

Workshop: Cultivating Spiritual Friendships

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[0:00] Okay, I hope you guys all had a good tea break. Actually, I'm wondering if I can encourage you to actually move closer to the front.

No worries, I don't. Last time I checked, my favorite food is pork and not people. So I really enjoy my pakote.

You can see that. And because another reason why I want to encourage you to come forward is because there's actually parts where I feel I'm going to...

So the plan is I'm going to talk for a while, hopefully not too long. So I need to watch myself in that. To just talk about friendship, which I don't know whether it's a topic that you have considered before.

Brian told me that he pitched on this maybe two years ago. So I hope you still remember some of that. And then there's some case studies we want to work through together. Maybe some Q&A; if you have.

[1:10] I'm not really here as an expert in friendship. But I think it's actually a needed topic. I know that some of you might think the topic across the corridor is more exciting.

And you want to join that? Well, there's a part of me that wants to join that too. Okay. But I hope that this is going to be something that will be helpful for you, for us to consider.

Can you just quickly pray for us and then we can get going. Father, we want to ask you to help us, Lord. We confess, Lord. We are built for relationship. It's not good for man to be alone.

It's not good for any human to be alone. And yet, oh Lord, we cry out to you. Lord, how do we find friends who truly know us, who stick closer than a brother?

And so we pray that through these sessions, as we think about friendship, Lord, help us to think how do we make friends. Help us to think how we can be friends. And truly help us to see that, first of all, Jesus, you have chosen to be our friends.

[2:16] And that's why, Lord, we will never be truly lonely. We ask this, Lord, in Jesus' name. Now, maybe I'd like to begin by doing some survey, alright?

Okay, I didn't really prepare this, but I'm just going to ask you. Maybe you can just take half a minute or so to reflect on your life, right? You know, words like friends and bro or sis.

I don't know if girls actually do that. We throw that around a lot, right? I mean, I remember like many years ago, I was taking an Uber ride all the way to Changi Airport in Singapore. And the guy just can't stop calling me bro, right?

Say, bro, bro. You know, every sentence begins with bro. And at the end of the show, I was like, is he my brother? Right? So, similarly with the questions like friends, right?

You know, we also say, hey, this is my friend, my friend. But truly, truly, let me ask you a question, right? Think about it for half a minute or a minute right now. How many friends do you really have?

[3 : 27] How many people in your life can you really say that these are my friends? What are the people in your life now?

Let me ask you a question. What's gonna do to knife through this chili and the t think that these are my friends? So, I guess it is the highest if the two and the truth do you really seek the YouTube so matter because you have a great diet, you know, Wikipedia, and its view in your teeth. Obviously you have the daí, which is labeled anxiety, like, that was the highest right as you do this by, hopefully, most of us will raise our hands. If you have more than one, you can raise your hand. If the answer is more than one, you can raise your hand.

Okay. Wow, I see only people half hand. No, no, keep it raised, keep it raised. If more than one, raise your hand. More than one, raise your hand. More than one, raise your hand, okay? I'm doing this with you as well.

More than one, raise your hand. Okay, okay. Now, more than five. More than five. Wow.

Okay, you guys need to come and do this. More than five. You guys already came out. Okay, more than ten. Wow. Okay, okay. That's great. That's great. I think maybe you guys should come and do this seminar than me.

[4 : 57] I I don't know. In the church that I come from, many, many people will tell me privately or something or hear hear it from others that they may have people that they hang out with.

They may have people who come over to their house that they can eat, they can play mahjong together or maybe not the mahjong part, but all right. Okay, right. But they but when they deep down in their hearts they're not sure whether these people are friends because these are not people whom they can count on to share their deepest feelings and troubles.

I'm I'm actually very blessed to have two friends in my life that falls in the category. I'm not counting my wife. I know I should count my wife that she is a friend as well but I I don't sleep with my friends so sorry to put that in front of you that I think that's another category for me.

So actually really there's only two two brothers whom I can really like you know pick up a phone anytime I call them and I can just pour my heart to them and they do likewise to me as well.

