

Study Guide: Lost Art of Friendship Q&A

Sunday, October 10, 2021 | Emily Morrison, Greg Boyd, Paul Eddy, Shawna Boren

Topics: Community, Relationships

Short Summary:

This panel conversation between Greg Boyd, Shawna Boren, Paul Eddy and Emily Morrison addresses questions that have been submitted during the series on friendship.

Extended Summary:

During the panel interaction, the panelists discussed how friendship actually plays out as we follow Christ together in our world where intimate friendship is uncommon. The questions that are addressed include:

- Jesus said “I no longer call you servants but friends” But the Apostle Paul often says that he is a “servant” or “slave” of God. Many other Bible passages also refer to Christians as “servants,” but hardly any refer to Christians as God’s “friends.” Which one is right – are we God’s servants or are we God’s friends?
- It is commonly assumed that real intimacy always involved a romantic or sexual component. Since we have learned that we should be able to have deep intimacy even in a non-sexual friendship, how should we then understand what intimacy is?
- How do we navigate personality differences when we are developing relationships with others? Some are “alpha” types who dominate, while many “beta” types feel controlled. What should each type do in order to walk in healthy friendship?
- What if we don't have time to invest in these types of deep friendships? I really want them. But honestly, I am really busy with other important things and there are only 24 hours in a day!
- Regarding conflict in a friendship: What if things cannot be resolved or the other party just doesn't want to work through it? Is there ever a time to walk away from a friendship?
- Can you talk about some of your own personal experiences of spiritual friendships, including both the blessings and the challenges?
- I don't get “friendship with God.” I've always heard that if we don't obey God, he'll send us to hell. This makes me fearful, and it hardly sounds like a solid foundation upon which to build a loving “friendship.” Can you help me?

The answers to these questions provide both practical direction and solid foundations for facing the challenge of developing friendships today. No one is an expert in this field; we are all on a journey of trying to follow Christ together, making mistakes along the way. Hopefully, we can take small steps in this direction and discover new ways to love others and experience the power of spiritual friendship.

Reflection Questions:

- When you hear that God is our friend, what is your immediate “gut reaction”? Meditate on this thought and see what hinders you from embracing it. Release anything that might serve as a roadblock in your soul to the Spirit and receive this truth.
- What is intimacy in friendship? How can this play out with your friends?
- How does busyness hinder friendship? What changes can you make to create space to invest in friends?
- How does your personality impact your friendships? What about your personality makes friendship natural? What about your personality naturally makes friendship challenging?
- What is your common response to conflict in friendship? What do you need to change related to conflict in order to develop deeper friendships?