

SERMON SERIES: Renewed

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Sermon Title

“Renewed Relationships”

Introduction

This week, we continued our series called **RENEWED** to try and tackle a seemingly simple question: *What would happen if we pursued the renewal of our mind through a fresh commitment to prioritizing God's Word in our life and relationships?* God created us as relational people. The people who influence our lives, and the lives we get to influence, help provide definition and purpose to our lives. But when those relationships are not rooted in the love of God, it can be hard for them to bring true benefit. When we renew our minds' view of the relationships in our line, and strive to sharpen our friends through Christ-like living, we can experience the fullness of what God desires for our relationships. To get started this week, answer this icebreaker question with your group:

- Who would you say is your best friend? What is one of your favorite memories with them?

Seek the Word

Read Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does this passage teach us about the importance of having supportive relationships in our lives?
- How does the phrase “A cord of three strands is not easily broken” define the way that we establish and engage in our relationships with others?

Read Proverbs 27:17 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- How does the idea of “iron sharpening iron” apply to our friendships and spiritual growth?
- What are the ways in which friends out to sharpen each other?

Read Romans 12:1-2 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does “renewing our mind” mean when it comes to our friendships?
- How does the concept of being a “living sacrifice” apply to our relationships with others as well as God?

Go Deeper

Reflecting on your past and current friendships, are there any that have or do point you away from Christ? Are there any that point you towards Him? How do these two types of friendships affect your spiritual journey with God?

Talk About It

- How can you ensure that your closest relationships are aligned with your spiritual goals and values rooted in Christ?
- Would you say that you are joyful in your friendships? What steps can you take to cultivate joy in your friendships, especially in times of personal or shared success?
- How can you invite accountability into your friendships in a way that encourages mutual growth and support?

Wrap Up

Reminder: Meaningful relationships can help us to stay focused on the renewal of our minds. They bring clarity, joy, and growth for our spiritual journeys. But these relationships can only be beneficial to our walk with Jesus if they are rooted in His truth and love. It is not Christ-like to deny friendships with non-believers, but we also cannot rely on those relationships to bring us closer to God. Investing in healthy Christian friendship, focused on sharpening each other and building one another up, can actually be the catalyst for more change in those other relationships, and deepen our relationship with God.

Challenge: Each day this week, reach out to a friend that has been a positive influence on your spiritual life. Express your gratitude for their friendship, and communicate ways in which you can continue to support each other in your spiritual journeys.

Prayer: Close your group time by praying for each other's relationships. Ask God to strengthen your friendships, provide clarity and joy, and help you grow in your faith. Pray for those who may feel lonely, that they would find meaningful connections within the church community.