And there's great great like blessings in that kind of relationship and the irony of the times that we live in right now is that we are more connected than ever.

[6 : 39] People are just a WhatsApp away people are just a call away even if they're in America and all that right can be very far and yet I want to actually say that perhaps we are feeling more disconnected than ever especially amongst the younger people and I think it's because we maybe we don't think of friendship enough maybe we have not really maybe we have wrong ideas of friendship so what I'm going to do now is to just spend the next 20 to 30 minutes to talk about friendship and then there's a couple of case studies for you to look at right so I'm sure that there are things that you can help these people and I hope that there are also kind of case studies that you can see in your in your in your church so so we're really talking about spiritual friendship we'll get a spiritual part later on but just I'm referring to the handout now essentially that's the way you can actually kind of this so the first thing to really see is that friendship right okay it's actually a necessity it's something we need something we need so Genesis 2 18 right when it says that then the Lord

God said that's in the account of God making a creating Eve for Adam right and he said hey it is not good that man should be alone I'll make him a helper fit for him look at that it is not good then man should be alone alright in the church that I used to come from this verse is being used to say that's why everyone should get married because it's not good for men to be alone it's not good for women to be alone I don't think that's reading in context I know in context that's actually Adam and Eve right but really the original context is there's only one human being at a time there's only Adam and if Adam doesn't get married if Adam doesn't get married and produce children that's it no more other humans are going to be around that is the context so what it really means here is we we are made for relationships we are made to not only relate to God we are made to actually to relate to one another it is not good for men to be alone friendship is actually a necessity but we know that if it's a necessity but it's actually not that easy to make friends why because friendship actually also comes as a result of choice or result of decisions that we make in John 15 13 to 16 right this is actually the the the where Jesus is talking to his disciples in the upper room so to speak before he before he goes to the cross let me just

I'm not going to read all of this but this is actually the passage where Jesus is talking about friendship now to be sure Jesus is our friend but not in the way that we usually think about it right because we think of friends usually as peers we think of friends as someone that we just hang out with and we can just talk to at a level point and maybe Jesus to you is not like a friend but here Jesus is saying that I have called you friends in verse 15 you see that right for all that I have heard from my father I have made known to you that's a very real sense that Jesus has actually made us his friends how he has revealed his inner life to us how so we cannot go into all that but in the context this amazing thing in the Old Testament we look at God right okay yeah you can see God's word you can see God's spirit at work but in the Old Testament you don't have what that full revelation that God is

Trinity for example you don't see that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit but in the Gospel of John the amazing thing is that God has come and God in a sense has revealed his inner life to us that God in eternity is actually the God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Spirit loving one another glorifying one another in eternity and the Gospel is that when Jesus comes and lays down his life for us we enter into that relationship and that's what he means by all that I have heard from the Father the words I have are from the Father I'm revealing them to you I'm inviting you into this relationship I'm made known to you and so the amazing things here is that actually it's a choice indeed we need to choose our friends but here the amazing thing first is that Jesus is the one who chose us verse 16 you did not choose me but I chose you and appoint you we usually talk about that in the context of salvation but actually in the context here it seems that this choosing is not merely just choosing for salvation or for bearing fruit which is what we'll talk about later on but it's actually how Jesus chose us to be his friends because he laid down his life for his friends in verse 11 so friendship is a necessity but at the same time friendship is a choice we need to make a decision to befriend someone and that's actually how friendship usually begins but then if that's the case you may ask this question how can

I really be friends with everybody how can I be friends with everybody we all have limited capacity we all have limited time we have all limited resources right so how is it possible for us to be friends with everyone this is where then we introduce the idea of what is called broad and narrow friendship broad and narrow friendship we are really going to think about this which is Proverbs 18 24 can I get someone to help us read that sorry all my verses are in ESV does anyone want to volunteer to read that for us or is this on recording as well if it's not recording then it's fine recording okay nevermind okay so I'll read it for you okay so a man of many companions may come to ruin so very interesting there's a but then there's a friend who sticks closer than a brother it seems that here right there's a disintroduction that we can think of friendship in the broad sense and also in a narrow sense in a narrow sense and there's a relationship between the two we're going to see that later on in a broad sense we can be friendly or we can be loving to everyone but sometimes only under

