

## The Connection

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Joseph Carty / General

Learn Ministry / Relationships; Evangelism; Friendship / 1 Corinthians 13:1–3

When it comes to reaching people, the most significant aspect to keep in mind is the relationship. How do we connect with people and lead them through new truth and life change? How do I invite them to the next step in their journey? What are the options for next steps?

What about small groups like Vespers, prayer meeting, church, personal Bible studies.

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A man dialed a wrong number and got the following recording: “I am not available right now, but I thank you for caring enough to call. I am making some changes in my life. Please leave a message after the beep. If I do not return your call, you are one of the changes.”

- Friendship...
- Some people
  - change friends
  - like clothes...
- No God.
- Not Jesus.

- God so relational

# Trinity

## **Psalm 90:2 ESV**

Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

## **“From Everlasting to Everlasting”**

- God was alone
  - but triune
- God created Angels
  - other beings

## **Revelation 5:11 ESV**

Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands,

- Even then
  - God wanted more
    - relationships.

**Genesis 1:26 ESV**

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

- God is relational
  - Longs for Connection.
- Created humans
  - in his image.
- We are designed
  - to be relational.

## Friendship Evangelism

- Quarter is Evangelism
  - Learn Ministry
- Sharing New Truths
  - Difficult
- Changes in Life
  - navigating issues
  - losing friends
  - losing job
  - losing church
- Need Extra Support

**1 Corinthians 12:25–26 ESV**

that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

- Same with
  - Friendship Evangelism

› Parable:

This guy's walking down the street when he falls down a hole. The walls are so steep he can't get out. A doctor passes by, and the guy shouts up, "Hey, you! Can you help me out?" The doctor writes a prescription and throws it down in the hole and moves on. Then a priest comes along, and the guy shouts, "Father, I'm down in this hole. Can you help me out?"

The priest writes out a prayer, throws it down in the hole, and moves on. Then a friend walks by. "Hey, Joe, it's me! Can you help me out?" And the friend jumps in the hole. Our guy says, "Are you stupid? Now we're both down here." The friend says, "Yeah, but I've been down here before, and I know the way out."

*James K.A. Smith, The Christian Century, "I'm a Philosopher. We Can't Think Our Way Out Of This Mess", February 25, 2021.*

- Paul

**1 Corinthians 9:19-23 ESV**

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

- "Became Them"

- What does that mean?
  - Practically Today
  
- Became
  - poor white family
    - living at mobile park
  - affluent black family
    - living in Dacula
  - educated Asian family
    - very quiet and personal
  - neighbor widower

One ingenious teenager who was tired of reading bedtime stories to his little sister decided to record several of her favorite stories on tape. He told her, "Now you can hear your stories anytime you want. Isn't that great?" She looked at the machine for a moment and then replied, "No. It hasn't got a lap."

- Became Weak...

- How can you
  - become like
    - neighbor
    - co-worker
    - etc.
- Church Friend asked
  - Do you like:
    - Fishing
    - Motorcycles
- I do now...
  - golf
  - pickle ball
  - shopping
- Easier if,
  - you meet them there...

- Spend time around them...

## Real Friendship

A British publication once offered a prize for the best definition of a friend.

Among the thousands of answers received were the following:

“One who multiplies joys, divides grief, and whose honesty is inviolable.”

“One who understands our silence.”

“A volume of sympathy bound in cloth.”

“A watch that beats true for all time and never runs down.”

The winning definition read: “A friend is the one who comes in when the whole world has gone out.”

## Jesus Example

[Luke 19:1-10](#) (ESV)

He entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in



to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

- Southern Hospitality
  - Easter Hospitality
- Chose Zacchaeus?
  - Hated by all.
- Spent time with
  - lost people

## I Must Stay At Your House

- Inviting Yourself Over?
  - acceptable
  - privilege

- Home Visits
  - Social Time
    - good
  - Your House
    - better
  - Their House
    - best

## Accusations

### **Luke 15:1-2 ESV**

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”

- Constantly Accused
  - being friends
    - with world-lings

# Friends At Church?

- Some - Yes
- All - No

## Bad Company

One day a farmer grabbed his shot gun to shoot at a flock of pesky crows. Unfortunately, he didn't see his sociable parrot that had joined the crows. After firing a few shots, he walked over to the fallen birds and was surprised to find his parrot badly ruffled with a broken wing. When the farmer's children saw the injured bird, they asked, "Dad, what happened?" The farmer simply replied, "Bad company."

## Friendship with World

### **James 4:4 ESV**

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

- Friendship with world
  - love worldliness

- Jesus loved
  - worldly people
  - not worldliness
- Stable Christian
  - not your sin
  - stable spiritual life
  - balanced choices

## Boundaries

- Worldly Entertainment
- Worldly Environment
- Zacchaeus House:

[Luke 19:8](#) (ESV)

And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”

- Discussion of Repentance
- Your presence
  - changes conversation.

## Dwell on Agreement

- Arguments
  - never win
- Friendship
  - softens hearts.
- Friendship through it all

## Small Groups

- Invitation to Small group
  - Vespers,
  - prayer meeting,

- Youth Group
  - Home Group
  - church,
  - personal Bible studies
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- Real Spiritual Connection

## Friends in Peace and in War

Though Jim was just a little older than Phillip and often assumed the role of leader, they did everything together. They even went to high school and college together. After college they decided to join the Marines. By a unique series of circumstances they were sent to Germany together where they fought side by side in one of history's ugliest wars.

One sweltering day during a fierce battle, amid heavy gunfire, bombing, and close-quarters combat, they were given the command to retreat.

As the men were running back, Jim noticed that Phillip had not returned with the others. Panic gripped his heart. Jim knew if Phillip was not back in another minute or two, then he wouldn't make it.

Jim begged his commanding officer to let him go after his friend, but the officer forbade the request, saying it would be suicide. Risking his own life, Jim disobeyed and went after Phillip. His heart pounding, he ran into the gunfire, calling out for Phillip. A short time later, his platoon saw him hobbling across

the field carrying a limp body in his arms.

Jim's commanding officer upbraided him, shouting that it was a foolish waste of time and an outrageous risk "Your friend is dead" he added, "and there was nothing you could do.'

"No sir, you're wrong," Jim replied. "I got there just in time. Before he died, his last words were "I knew you would come."

*John C. Maxwell and Dan Reiland, The Treasure of a friend. (J. Countryman Books, 1999) pp. 27-28.*

## Appeal

- Make Worldly Friends
- Boundaries
- Lead Them To Jesus