**Get Smart (Week 3) – Be A Friend**

**January 21-22, 2023**

Hey everyone! Welcome to week 3 of our Get Smart series. We have been studying the Book of Proverbs and hopefully this has been a time that you have been able to reflect and apply these Godly characteristics to your life.

The Book of Proverbs is written by a king named Solomon, who some considered to be one of the wisest men to ever live! The past two weeks, we have looked at and talked about how to be righteous and how to be wise. This week we are going to challenge you to yet again.

Let me ask you this question: Who in here has a good friend? Or better yet, a best friend?

Someone or multiple people are probably coming to your mind right now.

I am sure that each of us in here want to have good friends and want to be a good friend. But what exactly does it mean to be a good friend and why is it important?

Has anyone ever heard of a song called, “Let Me Tell You ‘Bout My Best Friend”? It goes a little like this…

**(Leaders Note: Yes, in the best singing voice you can muster, try to sing the first line of that song…or just enough to where some of them recognize it. I believe in you!)**

Well, today...I would like to tell you about one of my very best friends

**(Leaders Note: Share about one of your best friends and why that friendship is so important to you.)**

Right now, I want you to think of who your good/best friends are and what makes you consider them as such. Your answers might be that they are funny… or honest… or your sibling… or your neighbor. Those are all great answers but I think our THP for this week will help us with how we should want to consider ourselves as friends and what we should look for in our friendships with others.

**This week’s THP is: God wants us to BE A FRIEND!**

I think there are three important qualities to being a good friend: someone who is LOYAL, someone who LISTENS, and someone who LOVES.

Do you consider yourself as someone who is loyal? Or listens? Or someone who loves?

Are you someone that your friends can come to about anything and that they can trust to stick by them? Are you someone that listens well not talking over others and actually getting to know people? Do you love like Jesus - meaning that you care for everyone! Not just the people who look and act like you.

If you hear those three words and think those don’t apply to you or aren’t very important, then I’d like to challenge you to think a little bit deeper about friendship. One of the main themes of the Bible is relationships: relationships between people, relationships between people and God, etc.

One of the most important relationships that we can have is a godly friendship! We can’t do life alone. We need Christian friendships where we can encourage and be encouraged.

We’re going to take a minute and look at some verses in the Book of Proverbs that teach us about being a good friend, and also a few that go with each of the words (loyalty, listening, loving).

The reason I chose these three words is that I believe they are all similar and they start with the same letter, which makes it easier for you to remember! Plus, if you look up how to be a good friend online, which is what everyone seems to do these days; it gives you results like “30 simple steps to being a good friend” and…well…30 steps is not very simple!

So I want you to listen to each of these verses. Pick out which one stands out to you. Maybe God is asking you to work on a specific area where he wants you to become a better friend. Or maybe he is showing you what kind of friendships you need to be seeking out.

**(Leaders Note: Feel free to expound on each verse as you feel necessary. you don’t just have to read them!)**

**Choosing friends**

Proverbs 22:24 - "Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered."

Proverbs 12:26 - "The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray."

**Loyalty - A good friend is loyal**

Proverbs 18:24 - "One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

Proverbs 27:17 - "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

**Listening - A good friend listens**

Proverbs 13:20 - "Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm."

Proverbs 18:13 - "To answer before listening - that is folly and shame."

**Loving - A good friend is loving**

Proverbs 17:17 - "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity."

John 13:35 - "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

As I mentioned in the beginning, it's not only important to look for these traits in your friends, but it's also important to BE these traits so that you can be a good friend as well. My goal is not for you to sit here and think “I’m not a good friend” or “I have friends who aren’t \_\_\_”.

But I do want you to consider for a moment what it looks like to have godly friendships and what it looks like for you yourself to be a godly friend.

This week I want you challenge you to practice selfless friendship. Identify one friend in your life who may need extra support or encouragement, and pray for them. Write them a short note, or even doodle a picture, to let them know how much they are loved and appreciated. If possible, make an effort to daily communicate, whether in person or through text/phone call/etc., just to let them know you are there and that you care.

I hope that you will consider what God’s design is for friendship based on what the Bible teaches us. These verses give us a good idea of the kind of friends we should choose and the kind of friend we should be to other people. As our THP says, let’s commit to being godly friends! Let me pray for us before we go into our group discussions.