

Effective Youth Ministry Free Resource

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Regards,

Ken and Julie Moser

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Youth Group Program on Friendship

This program is designed to help your group to understand what the Bible teaches about friendship so they can work on friendships with one another.

For more program ideas see "*Creative Christian Ideas*" for Youth Groups and "*Programs 2 Go*" by Ken Moser or look for other free resources on our site:
www.effectiveyouthministry.com

FRIENDSHIP YOUTH GROUP

This is a complete program to run with your youth group based on the topic of friendship. The purpose is to teach the group what the bible says about friendship and how to be friendly especially to the outsider. You could use the program as it is or simply modify it and use what elements you wish.

Welcome and open in Prayer

Share with the person next to you: What is one quality you want in a friend?
Ask volunteers to share the answer their partners answer.

Friendship Bible Game:

Noughts and crosses (tick tac toe): place nine chairs in three rows at the front of the group in the form of a noughts and crosses (tic, tac, toe) board. Divide the group into two teams (noughts and crosses). The leader will ask a question (using the questions below about friendship in the Bible) and when a team answers correctly one of their group members goes and stands on the chair of their choice which marks their place on the tic, tac, toe grid. Alternate questions to each side. Make sure they put their hand in the air to answer and not shout it out aloud. When a team answers incorrectly the question can be directed to the other team. Continue until one team has filled three chairs in a row on the board. If it goes too quickly you can have a re-match.

If a question is too difficult you can make it easier by making it multiple choice (e.g. question 3 could be a choice of Abraham, Moses, Noah and Daniel):

1. Who was King David's best friend? (JONATHAN King Saul's son) 1 Sam. 20:42
2. Who in the OT was referred to as the person who "The LORD would speak to face to face, as a man speaks with his **friend**"? (MOSES). Ex. 33:11
3. Fill in the blank from Proverbs 19:4 "**BLANK** brings many friends, but a poor man's **friend** deserts him" (WEALTH)
4. Fill in the blank from Proverbs 17:17 "A **friend** loves at all times, and a **BLANK** is born for adversity." (BROTHER)
5. Fill in the blank from Proverbs 22:11 "He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the **BLANK** for his **friend**." (KING)
6. Fill in the blank from Proverbs 27:6 "Wounds from a **friend** can be trusted, but an **BLANK** multiplies kisses." (ENEMY)
7. Who in the New Testament was referred to as "a **friend** of tax collectors and sinners." (JESUS) Matt 11:19
8. Who was the friend of Jesus about whom Jesus said "Our **friend** **BLANK** has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." (LAZARUS who had died) John 11:11.
9. Complete the verse from James 4:4 with one word: "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the **BLANK** is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a **friend** of the **BLANK** becomes an enemy of God." (WORLD)
10. Who had three friends called Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite? IF YOU NEED A HINT: these 3 "heard about all the troubles that had

come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him." (JOB) Job 2:11

11. Who had 3 friends called Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah? (DANIEL) Dan 2:17 IF YOU NEED A HINT: their names were changed to Shadrach Meshach and Abednego.

12. In what book of the Bible do you find a song that ends the words "the darkness is my closest friend"? (PSALMS) Psalm 88.

13. In what parable of Jesus did a son say to his father "Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my **friends**." (PARABLE OF THE LOST SON) Luke 15:29

14. Complete the sentence to as close as possible: "Greater love has no one than this, that he BLANK BLANK BLANK BLANK for his **friends**." (LAY DOWN HIS LIFE) John 15:13

15. Complete the sentence to as close as possible: Jesus says in John 15:14 "You are my **friends** if you do BLANK BLANK BLANK" (WHAT I COMMAND)

Welcoming Activity:

Goal: To teach the young people how to make a newcomer welcome at youth group.

STEP 1: Place a leader who will pretend to be a new person at your youth group in four* different corners in the room. Give each person a personality/character. Some examples are:

- a shy person,
- a person disinterested in everything people say and doesn't make eye contact,
- a person forced to come to youth group by their parents,
- a non-Christian that brags about getting drunk and doing wrong things,
- a person who is hard to talk to because they are different – maybe they are obsessed with Star Trek and collecting stamps and can't talk about anything else)
- a normal person,

STEP 2: Divide the youth group into four* even numbered groups.

