

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a


A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.


Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

MISSIONARY OF THE WEEK





The Duartes | Uruguay

PRAY

- The Youth of Uruguay who face many unique challenges from society
- Wisdom and guidance in discipling and counseling relationships.

PRAISE

- Our son, Martin was recently engaged to Belen. Both Martin and Belen serve the Lord.
- For another good year of FEBU, they are encouraged by many part times students who meet in person and on Zoom.



Handout: 02/19/23
Study Date: 02/26/23

Best Friends Ever

Human beings were created to be relational, and friendships are an important part of our lives. We need friends—people we bond with in mutual affection. But not just any friend will do; having the right friends is key, and discernment is required: “The righteous choose their friends carefully” (Proverbs 12:26). In Scripture, we see what a true friend should be:

- A true friend shows love, no matter what (Proverbs 17:17).
- A true friend gives heartfelt advice, bringing joy to the heart (Proverbs 27:9).
- A true friend rebukes when necessary, but the correction is done in love (Proverbs 27:5–6).
- A true friend influences, enlivens, and sharpens (Proverbs 27:17).
- A true friend avoids gossip (Proverbs 16:28).
- A true friend forgives and does not hold grudges (Proverbs 17:9).
- A true friend is loyal (Proverbs 18:24).
- A true friend helps in time of need (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12).

Friends can console and help us when we are in trouble, as when Barzillai the Gileadite consoled David when he was being hunted by Saul (2 Samuel 19:25–26) or when Jephthah’s daughter’s friends consoled her in her sorrow (Judges 11:37–38). A friend may also rebuke in love, proving more faithful than a hypocritical flatterer (Proverbs 27:6).

The Bible gives warnings about the wrong types of friends. We are not to be friends with a hot-tempered person, for example (Proverbs 22:24–25). And Proverbs 1:10–19 and 4:14–19 warn against those who entice us to do wrong. We should not associate with evildoers, no matter how great the promised reward or how appealing their “friendship” seems to be. Those whose “feet rush to sin” should be avoided at all costs. The path they choose is no place for a Christian whose choice should be to follow the “path of the righteous.” Only that path leads to friendship with God.

The greatest friend anyone could possibly have is Jesus Christ. He gladly calls us friends (John 15:15), and He proved His commitment and affection for us in a convincing way: “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13).

Finally, the real definition of a true friend comes from the Apostle Paul: “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:7-8). Now, that is true friendship!

KEY VERSE

Proverbs 18:24 (NKJV)

*A man who has friends must himself be friendly,
But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Romans 1:11-12; Ephesians 4:29; John 15:12-13

Focus on the Positive

1. The article on the cover lists 8 characteristics of a true friend. Which are you best at? Which characteristic do you most need to grow in?
2. How do your friendships contribute positively to your life? How are you a positive influence in your friendships?

Tuesday: Proverbs 17:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-10; Matthew 7:12

Respond to Needs

3. How do your friends respond to your needs?
4. How does God use you to meet the needs of others?

Wednesday: Proverbs 13:20, 27:6, 27:9, 27:17; Hebrews 10:24

Invest in Growth

5. How do you determine if your friendships are helping or hurting your spiritual growth?
6. List people in your life who are investing in your spiritual growth. Make another list of people whose spiritual growth you are investing in.

Thursday: Psalm 133:1; Proverbs 17:22, 18:24; I Peter 4:8-10

Enjoy Life Together

7. Think of your friend who you most enjoy being with. What makes that friend enjoyable?
8. What do you think that your friends would say make you enjoyable to spend time with?
9. What makes friendships enjoyable? What makes friendships difficult?

Friday: Proverbs 16:28, 17:9; Colossians 3:13; I Corinthians 1:10

Never Hold a Grudge

10. Why is forgiveness necessary for successful friendships?
11. How has God demonstrated his forgiveness to you?
12. What steps will you take to increase either the quantity or quality of your friendships?