

**OBSERVATION** -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, and Why* questions together.

**INTERPRETATION** -- Answer these questions together:

**1. What does this passage teach us about us?**

- a) Given the creation narrative, “man’s fall” led to a distorted relationship with God and others. How do you see this distortion in relationship play in Gen. 3:8-13 and life today?
- b) Read Prv.17:17: How have you experienced love from friendship? Why do we need to be recipients of continual love from friendship? Why must we be continual “givers” of love of friendship?
- c) Read Genesis 2:15-18, Samuel 18:1-4, and 1 Samuel 20:41-42, and discuss the connection between God’s regulation for relationship and the attitudes portrayed between David and Jonathan’s friendship. What do those passages teach us about our need to pursue friendship?

**2. What does this passage teach us about God?**

- a) The “fall” narrative displays a picture of God desiring relationships. How do you see God desiring friendship with man after the Fall (Read Gen 3:8&21)?
- b) The work of God, *Trinity*, is the ultimate picture of pure friendship. How does the Trinity embody ultimate pure and unified friendship (Read Phil. 2:6-10)?
- c) As believers, how can our friendship prove that “WE ALL” are beholding the glory of *Trinity’s* divine friendship (2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 2:1-5)

**3. What does this passage teach us about grace/salvation? How does it point to Christ?**

- a) Golden stated that we should pursue friendships because, in Christ, we are all needy of people that will love us “always.” What is specifically unique about how Christ came to our aid while we were enemies of God (Read Rom. 5:6-9)?
- b) How is Christ, not only the friend that loved us, but a friend that always loves (Read Rom. 5:10-11 and 1 John 2:1-2)?
- c) Golden stated that we don’t only pursue friendship because we are needy in Christ but because we are needed in Christ. Christ has called us friends because he laid his life for us and exposed the Father’s knowledge and works to us (John 15:12-15). How does the atoning work of Christ and the knowledge of the Father influence how we love our friends *always*?

**APPLICATION**

- a) True friendship requires that we continue to be transparent about our needs, sacrificially give, and pay continuous attention to the needs of others. Friendship is not just a passive designation but an active attitude of humility to others. Think through and discuss the following mindsets toward the active nurturing of friendships:
  - a. Transparency rather than isolation (Prov. 27:17, Jam 5:13-17;19)
  - b. Providing godly counsel rather than flattering (Pro. 29:5; 27:9; 27:5).
  - c. Paying attention to the needs of others rather than selfishness (Prov. 18:24; Rom.15:1-3a; Phil.2:4)
  - d. Thinking others more significant rather than being prideful (Phil. 2:3).

**PRAYER**

- Praise God for being a true friend who has revealed Himself through His word.
- Confess how you might have demonstrated pride or selfishness in your relationship with God and people.
- Thank God for Christ’s friendship that atoned for your sin and continues to intercede for you.
- Ask God for strength to bear the fruits of love, patience, peace, humility, and joy in our friendship.