[13 : 42] God's sovereignty and serendipity that we can actually start to make friends with a few in a deeper and deeper and deeper way that you can really have a friend that stays here who sticks closer even than a brother right maybe some of us has tasted that you have friends who are more deeply connected to even than people from your own family so let's look at these two in different categories there's actually the broad friendship and then there's narrow friendship so let's look at the broad friendship first so James here I'm going to read James so James here says chapter 2 verse 2 to 4 he talks about this man who is wearing gold ring and fine clothing coming to assembly and a poor man in shabby clothing coming in and if you pay attention to the one who has the fine clothing and says you sit here in a good place and while you say to the poor man you stand over there or sit at my feet have you and

James says that look if you are this way you're partial towards people on the basis of their appearance right I don't know how you think about friends because when you come to a place like church very often what people do and what I observe in my own church is that people often want to be friends only with people of the same kind as they are I used to get calls during COVID because they can only meet in CGs we are trying to get new CGs to be open for people to join so they can get in those groups I get calls and you know what they come and ask me hey what's the make-up of the CG like is it full of young people or is it mixed or is it what they are all these things is there children there and as they people who look like me over there I'm not going to be there but do you know what that's actually a preemptive decision already to not make friends with people who are not like them

I'm not going to waste my time but if you think like this you are actually not really understanding the idea of broad friendship because James 2 8 9 here says look if you fulfill the royal law according to scripture you shall love your neighbor as yourself you are doing well contrast this with what showing partiality you are committing sin and you are convicted by the law as transgressors now so what is broad friendship the broad friendship is that I actually have to resist the idea that I actually try to pick my friends based on whether they look like me whether they are from the same race whether they do the same job whether they are from the same background educational background I'm not going to allow these things to actually inform whether these people will be my friends or not are you here to look for something hello

Lucas okay and and when you actually have that kind of mindset right that you actually preclude some people from your potential friends so to speak right okay then you're not getting that broad friendship broad friendship actually means that there's a sense in which really that everyone that we meet even to non-Christians in some sense can be our friends of course we need to be very careful about how they influence us but on the whole right we can be friendly towards them because it's what it means to love your neighbor as yourself that's the second greatest commandment but we see that there's this idea of narrow friendship right right which is Proverbs 18 speaks of there's a friend who sticks closer than a brother and sometimes I don't know because I used to think this is my experience

I used to think wow I understand people now right because it's like I don't know people say that after 30s after 40s I don't know whether it's experience maybe not just me people say that as you grow older it's harder and harder to make friends and I don't know we talked about calculations this morning there's kind of calculation I make in my mind as well as I think about friends because I meet someone I was like wow maybe this guy's only going to be in Singapore for two years or only for six months am I going to pour myself into this relationship nah don't waste the time probably not because I'm not going to get my benefit back in the long term right but that I didn't realize it so I have two friends whom I'm very close to because they really become very close friends since university and there are people who

[19 : 04] I share a lot of things with and I think that God brought someone into my life out of the surprise I didn't know there's a colleague who just joined the team maybe two years ago and we really I don't think I actually intentionally say I want to seek out this guy but I think because of some sense practicing the broad friendship being friendly to people just be interested in them right be interested in them that's the way you do it you meet people at tea break what do you do you ask questions right yeah who are you how are you tell me your story right and then you ask questions about the story listen very well and somehow sometimes God just use that to bring out people into your life whom they will reciprocate they come to you and say hey I'm sorry if my cocking is not what you understand but hey I want to chill you for lunch right yeah you know and sometimes there's reciprocity and they say oh we become good friends better and better friends and not just hanging out we actually then start to share our sins our struggles with one another we pray for one another there's something really wonderful in that so narrow friendship and broad friendship and very times we because actually sometimes we only think in one category or only in one the other category that's why we actually struggle in friendships we are really responsible in faithfulness for faithfulness to love others in the broad friendship category while

