



OCTOBER



IMPORTANT DATES:

- 10/17 - tseries
- 10/28 - service project
- 10/31 - halloween tnl
- 11/10 - light mtng



OCTOBER 16TH

Friendship

PART ONE

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:3-5

Being a good and healthy leader means you have good and healthy friendships in your life. What this means is you do friendships the way Jesus wants you to...

1. Is it important to have friends? Why? What things make someone a good friend? Why?
2. Why do you think it is good to have Christian friends if you are trying to live the Christian life?
3. Read Proverbs 27:17. What do you think this verse means and what does it have to do with Christianity?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 15:33. What does this verse have to do with Christianity?

5. As Christians, we should be seeking friends that sharpen us in our faith instead of pulling us away from God. Are there friends in your life that are pulling you away from God? If so, how have you seen them influence you negatively?

6. Think of a good Christian friend you have. How specifically have they affected your walk with God?

OCTOBER 19TH

Friendship

PART TWO

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:3-5

Read the attached article, “An Unlikely Friendship.” As you read, highlight anything that stands out to you. After you have read the article and answered the question at the end, complete the following sentences in the space provided:

One thing I learned this week about friendship was...

One question I still have about friendship is...

LIES *Young* WOMEN BELIEVE

An Unlikely Friendship

Hey, girls! This month we're going to be talking a lot about friendship. But before we dig into friendships with our peers, I want to talk with you about friendship with God.

Meet my friend Cristi. I remember the day she told me that in her teen years God was her best friend. I was glad I was sitting down when she told me that, because I could've fallen over backward from surprise. I'd never heard that from anyone before.

This is her story.

When she was 13, Cristi's family moved to work at Life Action's Christian camp. She had to leave tons of great friends, her church, and her Christian school. Her mom started to homeschool her, she didn't fit in, and she felt pretty lonely.

One day, an older girl shared with Cristi how she had experienced a time when she had no friends. God had said to her, "You should make Me your best friend."

When Cristi heard that, she thought, "That's what I'm going to do!" She started setting aside time to go on "dates" with God. She would grab a yummy snack, burn a candle, and would read the Bible and talk to God. She did that for the entire year. As she did, she began to make friends, but she no longer needed them like she always had before. What I mean is, she wasn't relying on them to meet any needs, because God was meeting all her needs.

She would even often turn down an invitation to go shopping (which she loves to do) in order to hang out with her family or spend time with God.

During that time, Cristi really changed. She had been shy before, but once she started spending time with God and got her eyes off herself, she became confident. She found her worth in God. She was suddenly able to give to other people who needed help. She realized she didn't need a boyfriend. She was getting all she needed from God and was no longer looking to someone else to satisfy her desires.

How about you? Is God your best friend?

If not, would you like to work on deepening your friendship with Him?

I asked Cristi how you and I could get started, and this is what she suggested:

- **Schedule a time.** Figure out how to make it special. Cristi always looked forward to her date with God. Sometimes (especially when there were hard things going on in her life) she would spend hours with Him. Other days, she'd just be like, "God, You're so good to me," and would spend fifteen minutes or so with Him.
- Instead of running to someone else about the problems, joys, and events in your life, **go to God first.** Be honest with Him. Tell Him what you'd tell your friends. After all, He is your friend!
- **Read the Word** to get encouragement and answers. Cristi would ask God, "Would you encourage me in some way?" Every time she prayed that, God would! Cristi also enjoyed journaling, listening to music, thinking about Him, and sometimes spending time in His creation.

Which one of the suggestions above can you work on the most? How?

OCTOBER 23RD

Friendship

ACCOUNTABILITY PT 1

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:3-5

1. Have you ever tried to consistently workout? If so, you know it's easier to workout when we have another person working out with us. The same goes for Christianity. It's easier to live the Christian life when we have other people helping us in our walks. It's called accountability. Do you have someone in your life that you regularly talk to about your Christian walk? If so, what do you talk about?

2. Read James 5:16. Do you have a friend you tell your sins to? Why can it be scary to tell our sins to our friends? Why is it good to do so, however?

3. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. How does this verse further the idea that other Christians can help us grow in our faith?

4. Even though you might already have someone in your life you talk to about God, think of that one person to start being your accountability partner. What are some of the struggles you have in your walk that you should share with him/her?