STEP 3: Allocate each group of young people to a leader acting as a newcomer. Give them 2 minutes to welcome the 'new person'. When 2 minutes is up ask the groups of young people to move on to the next new person and start process again. Continue until each group has had the opportunity to welcome each leader acting as a new person.

STEP 5: Have the group come back together and ask the young people to tell of their experience of welcoming the 'newcomers'.

STEP 4: Have the leaders tell of their experience of being welcomed including positives and negatives.

STEP 5: Share some tips on how to welcome a new person. Some suggestions are:

1. Ask the person their name (and remember it).
2. Find out a little about them, why they came etc.
3. Ask if they know anyone in the group and if not invite them to sit with you.
4. Either at the beginning or the end of youth group, introduce them to some people.
5. Let them know about other activities such as Bible study and church.
6. Look for them the following week and care for them until they feel a part of the group.

**If your group is really large use more characters so that only 2-3 people are required to speak to any one person at a time. This is more effective if there are only a few kids per leader acting as a new person. You need the same number of groups as people acting as new people.*

Memory Verse: John 15:14 "You are my **friends** if you do what I command."

Shrinking verse: put the memory verse on Powerpoint. Tell them that these are words spoken by Jesus to his disciples. Have everyone read the verse aloud in unison including the reference. When they are done show the next slide with the same verse but in smaller print and read aloud in unison again. Repeat a couple more times with the verse shrinking smaller and smaller each time. The final slide make the print so small that it cannot be read – by then they should be able to recite from memory. Then turn off the Powerpoint and ask any volunteers to recite the verse with reference.

For other options on how to teach a memory verse see chapter 6 of *Creative Christian Ideas* by Ken Moser.

Testimony about friendship: Ask a leader to give a testimony of how true friendship has been demonstrated to them or why their friends are important to them. You could ask each leader to stand up at different times during the program to give a testimony about true friendship.

Skits:

Divide into small groups with a maximum of five people per group. Ask the group to come up with a hot tip on how to be a good friend. (Some suggestions if needed are: Keep confidences, stand up for your friends, be prepared to be honest with them, stand by them in difficult times, forgive them when they wrong you). Have each group perform a skit that illustrates their hot tip and then ask the other groups to guess what their hot tip for friendship is.

Prayer:

Break into groups of three and pray for each other in regards to your friendships including prayer for you as a friend to others and prayer for friends that you have.

Talk/Study:

If you have a capable speaker they could give a talk on friendship in the Bible, possibly on the memory verse. Otherwise, you could use the following method to teach on friendship from the Proverbs.

Write the verse references for the passages from Proverbs below on a whiteboard. Divide into groups of 3-4 people. Make sure each group has a Bible. Allocate one (or a few) verses to each group to look up and work out what it means. Ask them to comment specifically on what it is saying about friendship. When everybody is ready, work through verse by verse asking each group to volunteer their answers. You will need to know what each verse means in case the young people cannot work them out.

VERSES TO ALLOCATE TO GROUPS (You don't need to use all of them if you don't want to)

Prov. 18:24 A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a **friend** who sticks closer than a brother.

Prov. 27:6 Wounds from a **friend** can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

Prov. 27:9 Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one's **friend** springs from his earnest counsel.

Prov. 27:10 Do not forsake your **friend** and the **friend** of your father, and do not go to your brother's house when disaster strikes you — better a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.

Prov. 22:24 Do not make **friends** with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered,

Prov. 12:26 A righteous man is cautious in **friendship**, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

Prov. 17:17 A **friend** loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

OTHER VERSES FROM PROVERBS THAT MENTION FRIENDSHIP IF NEEDED.

Prov. 17:9 He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close **friends**.

Prov. 22:11 He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the king for his **friend**.

Prov. 19:6 Many curry favor with a ruler, and everyone is the **friend** of a man who gives gifts.

Prov. 19:4 Wealth brings many friends, but a poor man's **friend** deserts him.

Prov. 14:20 The poor are shunned even by their neighbors, but the rich have many **friends**.

Prov. 16:28 A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close **friends**.

Prov. 19:7 A poor man is shunned by all his relatives — how much more do his **friends** avoid him! Though he pursues them with pleading, they are nowhere to be found.

Conclusion: Encourage the group to be true friends to each other, a true friend with Christ and someone who reaches out to the newcomer in order that they can also become friends with God.