God is actually the one who brings what fruitfulness in the narrow friendship category that if we are faithful in the broad friendship category okay sometimes okay not all the time I'm not preaching a prosperity gospel here but sometimes God is faithful in what bringing the fruitfulness in this narrow friendship category so we need to actually hold a bit of tension between these two because on the one hand you need to be very careful of not being open to narrow friendships there may be these moments where you realize that you are being invited into relationship and you gotta think about that I think I was just challenged that just last week because my wife just suddenly spoke to me about these two brothers whom I've been I've known them for a while already I think I'm okay

I'm pretty good friends with them maybe it's a spectrum it's not just two categories but they're getting closer to this side but my wife is like how come you don't let them in how come you don't let them in and let them really be your friends I don't know I don't know how to answer the question maybe there's a part of me that's not open because you know what being open to narrow friendships requires some amount of faith because I gotta open up myself I gotta open up a part of me maybe I don't open up to other people and let them come in and see that right yeah maybe I don't know about church culture it can be dangerous to confess that you like to watch anime for example and then because you don't do that and then you are not getting people to come in for example right so you need that that be careful not being open to narrow friendships because if you just keep people at arm's length no wonder your friendships don't grow deep

I mean that's just a natural thing right but you should also be careful about being only open to narrow friendships I think that's like me when I was younger when I was younger I absolutely hate small talk I hate small talk I hate it when people ask me what's the weather like how's the economic situation now inflation very bad now it's all making small talks we're just talking about stuff and it's really nothing I feel anxiety inside I talk about theology faith God but with a bit of getting older and hindsight if you're only open only to narrow friendships the irony is this you may never get there because you need to allow the small talk to lead to some place where you build enough trust you can move on to the next part of the relationship right because the small talk is for people to check you out what you think right yeah but so

I guess that's just that's just you need to hold attention right to be how to be faithful in broad relationships but also then how to pursue the narrow relationships okay moving on quickly let's talk about how to discover friendships okay how do you discover friendships we're trying to be more practical here now friendships has a very personal aspect really I mean what I mean is actually I think we are referring to the narrow side because there's actually another reason why we cannot really be deep and narrow friends with everyone because a lot of times friendships are forged in the furnace if you like of commonality so there's a C.S.

[24 : 52] Lewis quote over here right which is that some say that friends have chosen their friends you know for their various excellencies beauty frankness goodness with intelligence heart but yes there's a particular kind of beauty particular kind of goodness that we like and we all have personal taste in these matters if you watch yourself you know I actually enjoy being this person because I enjoy his humour maybe I'll say that but honestly another guy who's just like humour as this guy but somehow you don't really get close to him or her and the reason why because it's a to them but look we know this okay

I will say for you I may love you but I'm sorry I may not like you I would choose to love you because I choose to do that which is good for you that love is a choice but friendship sometimes involves that liking that mutual liking right and it's not one way only I mean it's there's some ways it's a bit like courtship I understand you like you back you cannot force this thing right yeah there's a personal aspect to it and let's not get away with that so which is why it's built on some kind of affinity you know friendship is born at the moment when no one says to another what you two I thought no one but myself that's what CS Lewis wrote in the four loves you found a kindred spirit that's what it means you found someone hey you actually have this as well right which is why with and humor sometimes works right because you have that moment where you both laugh at the same time and then you know oh we are thinking of the same thing and then there's chemistry

I just have a caution as well it does have that but then the affinity and all these things can really surprise us I have a brother in my church I think who's a lot more intentional I admire him because he will choose to join CGs whereas intergenerational he seek out older men so that he can really be friends with them and let them befriend him and I think it's wonderful when you see these things in church when there's friendship that cuts across all kinds of social demographics but age range it's really wonderful to see that so the affinity aspect may not necessarily be the outside things like our career stage or our however every friendship needs to have that I mean C.S.

