

# October Development Guide

## SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS



Your Christian relationships are extremely important. Relationships are a vital part of our lives as Christians, influencing our walk with God and our impact on the world. The Bible emphasizes the importance of surrounding ourselves with godly friends who can help strengthen our faith, keep us accountable, and push us toward spiritual maturity. Let's explore three key principles in having the right relationships—vetting your friends, dropping certain friends, and loving your godly friends—grounded in Scripture.

### 1. Vet Your Friends

Relationships should be aligned with the spiritual and moral standards found in the Bible. Vetting your friends is a biblical principle, as found in **Psalm 101**. The psalmist carefully outlines how he will live a life of integrity and ensure that those closest to him also align with God's values. **Proverbs 11:30** declares, *"The seeds of good deeds become a tree of life; a wise person wins friends"* (NLT). Wise friendships build each other up in godly principles and faith.

To "vet" your friends means to assess their character, their values, and their commitment to Christ. Are they going to help you grow closer to God, or are they drawing you away from your walk with Him? **Psalm 101:6** encourages us to search for faithful companions who are "above reproach," living in a manner that honors God. Those who distort truth or lead us into compromise are not the kinds of people we should be investing in. The Bible challenges us to evaluate the people in our inner circle and ensure they are leading us toward holiness, not away from it.

Vetting your friends involves discernment through the Holy Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and clarity to recognize whether a relationship is spiritually beneficial or detrimental. Our friendships must reflect our commitment to living for Christ with integrity and purpose.

### 2. Drop Your Friends

The second principle is about severing ties with friendships that are spiritually harmful. **Proverbs 18:24** states, *"There are 'friends' who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother"* (NLT). Some relationships are toxic—they drag us down spiritually, lead us into sin, or hinder our growth. In such cases, the Bible encourages us to distance ourselves for the sake of our spiritual health.

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The story of Jonah illustrates this point well. Jonah, fleeing from God's command, boarded a ship with sailors heading in the opposite direction of God's will. The storm that followed was a direct consequence of Jonah's disobedience. The sailors, although initially reluctant, eventually threw Jonah overboard at his suggestion, and the storm ceased. Some friendships in our lives are like Jonah—they are leading us away from God's direction, causing unnecessary chaos. Dropping such friends is necessary, even when it feels difficult.

Remember to trust God to handle the outcomes. When we sever unhealthy ties, we must believe that God will take care of the other person because holding onto toxic relationships may prevent them from experiencing God's correction and healing. Just as the sailors grew closer to God after dropping Jonah overboard, we too may experience deeper intimacy with God when we let go of relationships that are pulling us away from Him.

### 3. Love Your Friends

After vetting and dropping harmful friends, the next step is to love and invest in your true friends. **Proverbs 27:6** teaches, "*Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy*" (NLT). Genuine friends speak the truth in love, even when it is difficult to hear. These are the friends who help you stay accountable to God's calling on your life. They challenge you to live righteously and are there for you in times of struggle and growth.

Loving your friends means fostering relationships built on honesty, encouragement, and godly counsel. **Proverbs 27:9** tells us, "*The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense*" (NLT). Good friends will offer guidance that is spiritually enriching, leading you closer to God.

Loving your friends also involves spiritual intercession—praying for them, supporting them in their walks with God, and encouraging them to pursue their God-given purpose. These relationships are rooted in the love of Christ, serving as reflections of His love and care for us.

As disciples, our relationships are crucial in shaping our faith and effectiveness in the Kingdom of God. By vetting our friends according to biblical standards,



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dropping those who hinder our walks with God, and loving those who encourage and challenge us spiritually, we build a strong foundation for our Christian journeys. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can make wise decisions in our friendships, surrounding ourselves with people who sharpen our faith and help us grow in Christ.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What were your biggest takeaways from this teaching?
2. How will you apply what you learned?
3. Do you remember a time when you should have removed a friend who wasn't heading the direction God was calling you?

