

[GUARDRAILS]

Personal Guide—Week of August 16th—22nd, 2015

Introduction to Study

This week's guardrail asks, "why can't we be friends?" What kind of guardrails are needed when it comes to friendships? We'll explore that in this week's Personal Guide.

Materials Needed

- Bible
- Notebook or Journal
- Computer (for *THRIVE* only)

Day One

Read Proverbs 27:17 at least three times.

1. What does the writer mean in this passage?
2. Think about sharpening a kitchen knife. Does it hurt the knife to be sharpened? What is the purpose of sharpening the blade? How does the knife fulfill its purpose by being sharpened?
3. How might your friends sharpen you? How might you become dull if not sharpened by others?

Day Two

Read John 15.

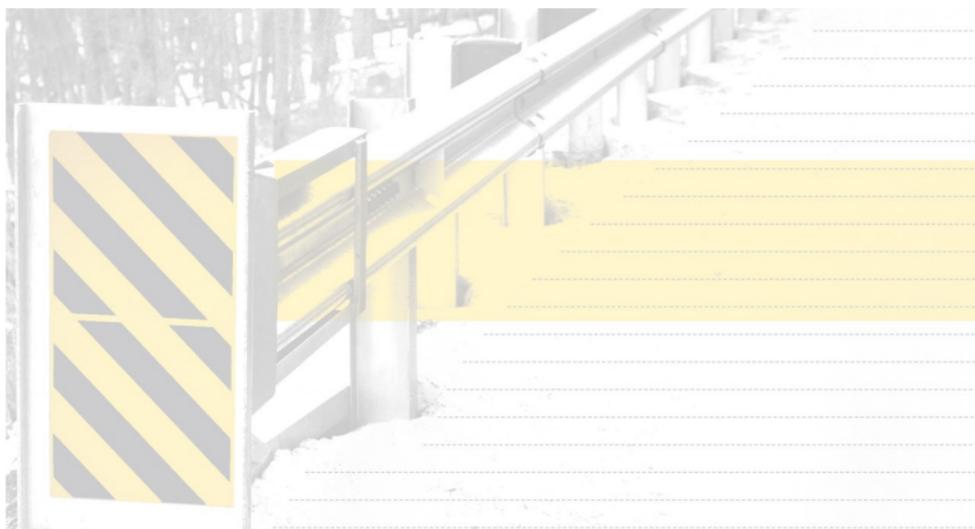
1. Who is Jesus' audience in this passage? (Look back to chapter 13 if you're not certain.)
2. How does Jesus describe his audience in verse 15? What command does he give this group in verse 17?
3. Who is promised to come and help them at the end of this chapter (see vs. 26)? How might this person help us keep good guardrails in our friendships?

Day Three

We'll look at another truth about friendship today in Proverbs 27:5-6. (You may want to look at multiple translations to help you gain understanding of the verses.)

1. What do each of these verses say about friendship?
2. How might a friend's wound be good for us? When is the opposite true?
3. How does correcting someone publicly demonstrate love? Why is this more valuable than someone who loves without telling/showing their love?

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Day Four

The bible tells of some great friendships. Let's look at Ruth & Naomi today in the book of Ruth (4 chapters long).

1. What did Ruth do for Naomi after her family died?
2. How did God use this friendship to provide for both Ruth and Naomi?
3. This friendship helped Ruth meet her next husband. See what leader was born as a result. (see verses 18-21 of chapter 4)
4. The legacy of important leaders didn't end with David. Check out the full lineage found in Matthew 1. Do your friendships have life-changing impact like Ruth and Naomi's?

Day Five

One of the most famous biblical friendships was between David & Jonathan. Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4; chapters 19-20.

1. How does the writer describe Jonathan's love for David?
2. What does Jonathan do for David? What guardrail did he provide for David in these actions?
3. How does their relationship challenge you to be a guardrail for others? What steps might you take to become a friend like Ruth or Jonathan?

THRIVE

Learn more about what good and bad friends look like at this Christianity Today article at <http://tinyurl.com/goodbadfriends>

Wondering just how iron sharpening iron happens? Check out this short video from Gordon Ramsey at <http://tinyurl.com/ironsharp>

In this virtual world we are living in, what role does social media have on true friendship? This thoughtful article from Plugged In challenges us to think about our friendships in a Facebook age. Read it at <http://tinyurl.com/friendship-fb>

Additional resources at www.myriversidechurch.com/smallgroups.