Lewis I don't have it here has another quote which says about difference between lovers and friends because lovers face one another because they're in love with each other but friends right I think yeah friends they stand shoulder to shoulder facing the same thing facing the same thing right so that's how you can find friends but finally I want to end by talking give you some practical things about how to forge friendships and discover friendships so forging friendships so like now in E okay before we get to the case studies and I'd like you to some discussion so look if you are actually seeking friends and you want friends you have to really be honest with yourself and not about life in Kuching maybe Kuching in life is busy Singaporean life is extremely busy if you want to start a conversation with any

Singaporean just say you busy recently and the person yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah or people call me I don't know why I feel slightly offended actually when people call me hey pastor you busy very recently I don't know what to think I just think I don't pay attention to you but yeah but but which is really a sign of actually where our priorities and our capacity as well just to be very honest about this maybe you are in a life stage where you really cannot have the capacity to make time to make friends right so you have to look at your capacity and priorities but if you're actually not making this a priority it will not happen that's just a reality of life okay right if you don't make this a priority you cannot live like this for 5 or 10 years and look back and say hey I didn't make friends in that period of time no no you have to in some sense make that capacity you have to be intentional about it so to speak and you have to actually set the correct expectations set the correct expectations which is to have realistic goals

[30 : 17] I mean once you know your capacity then let's say you want to set a goal for the next few years you can say okay look how am I going to be really pursuing friendship in the next few years how do I do so with the right attitude as well because just mind you that this is actually an art there's no science to it right okay friends is to I need to be faithful in broad friendship but then only God will bring the fruitfulness of the narrow friendships okay so I'm praying for the narrow friendships I'm praying for those deep friendships but I need to also be realistic right whether one or two can be formed in the next few years and I think this is something that is necessary because you are not when you do so right it's not just doing for yourself you're doing for others as well when that person as well also gain a deep friend when you do so right so but you need to be realistic about your goals because it's a bit like exercise even if you set too high a goal but you know that I'm an example of failing many times I just want to lose three kgs and then I can't do it and then you gain one kg

I just give up right so you need to set realistic goals for yourself but at the same time you need to practice patience because I mean it's an art patience I mean maybe it's okay if things don't work out if things okay I mean especially young people here I think because I think the digital platform sometimes gives us a little bit I mean I'm going to talk about that a little bit later on but there's a little bit difficulty in forming friendships just over text or even zoom calls because there's something about body-to-body face-to-face that actually creates that kind of chemistry and friendship and it can only be enhanced or kind of be found out only through mutual interactions over a sustained period of time so be patient it's a bit like planting it's a bit like planting it's like if you plant right you don't know when it's going to harvest but you can be faithful in planting but God will provide a harvest in due time alright okay finally

I want to just talk three ways practical ways to actually forge one is as much as you can meet face to face maybe this is not really applied to coaching context I'm sure you guys meet face to face right I mean I heard that in Malaysia it's very easy pick out the phone hey want to makan tonight or not people just come out and eat right so I think it's wonderful you should capitalize on that really Singaporeans the calendars are crazy I can never do that with anyone in Singapore say hey you want to come over for dinner tonight people say you'll I'm free in three weeks time yeah because the planning is like so much but then you need to do that so you need to say hey how can I plan for time to meet face to face and spend time with one another texting everything is a good way to connect people but it cannot replace that so I would like to encourage that for you and the next thing is actually then for example is to do things it's not only just face to face right but we have it side by side and there are practical ways to do this meals and perhaps

I think this should be happening in KC sorry I didn't ask Brian about all this but I really think that one of the ways that the married and the family can really be blessing the single people in a church in my opinion is to host meals host meals host a makan session in your home right make them kachamua or something I don't know what's your most favorite dish to make right and what do you do you create you create the opportunity for face to face conversation you create the opportunity for people to come and actually know you we really would like to encourage a hospitality culture in church and hospitality is not just welcoming people at the door and in front of the door during church service that is hospitality but hospitality extends to even just having people in your homes when you're eating with them side by side and that's how friendships are being forged and of course

