

# THE FRIEND CONNECTION



## TRUE FRIENDSHIPS AND RING-DONUTS

### The importance of true friendships

[Sermon preached on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2018]

**Resources needed:** Bibles, A5 sheets of paper, pens, facility to show a YouTube video clip or play a worship song.

## WELCOME

What is the greatest act of friendship someone has ever shown you?

## DISCUSSION 1

1. Come up with as many reasons as you can for why close, healthy friendships are important.
2. Have you noticed people around you having fewer true friendships?
3. What factors have you seen at play that account for this?
4. Do you agree with the following quotation?

“The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love. There are many in the world who are dying for a piece of bread but there are many more dying for a little love. The poverty in the West is a different kind of poverty -- it is not only a poverty of loneliness but also of spirituality. There's a hunger for love, as there is a hunger for God.”

**A Simple Path: Mother Teresa**

5. Have you ever experienced loneliness? What would have helped?
6. Does the gospel have any answer to this problem (encourage your group to think first about what the Bible says and then look at 1 John 4:7-21)?

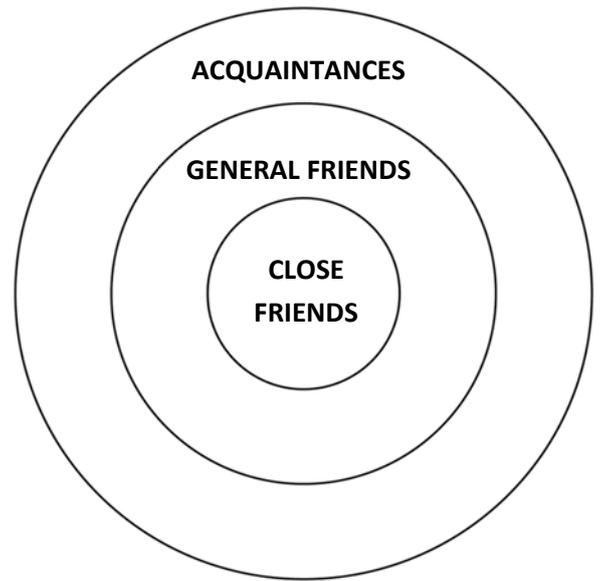
## WORSHIP

Watch or sing together the following song by Delirious – What a Friend I've Found.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yM97NbrFicQ>

## ACTIVITY

**Friendship circles:** Have everyone in the group draw a diagram of 3 circles, one inside the other like the example. In the inner circle, write the names of those with whom you could talk or pray about anything. In the middle circle, write the names of those you spend time with, and who know you reasonably well. In the outer circle, write the names of those with whom you keep in touch but you would not share on a deeper level.



1. How many people do you have in the inner circle? Is there an ideal number or does it not matter how many or if you have none at all?
2. What is the proportion of Christians and non-Christians in the circles? What do you think is a healthy balance?
3. Of the people in the acquaintances circle, do you think any of them might be lonely and in need of deeper friendship from you?
4. In which circle do your fellow life group members fit? How do you think it should be?

## RESPONSE AND PRAYER

**For the group:** What could you do to deepen the friendships in your life group?

**For individuals:** Ask God to show you one person that you could be a friend to this week. How will you do that?

**Prayer time:** Spend time praying for your non-Christian friends, for the lonely, and for you to experience the love of God so you can love others in the same way.

## OPTIONAL EXTRA for use in the group or at home!

If you have time look at one of the greatest examples of friendship in the Bible and identify the marks of a true friendship in the relationship between David and Jonathan.

1 Samuel 19; 20; 2 Samuel 1:25-27; 9:1-7