



GROUPS
Part 3: True Friends
Pastor Dave Patterson

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures referenced in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to facilitate a discussion.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is not to pound through the questions but to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships, so knock yourself out with the discussion questions but spend more time laughing than answering the questions.

Proverbs 18:24

There are “friends” who destroy each other, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 17:17

A *true* friend loves regardless of the situation, and a *real* brother exists to share the tough times.

“Over 90% of all people who fail in their life’s vocation fail because of destructive relationships or the inability to get along with people.”

The Carnegie Technological institute

Proverbs 18:1

Whoever pulls away *from others* to focus *solely* on his own desires disregards common sense and rages against all wise judgment.

ESPN

E = Encourage one another

S = Share our stories (*testify*)

P = Pray for each other

N = Identify our **next** steps

Mark 2:1-12

After a few days, Jesus returned to Capernaum, and word got around that he was back home. Soon the house where he was staying was so packed with visitors that there was no more room, even outside the door. While he was preaching God’s word to them, four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher.

When they weren’t able to get in the house, because of the crowd, they removed part of the roof and lowered the paraplegic on his stretcher. Impressed by their bold faith, Jesus said to the paraplegic, “Son, I forgive your sins.”

Some religion scholars sitting there started whispering among themselves, “He can’t talk that way! That’s blasphemy! God and only God can forgive sins.”

Jesus knew right away what they were thinking, and said, “Why are you so skeptical? Which is simpler: to say to the paraplegic, ‘I forgive your sins,’ or say, ‘Get up, take your stretcher, and start walking’? Well, just so it’s clear that I’m the Son of Man and authorized to do either, or both . . .” (he looked now at the

paraplegic), “Get up. Pick up your stretcher and go home.” And the man did —he got up, grabbed his stretcher, and walked out through the stunned onlookers. They were all amazed and praised God, exclaiming, “We’ve never seen anything like this before!”

3 Ways to Be a True Friend

1. Be a true friend who will carry some weight.

Galatians 6:1-2

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. **Carry each other’s burdens**, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.

2. Be a true friend who will carry people to Jesus.

3. Be a true friend who is filled with faith and takes action.

Discussion Thoughts

1. “Show me your friends and I’ll show you your future.” Do you think is an accurate statement? Why or why not? What do you look for in a friend?
2. How intentional have you been in choosing people you’re currently in community with? How has this intentionality, or lack of, affected your life?
3. What does “carrying each other’s burden” mean to you? What are practical examples of carrying another’s burden to Jesus?
4. When was a “stretcher season” for you, when your true friends helped carry your burden? What difference did their sacrifice and their strength make in that season?
5. What are practical ways to fight isolation?