



Friends Like These

How Do I Pick Friends?

Proverbs 13:20; Acts 18:1-3, 18-26; Romans 16:3-5

Humans need a few things to survive—water, food, shelter, clothing. Then there are plenty of things we all want—extra money, extra time, hobbies. But let me ask you a question. Where do you consider friendship? For most of us, friendship is something we wished we had, but either don't have the time or don't have the energy to pursue. So, most of us simply choose to live without friends. Here's the problem. Just like we were made to need water, God made us to need friends. Friendship isn't optional. That means we need to prioritize friendship and cultivate those friendships.

Because your friends will determine who you become, use wisdom in picking your friends.

- As you reflect on the message, what stood out to you? What is something you are still thinking about?
- What is something from the message that challenged you? How are you wrestling with that challenge?
- What question(s) do you have from the message?
- What is at least one practical takeaway from the message?

Proverbs 13:20

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise,
but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Acts 18:1-3, 18-26

After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. **2** And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, **3** and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.

18 After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers^[a] and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. **19** And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. **20** When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. **21** But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills," and he set sail from Ephesus.

22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. **23** After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

24 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. **25** He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit,^[b] he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. **26** He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

Romans 16:3-5

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, **4** who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. **5** Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.

- Reflect back on your life? Has it been difficult to make friends? Why or why not?

- In the past (and maybe currently), how have you picked friends? Consider the criteria and/or steps that are both explicit and implicit.
- What is it about friends that can either make us wise or make us fools? How do friends strengthen or weaken our character?
- Look back over Acts and Romans. Who were Priscilla and Aquila? What was their friendship with Paul like?
- How do common interest and shared experiences create and build friendships?
- As you reflect on picking friends, what are some contemporary challenges that must be overcome?
- What can we learn from Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila that could help us overcome these contemporary challenges?
- In Acts 18:24-26 Priscilla and Aquila model what Christian wisdom looks like. What should be included in Christian wisdom? What should we be listening for?
- In Romans 6:3-5, we get a beautiful glimpse of how Priscilla and Aquila sacrificially loved Paul—they “risked their necks for my life.” What are practical ways we can sacrificially love our friends?
- One of the hardest things about life, including our friendships, is trusting God. If we’re struggling to find and build friendships, how can we strengthen our trust of God’s sovereignty and providence in our lives?