I mentioned already you can meet with people to maybe get someone to have a debate about where's the best laksa and then you get twice because you get to eat at your favorite laksa so that you can meet twice so that's one for one right and you do life together do life together which is kind of it can be creative maybe this part is more challenging for coaching people because your lifestyle and if I may say so when I go to America I always feel that I'm back home in Malaysia because America has one thing in common with you guys you know what's that you like to drive straight to the you all have your own vehicles and you drive straight and you drive it's the best if I just park just at the doorstep of the shop that I want to go and I can just walk in there and I don't have to you know and I do I minimize walking basically right this is very strange for someone growing in Singapore because we walk all the time right okay we walk more than you basically

[35 : 42] I think yeah but you know my struggles I walk but then I still like that but then the thing is that doing life together actually my notes would say you actually fold people into your rhythms so for example if I need to go to the bank to do something right and I know that there's a young brother who has nothing to do I say hey why don't come alongside with me we go together or that day when my wife and my kids are in KL I need to actually do some household cleaning I actually got one brother in my church says anyone hang on with me come let's do household together I know it doesn't sound appealing but this is doing life together you come and then I see you vacuum I say oh man you don't know how to vacuum but you know you actually create friendship through that you have these creative ways to fold them into your rhythm and the car thing is because I think it's a bit harder for you because everyone needs to drive their own car I mean the point is to get people in the same car so they can talk that's how you actually create those opportunities you all drive together go there then you lose a bit of the interaction already and finally heart to heart heart to heart

I just want to share a couple of things if you have a heart to heart which is loving one another with brotherly affection outdo one another in showing honour encourage one to build another up just as you are doing there's a lot of scriptures on this and that's actually the goal of friendship what's the goal of friendship I want to let you know put it this way are you able to have friends in church where they know you so well right they know how to encourage you it's not easy to be encouraged you know because we are very cynical people and someone come up to you well done you think of course you say that you're just being polite but it takes someone who really knows you to come and encourage you in a way that actually goes into your heart yeah and do you have someone like this in your friendships someone truly knows you knows when you take and knows how to encourage you or even more controversially someone who knows in a week when you're most prone to temptation and the person is able to say hey give you a call

I'll give you a text I'm praying for you I know they might be tempted tonight but I'm praying for you I'm open to you do you have any friends who know you to that level because that's what it means to encourage one another heart to heart I gotta really go quickly now but then in this page there's a lot of questions these questions are here when you do side to side or face to face you don't know what to say I'm giving a cheat sheet basically right these are questions you can ask right and there are categories there are the people we're just getting to know good questions to ask how do come to faith like that day I was that to it's Leo right I think that Brian was asking him about how they come to faith these are great questions to ask each other because everyone has a story everyone has a story with Jesus and that story is amazing get to know that story and all the rest are pretty good stories too and so which is why you need to get to the point where you have firmly established friends just where it's like the encourage out heart one you can ask this question more straight how have you been struggling recently how can be a better friend to you how can help you grow spiritually that's the angle really of where we want to go to but that's a sample for you to take note of right now

I want to give 10 minutes to just look at the case studies and discuss amongst ourselves so maybe what I want to do is to get into groups of three or four perhaps alright okay and look at the case studies right okay and you choose one just choose one within your group to talk about and then in 10 minutes time we gather back and then we can maybe have some Q&A; or just express your ideas of we hope to end maybe just a few minutes after 12 okay sorry that this made a bit squeeze for you guys yep thank you alright okay these are okay basically based on what I'm just eavesdropping going around the room and hearing you guys are having great great conversations alright okay so maybe a very practical thing to suggest is that you can continue these conversations over lunch to talk about it but

I and if you okay I'm sorry that we're running out of time but if you are really having some questions around this topic do remember that we have that Slido thingy we also have that you can write a question and put it into the box outside so you can actually really ask these questions as well right I think tonight is quite free for all right so it's not really just about the questions you can be asking maybe I just like to give some slight comments on the case studies I think you guys probably have a lot more ideas which I'm hearing is very good ideas I think for me the John case here if you take a look at this John case here the profile is very interesting right it's the kind of guy that is if you've been around for a long time you know that there's a person like this maybe it's more guy thing but some girls can like this too but it's slightly more rare they're kind of funny they're always the funny guy that's what means gregarious here as well but somehow he actually keeps certain things very close to his heart he doesn't actually reveal himself a lot so which means that actually the joking the jokester right is actually the way to actually hide something inside and so if I were to talk to

