

MEET  
THE  
GROUP**THE POINT**

Christ's love is the only power to change the human hearts and revive friendships.

**BIGGER PICTURE**

There are many ways for relationships to go wrong. Gossip (Proverbs 17:9), belittling (Proverbs 11:12), an overbearing or clingy friend (Proverbs 25:17), a friend who always has to win every argument (Proverbs 18:19), arrogance and pride (Proverbs 17:14, 22:10), and many other ways. The pain that comes with broken friendships is real, and we live in a world that is quick to encourage you to tear down the former "friend." But what if there was a better way than revenge? What if God's design and desire were for healing rather than for a trail of broken relationships with people we now trash? What could possibly lead to healing in our relationships? Proverbs points to a better way. We refuse to seek revenge but choose to trust God to come through (Proverbs 20:22). We choose to confess and run from sin and seek mercy from others (Proverbs 28:13). We choose to love our enemy rather than "give them what they deserve" (Proverbs 25:21-22). We see Proverbs call for what Jesus, Stephen, and Paul embodied (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60; 2 Timothy 4:16).

**Verses:**

Proverbs 17:9; 11:12; 25:17; 18:19; 17:14; 22:10; 20:22; 28:13; and 25:21-22

**LEADER WIN**

It is so easy to allow gossip to become commonplace in our conversation. Sometimes we justify it because of what people have done to us in the past. A win this week is challenging your group to take the hard steps towards embodying the kind of love that heals relationships and revives friendships. Help your group see that there is a better way. As a leader, embrace this challenging call for your own relationships as well.

**LEADER TIPS**

**Think Next Steps.** Following Jesus is a journey. Our goal as Leaders is to help students move forward on that journey to become fully devoted followers of Christ. How do they do that? One step at a time. Every week, help your students identify and take one step to move closer to Jesus

**Getting Started...**

1. If you have anyone new: Have everyone introduce themselves by sharing their name, where they go to school, and one interesting fact about them.
2. Remind everyone the purpose of group time and the expectations you have for how it will run.
3. **Ask this question:** Do you have a nickname? What is it and why?

**The Big Question: *How can friendships last?***

1. What is the longest friendship you have in your life? What are things you appreciate about that friendship?
2. Read Proverbs 17:9; 11:12; 25:17; 18:19; 17:14; 22:10; 20:22; 28:13; and 25:21-22. Have different students read each passage. If a verse is confusing, read it in different versions (NIV, CSB, ESV, NLT) and discuss what it means together. What sticks out to you about these passages? Why?
3. What are the reasons friendships in your life have gone wrong? How do you usually respond when a friendship falls apart?
4. What things are you tempted to do that would ruin relationships in your life? Gossip? Belittling? Overbearing/being clingy? Winning every argument? Arrogance/pride? Other ways?
5. How do you respond when you are in the wrong? How do you respond when others have wronged you?
6. Reread Proverbs 20:22, 28:13, and 25:21-22. Which Proverb is most challenging you as you think about how to respond to others? What is one step you can take towards healing in a relationship in your life?
7. Jesus on the cross (Luke 23:24), Stephen as he is being stoned (Acts 7:60), and Paul as he is in jail preparing for his coming death (2 Timothy 4:16) all ask for those who have betrayed them to be forgiven. How is this challenging? How is this encouraging?

**Next steps**

1. Commit to taking one step towards seeking healing in a broken relationship in your life. Hold one another accountable. You cannot control the outcome, but you can control how you respond to and treat others in your life.
2. Consider memorizing Proverbs 17:9 as a group.