5. It can be scary telling other people our sins. But if we don't do so, our faith will suffer. We must find someone that we can trust to be our accountability partner. What this means, though, is they are allowed to call you out when you sin. Sometimes it might be judgmental, but they are judging us in love, not hate. Read Matthew 7:1-5 and write down when God says it is ok to judge others based off of the verse.

OCTOBER 26TH

Friendship

ACCOUNTABILITY PT 2

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:3-5

Read the attached article, “Who’s holding you accountable?” As you read, highlight anything that stands out to you. After you have completed the article and homework from a few days ago, complete the following sentences in the space provided:

One thing I learned this week about accountability was...

One question I still have about accountability is...

LIES *Young* WOMEN BELIEVE

Who's Holding You Accountable?

As we've focused on the topic of friendship this month, I hope we've encouraged you to see your friendships in a new light. I've challenged you to be more concerned with being a good friend than having friends. I've asked you to use some of your relational energy to seek out a mentor and to mentor others.

Many of you have risen to the challenge. You've made commitments to find those in need of a friend this school year. You're actively praying for God to send a mentor into your life or you are looking for a young woman to mentor from your church or school. I'm so proud of you! I'm thrilled that you are looking beyond your peer group for friends and seeking to build relationships that sharpen your relationship with Jesus.

But I'm not done yet! There's another area where I'd like you to be intentional about your relationships this month. I want each of you to find an accountability partner.

An accountability partner is just like it sounds—it's a friend who agrees to hold you accountable to God's standards for your life. She's the one you'll talk to when you're wrestling with a specific sin. She will ask you how you're doing with personal prayer and Bible study time. And when she sees that you're stumbling, she will speak God's truth to you in love. And you'll do the same for her.

This is the principle outlined in James 5:16 and Proverbs 27:17.

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

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

Living out our Christian faith in a fallen world is tough, girls! We can't do it alone. That is why we need the support of a Bible believing church, Christian mentors, and friends who agree to hold us accountable.

I've had different accountability partners since I came to know the Lord at age 15. There have been many, many times during my Christian walk that those friends have needed to call out sin in my life, encouraged me to get back on track with regular Bible reading, or simply pray with me during a particularly difficult season. As I look back on my years as a Christian, I realize I would have been foolish to seek to swim the waters of faith without friends who intentionally held me accountable to God's truth. The same is true for you.

It's great to have friendships that are grounded in fun. I want you to have friends that you can just hang out with or go for latte runs with when your day has been stressful. But I also want each of you to have at least one good friend who holds you accountable to God's standards for your life. (It's even better when you combine accountability and lattes!)

As you seek to find an accountability partner, here are a few things to consider:

1. Find someone who is grounded in God's Word. God's Word is our standard for how to live, not the opinions of others. You need to find someone who knows what God's Word says so that she can speak His truth to you in love.
2. Find someone you love to be with. Talking about our sin is tough. It is often painful. A good accountability partner is someone you feel comfortable around and love to be with.
3. Find someone who also wants to be held accountable. Unlike mentoring, having an accountability partner is a two-way street. Don't seek out someone who is willing to call out sin in your life, but won't hear truth herself (Jesus referred to this as a plank eye in Matthew 7:3).
4. Communicate your intentions. Go to your friend, and ask her to be your accountability partner. Communicate your expectations, and then come up with a clear plan to meet regularly.

In case you're not quite sure about this accountability thing, here's one more push taken from Hebrews 10:23–25.

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

OCTOBER 30TH

Friendship

BEING A GOOD FRIEND PT 1

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:3-5

So far this month, we have talked about looking for the right friends. However, we need to be a good friend ourselves. Read the following verses and write down what God says it means to be a good friend:

1.1 Thessalonians 5:11

2. Proverbs 17:17

3. Proverbs 27:5-6

4. Ephesians 4:25

5. Ephesians 4:29

6. Philippians 2:3-5

Out of all of these verses, which 2 or 3 do you need to work on the most?

NOVEMBER 2ND

Friendship

BEING A GOOD FRIEND PT 2

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:3-5

Read the attached article, “Best of: What is True Friendship?” As you read, highlight anything that stands out to you.

