precious to Him [John 15:15](#)

NEXT STEPS

Your Response Today: Do you want to take a next step in your faith, ask for prayer, or learn more about following Jesus? Take a moment to fill out our online connection card by texting “**Card**” to **970-00**

Connect in a LifeGroup: Grow in community together this fall with others from Calvary. There will be some groups meeting online, as well as smaller off-campus groups meeting in-person. Browse groups to join, or consider helping to start a new group by filling out the Leader Interest Form at calvarylife.org/groups

Discover More: Learn about ways you can connect to life at Calvary including weekly pastoral updates and online events, find resources to receive care and help through this season, and discover how we are reaching out with the good news of Jesus locally and globally at CalvaryLife.org

RESOURCES

Worship Services: Our Worship Services will be streamed live online from the Worship Center each Sunday at 9:30am in English and there is also a service streamed live from the Chapel in Spanish at 11:00am. Find ways to watch and resources for you and your family on our website at calvarylife.org/live We also have on-campus outdoor services now available. RSVP is required - learn more and sign up on our Church App. Find out more at calvarylife.org/app

Family Activities: Find ways to help your kids grow through fun activities to build their faith each Sunday and throughout the week with great resources provided by Calvary Town at calvarylife.org/town

Find Help or Give Help: Do you need assistance or encouragement in this season? Or, do you want to get involved and be available to help others in need? Find ways to receive help or give help at calvarylife.org/help

Ways to Give: Please pray for those who are affected economically by this virus and for our church finances as well, that God would sustain and provide through this challenging season. Please consider mailing a donation to the church or you can give online simply and securely this week at calvarylife.org/give

September Giving Update: We are profoundly grateful for your faithful support and look forward to how God will use the generosity of our church family to make a difference for His kingdom locally and globally. After the first two months of our new fiscal year, which began July 1, Calvary's general fund for Church Ministries is below budget by \$40,000 and the missions fund for Reach Ministries is ahead by \$12,000. Discover more at calvarylife.org/udpate

On-Campus Worship • Sundays at 7:00pm in the Courtyard

Thank you for joining us on campus to worship! Reserve your seats weekly using the Church Center App (available in the App Store or Google Play) or online at calvarylife.org/oncampus

Holy Spirit

There's nothing worth more that will ever come close,
No thing can compare You're our living hope, Your Presence

I've tasted and seen of the sweetest of loves,
Where my heart becomes free and my shame is undone,
In Your Presence Lord

Chorus: *Holy Spirit You are welcome here, Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere
Your glory God is what our hearts long for, To be overcome by Your Presence Lord*

Let us become more aware of Your Presence, Let us experience the glory of Your goodness

Alleluia

Father we have come, To bow down in worship, Lifting up our hearts, We bow down in praise

*Chorus: Alleluia, Lover of my soul, Alleluia, With all of heaven we are singing
(With all of heaven we are singing), (With all of heaven we are singing)*

Bright and morning star, Your eyes blaze like fire, Shining like the sun, You're our one desire

All the angels cry out holy is the Lord (God), All the earth replies holy are You

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Holy are You

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Nothing But The Blood

What can wash away my sin, Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
What can make me whole again, Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Chorus: O precious is the flow, That makes me white as snow, No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus

For my pardon this I see, Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
For my cleansing this my plea, Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Nothing can for sin atone, Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
Naught of good that I have done, Nothing but the blood of Jesus

This is all my hope and peace, Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
This is all my righteousness, Nothing but the blood of Jesus

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Build My Life

Worthy of ev'ry song we could ever sing, Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring
Worthy of ev'ry breath we could ever breathe, We live for You

Jesus the name above ev'ry other name, Jesus the only one who could ever save
Worthy of ev'ry breath we could ever breathe, We live for You, We live for You

*Chorus: Holy there is no one like You, There is none beside You,
Open up my eyes in wonder and show me who You are
And fill me with Your heart, And lead me in Your love to those around me*

*Bridge: I will build my life upon Your love, It is a firm foundation,
I will put my trust in You alone, And I will not be shaken*

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