

Sermon Series Title: "The Church of God"

Sermon Series Summary: The Church of God is the people of God throughout the ages, redeemed by Jesus Christ. We're going to take a look at who we are and who we are called to be as the church of God. More specifically, we see that who we are is directly connected to whose we are in Christ.

"We are in our "The Church of God" sermon series, and we see that we are defined not by who we are but whose we are as the Church."

Call: Luke 1:78-79

Text: Proverbs 27:9, 18:24, 27:17

Title: "Friendship, Part One"

Next Week's Call: Luke 2:13-14

Next Week's Text: Proverbs 27:5-6, 25:20, 27:14, 17:17, 19:6-7, 20:6

Next Week's Title: "Friendship, Part Two"

Future Calls: Luke 2:29-32; Revelation 5:6-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14; Revelation 15:3, 4; Revelation 21:1-4, 5-7, 22-23

Future Titles: "The Outward Church" (Jeremiah 29:1-9), "Our Mission" (Luke 5:1-11), "Church as City" (Ephesians 2:19, Hebrews 13:14, Revelation 21:2), "Church as Body" (1 Corinthians 12:12-31), "Church as Family" (John 1:12-13), "Church as Bride" (Ephesians 5:22-33), "The Eternality of the Church" (Revelation 21:1-7)

Fallen Condition Focus: We don't have right friends.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ is the perfect friend for us.

Central Truth: "In our individualistic and busy world, may we discover intentional and accountable friendships in Christ."

Summary: Life is not about following a set of rules. Not everything is black and white. We need wisdom to discern the best course of action, including friendship. Through the Proverbs today, we will see the discovery, intentionality, and accountability of true friendship. We see Jesus being the perfect friend for us through His life, death, and resurrection.

## Reflective Questions:

1. What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?
2. What stuck out to you about friendship in the passages read?
3. How does this influence your approach to friendships?

### I. Introduction

- A. Hook- Personal sermon schedule
- B. Transition- friendship (loneliness study); friendship v. acquaintance
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

### II. The Context

- A. Difference between wisdom and knowledge
  1. Life is not black and white. It's not about following a bunch of rules or accumulating knowledge. The law of God embodies the spirit of God, and it requires the wisdom of God to live humbly and obediently. The godly life is the wise life.
    1. Which school to go to? Who to marry? Which job to take?  
Where to move? When to leave a job?
  2. We need wisdom to live, discern, and be tactful.
- B. Proverbs is part of the greater Wisdom literature in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon; and some Psalms and Job passages. James is the wisdom book of the NT.
- C. Author of Proverbs- King Solomon who asked for wisdom more than anything else
  1. 1 Kings 4:29-34: 3000 proverbs, 1,005 songs
- D. Proverbs covers many topics (money, speech, marriage, parenting, diligence, work, and friendship).
  1. Keller devotional throughout the year on Proverbs

### III. The Call (Proverbs 27:9, 18:24, 27:17)

- A. Wise living means wise friendships- true and deep. We need friends. But more than that, we need good, true, and faithful friends. Friendships are important.
  1. "In the early stage of your life, you were shaped most by your family. But for the rest of your life, you will be shaped largely by your friends. You become like the people with whom you spend the most time."  
-Tim Keller
  2. Hindrances to friendship in our culture: individualistic, busyness

#### B. The Discovery of Friendship (27:9)

1. Perfume- welcomed since bathing was difficult and conditions were sweltering
2. Oil- sign of welcome and respect (both make the heart glad)
3. Sweetness of friendship- sweetness back then could not be created, only discovered. That's why in the OT, sweetness is referred to as honey and not sugar.
4. Friendship begins with discovery- common loves and vision (against individualistic society)
  1. CS Lewis quote
  2. Marriages found upon friendship
5. Christian faith can create deep friendships between people who are completely different from one another.
6. Sweetness comes earnest counsel (from experience and wisdom; from person's heartfelt love and compassion).

#### C. The Intentionality of Friendship (18:24)

1. Many companions- ruin; Hebrew play on words; sound alike
  1. Ruin- break in pieces
2. Friend who sticks closer than a brother?- profound back then when culture was far more family oriented than ours
3. Family may be there for us but may not like us or understand us.
4. A true friend sticks closer than a brother, and that friendship is cultivated through intentional time together (against busyness).
  1. Proximity and Permission
  2. A mile wide and an inch deep, or an inch wide and a mile deep?

#### D. The Accountability of Friendship (27:17)

1. Friends sharpen and challenge one another; encouragement/blessing but also rebuke
  1. Knife sharpening
  2. Sharpens one another's faces- whole person; personality/character
2. Not many relationships where rebuke, criticism, and advice are mutually given. But they are in friendships.
3. We will never become the people we are meant to be without friendships.
4. Ray Ortlund- difference between hurting and harming; Hurt for the sake of growth/maturation. Jesus hurt people but never harmed. It was always for their good.

#### IV. The Christ

- A. Christ has called us friends (John 15:15).
- B. He is the One who discovered us. He has come to find us and save us. He is the one who calls us sweet, even though we have sinned against Him. He drank the sour wine of God's judgment on the cross, so we can receive the sweetness of His mercy.
- C. He is the Intentional friend who was ruined, broken into pieces to stick closer to us.
- D. He is the friend who gave up His life, so that He can be our brother... the friend that will stick closer than any family.
- E. He is the One whose face was torn apart, so that He may sharpen our face... renew our hearts and character.