After you have completed the 2 sections on “Being a Good Friend” (homework and article), complete the following sentences in the space provided:

One thing I learned this week about Being a Good Friend was...

One question I still have about Being a Good Friend is...

LIES *Young* WOMEN BELIEVE

Best of: What is True Friendship?

I can remember it like it was yesterday. I was in the seventh grade. I had just dialed in the combination to my locker when an avalanche occurred. Someone had filled my locker to the brim with hygiene products. When I opened the locker, it triggered the avalanche and several bottles of soap and shampoo spilled out into the hallway. As if that wasn't embarrassing enough, the culprits had included a note that pointed out that I "stunk" and suggested that I use the "gifts" they'd given me to take a shower. I was humiliated. I wanted to run. I wanted to hide. I swore I was never coming back to seventh grade.

It turns out that the shampoo bandits were my "friends." While it's true that the hormonal changes of puberty may have left me less than shower fresh, their tactic for dealing with it was less than friendly. In fact, it was downright mean.

That wasn't the first time that my relationship with my "friends" caused turmoil in my life, and it certainly wasn't the last. Our friendships can be the source of some angst, especially in middle school and high school. As a result, we can get pretty wrapped up in the pain our friends have caused us or in our desire to have more friends in order to feel more loved and accepted. But God's Word encourages us to shift our focus away from our own needs and toward the needs of others.

Philippians 2:3 says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."

This certainly applies to our friendships. That's why I want to challenge you to focus more on being a friend than having the right friends or the right number of friends.

In *Lies Young Women Believe*, Nancy and Dannah write, "You are called to be a true friend. If your focus is on who likes you, you're not pursuing true friendship. If your focus is on who is asking you to hang out with them, it's all wrong. That's not a spiritual mind-set. Ask the Lord to help you be more concerned about who needs you than who likes you."

But just what are the qualities of a good friend? Let's use Galatians 5:22-23 as our guide.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

What kind of friend are you? Are you loving, peaceful (in this case, that means easy to get along with instead of a conflict starter!), patient, kind, good, faithful (no ditching your friends when something better comes along), gentle and self-controlled? Do you seek to demonstrate Christ's love to others by being a good friend?

Let's go back to what Nancy and Dannah wrote about friendship in Lies Young Women Believe:

There are people who need your friendship. Ask God to give you eyes to see who they are and start becoming a friend today. And please, please—if it's not too late—don't do that silly, superficial girl thing around seventh or eighth grade where you cut off every friend who is not as old as you. If you can just be a friend through the next few awkward months, you might have a friend for life.

So what do you say, are you willing to shift your focus away from having more friends—and even from the drama that your current friendships may be causing—and toward becoming a true friend to others in need?

What are some ways that you can begin to reach out to others around you in the spirit of true friendship?

This blog was created to help you in your pursuit of truth. So as you begin to reach out to those around you, we want to encourage you to share your ideas and experiences with others.

What are some practical steps you can take to be a true friend to those around you? I am going to start by calling a friend of mine who is having a hard time at home and offering to take her out for sushi (yum!). I bet you can come up with some other great ideas for demonstrating friendship to others.

NOVEMBER 6TH

Friendship

FRIENDSHIP CHECK UP

Create a list of your friends:

Matthew 7:16 says *“You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.”* You can see that a friendship is healthy by the good fruit that it bears; which is the actions and words a friend performs.

1. Describe how your friends are faithful, honest, kind.

2. Are you careful about who you befriend and cautious about how you behave with friends? Read Proverbs 12:26 Why is this important?

3. Are you more concerned with having true friends OR many friends? Read Proverbs 18:24

4. Are your friends a good safety net? Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

5. Read John 15:13-15 Is God your best friend, or have you made your earthly friendships more important? If so, what can you do to change that?

After everything you learned this month, create a new list of who your true friends are:

NOVEMBER 9TH

Friendship

FRIENDSHIP WRAP UP

Part of being a good friend means you encourage others in their faith, about the love God has for them, about how talented they are, etc. What you need to do this week is write a letter to 2 or 3 friends. Give them the letter without expecting to get a letter back. In your letters, include a Bible verse, what you appreciate about your friendship with them, and why you are thankful for them. Have fun!!!