

FAST Lesson 4B: A Real Man Builds Relationships – Friendships for Life

John Kain, 2009

- I. Establishing a mutual commitment to support one another is the mark of true friendship. While finding fun things to do together is helpful in that it makes it easier to prioritize spending time that is focused on the friendship, it should not be the central focus.
- II. True friendships include a focus on helping each other succeed, praying for one another and being available to help with one another's struggles and weaknesses.
- III. Our society often portrays friendship as a bunch of guys hanging out together, perhaps having a beer or watching the game. Hanging out together is appropriate for friends, but only a part of the relationship. Real friends open up to each other by sharing honestly with one another. It is important that our friends share our world view as believers, so that we are able to see the same truths.
- IV. True friends also confront one another when necessary after establishing a healthy pattern of accountability. They treat one another with sensitivity, speaking the truth in love.
- V. **The measure of success in friendship is not how many friends you have.** Many friends may be an indication that you have an attractive persona or unusual natural ability or advanced skills or lots of money, but true friendship is not measured in numbers.
- VI. Success in friendship is measure by your sincere interest in others, and anchored by a few highly committed relationships.
- VII. When friendships are damaged, we can sometimes repair the relationship. The repair process requires that we first look within ourselves. Our resentments toward the other person should not be stuffed / ignored **or** revealed to everyone around us. Instead our ill will should be addressed by resisting feelings of superiority (don't

deride the other person), accepting the pain (don't pay back), and showing love when we can do so sincerely (invest in the relationship).

VIII. Reconciliation is the most important part (and difficult part) of friendships that stand the test of time. Although we sometimes must let go of relationships that don't work out, genuine friendships are worth the effort. The tougher things get, the more we need genuine friends.

“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27: 17)

“**Carry each other's burdens**, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18: 24)

“After David had finished talking with Saul, **Jonathan became one in spirit with David**, and he loved him as himself.” (1 Samuel 18:1)

“A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but **a man of understanding holds his tongue**.” (Proverbs 11: 12)

“**He who covers over an offense promotes love**, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.” (Proverbs 17:9)

“Better is open rebuke than hidden love. **Wounds from a friend can be trusted**, but an enemy multiplies kisses.” (Proverbs 27: 5-6)

“A friend loves at all times, and **a brother is born for adversity**.” (Proverbs 17: 17)