[42:19] John it's good that he's realizing that it's not healthy to be where he is in terms of friendships actually it's to say that it may not necessarily look like he's going to have immediately very good friends immediately it's probably not easy as that but it's more like hey he can really be more outward focused in his conversation with people I don't have to make a joke of everything I can really be concerned about your life you can ask those good questions for example when you meet people be really interested in someone that is part of the faithfulness in broad friendship be really interested in someone it's like hey I like to get to know you tell me your story tell me your family if it's possible that person allows that and also at some point for John himself to disclose about person aspect and that's actually how friendship actually grows because if you are always trying to make things into a joke you lose that opportunity sometimes to get deeper so actually this is nothing to do with introvert or extrovert

I'm just basing on some conversations that I'm hearing around here it's not as if extrovert people are actually better at making friends than introvert actually not necessarily true in my just little bit of experience introvert people secretly despise those extrovert people they have all very shallow friends I'm looking for real relationships right okay but so it's nothing to do with all these categories it's really in the end about how God has made you and you figure out what does it mean for me to care for someone else what does it mean for me to be faithful in broad friendship back to that question so in some sense John may struggle his struggle is not really being faithful in the broad friendship category in some sense let's talk about Rachel and Shen for a while Rachel and Shen to me this is a very it's a thing that's a bit more common I think because you know you may have expectations maybe

I don't know it's more common my sisters I'm not sure because I think usually guys are a bit more proud we don't come to a church thinking I'm looking for a mentor but sisters are more open to I how Rachel comes as a not so nice person I don't know whether we want to jump to those conclusions but if you are Rachel or you have been Rachel maybe it can be reflecting a bit of why you can be doing that to someone because the reality is that we do actually there are things happen in our life that we don't really think about too much right for example I don't watch yourself in this why is it that some people they text you you immediately reply let's be honest

I don't know I have respect for you okay because there are some people I just immediately reply there are some people that text me I be honest let's sit for a while first before I reply okay sometimes the sit for a while becomes a very long while and and and we need to dig deep inside is there something very interesting in our church because they had a church camp where they talk about reconciliation I wasn't part of the church camp but it seems bearing a lot of fruit because even months later people are going up to each other people who are so close and say you know what I have something against you and I just never told you in the face and I want to share this with you I hope they can forgive me it's very interesting because when we search deep in our hearts we may actually have those kind of little it may be very tiny you think I'll just brush it aside no no you may be offended by something but you're actually nurturing that so it's very hard to tell our hearts are very deceitful but for

Shen I will say this it's a bit like she needs to see a broader picture I mean the sometimes come back to the question about being practical about the patience that we're talking about sometimes just a one-off chemistry I mean some group said it's very good which is like may not necessarily mean a friendship in a long time sometimes actually in fact some friendships we know are forged in a furnace of conflict they first time meet cannot later on they actually get to know each other through conflicts right yeah so it's actually not really about all these things as well but more like actually just being accepting that sometimes God in his sovereignty has not allowed me to pursue this friendship and I actually when I feel disappointed and angry I'm actually not angry with Rachel I'm actually angry with God so you have to come to terms with that as well right but what does it mean then for me to be faithful and what does it mean that asking

[47 : 49] God to faithfulness I'm sorry I'm hope that this session will be helpful for us to spend some time thinking about spiritual friendships can I close us in prayer and I think next time is lunch but I'll leave that to Jonathan to tell you Father we want to thank you thank you that even your word you gave us such wealth we see friendships even formed between David and Jonathan we see friendships as something that you use for your glory to draw the hearts of the brothers and sisters near to one another that we may exalt one and clash in the faith we pray oh Lord that in KAC we pray for our brothers and sisters in KAC we pray that won't you be pleased oh Lord to grant them such fruitfulness of narrow and deep friendships even as they practice oh

Lord the faithfulness in broad friendships I pray that you help them we pray that you guide and lead them give them wisdom in how to pursue this we ask this all in Jesus name Amen Thank you