

## Instructions for the Game of Life (Part 9)

### (Proverbs 18:24)

#### Instructions for Building Friendships

**Introduction:** Can you think of anyone who would describe or would describe you as a “good friend?” While some people play at friendships, if we are going to really build true friendships to help us in the game of life, we need to turn to the book of Proverbs where we get the instructions for building friendships. Here are ten characteristics of true friendship.

#### **I. Friends listen:**

A. Genuine friends have open ears.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, and example, He listens to us.  
(Ps. 91:15; Isa. 65:24; Lk. 11:9; Jn. 5:16)

#### **II. Friends share interests:**

A. Genuine friends always find common ground with us.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, He sought common ground with us. (Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 4:15)

#### **III. Friends protect:**

(Proverbs 17:9,17; 16:28 Jn 15:15; Ps.125:2 Ps.34:7; Jn.15:13).

A. Genuine friends always look out for each other.

B. Jonathan and David were genuine friends.

1. *They know how to keep private things private.*
2. *They will not allow others to speak badly of us.*

C. Because Jesus is our friend, He protects us.

#### **IV. Friends tell the truth:**

(Proverbs 27:6; Eph. 4:15; Heb. 4:12)

A. Genuine friends are always honest with us.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, He deals with us in loving honesty.

#### **V. Friends overlook faults:**

(Prov. 19:4; 17:17; 18:24)

A. Genuine friends accept us, warts and all.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, He overlooks our faults.

1. The religious establishment gave Him the title "**friend of sinners.**" He wore it like a Medal of Honor.
2. Don't misunderstand. He doesn't condone your sin. He hates your sin. He wants to take your sin away. He's the only one who can clean up your life.

#### **VI. Friends bear burdens:**

(Gal. 6:2; Prov. 17:17; 1 Peter 5:7; Mt. 11:28-30).

A. Genuine friends help you carry your load.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, He takes our burden upon Himself.

#### **VII. Friends are loyal:**

A. A friend is someone you can always count on.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, we can always count on Him.

Because Jesus is our friend, we can always count on Him. He said, He would never leave us or forsake us. (Heb. 13:5)

#### **VIII. Friends bring out our best:**

(Prov. 27:17; Rom. 8:28; James 1:2-3)

A. Genuine friends always want what is best for us.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, He brings out our best.

#### **IX. Friends build us up spiritually:**

Your best friends aren't necessarily those you play with or shop with. They are those who pray for you and lovingly guide you spiritually.

A. Genuine friends want you to become more like Christ.

B. Because Jesus is our friend, He wants us to grow spiritually.

#### **X. Friends love:**

The acronym C-A-R-E can help us remember four key elements of friendship.

A. Genuine friends express their love.

#### **Challenge -**

#### **Affirm-**

#### **Respect-**

#### **Encourage -**

B. Jesus' greatest expression of love was His death.

Jesus himself said, "*Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends*" (John 15:13).

God has designed us with a need for one another. So to have friends, and be a friend is the only way to fulfill God's design for us.