



How to Prepare to Help a Friend

5/21/17

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

²⁸ in no way alarmed by *your* opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that *too*, from God.

²⁹ For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

³⁰ experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

2:1 If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,

² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself;

⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant,

2 Corinthians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort;

⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

⁶ But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer;

⁷ and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are *sharers* of our comfort.

⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came *to us* in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;

⁹ indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;

¹⁰ who delivered us from so great a *peril of death*, and will deliver *us*, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us,

¹¹ you also joining in helping us through your prayers, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed upon us through *the prayers of many*.

1. Trust the truths and wisdom of the Bible

a. Locate passages that speak to your friend's need that can be shared along the way as God leads. Call your pastors and/or other leaders for help.

b. Develop a topical file system of passages that can be used to help future friends.

2. Trust and apply the following teachings of Scripture regarding your friend's condition if he/she is not trusting Jesus

- a. Your friend is a masterpiece of The Loving Creator, fashioned by Him in His own image according to His divine plan and is set apart from the rest of creation.
- b. Though your friend bears the image of God and with that image has a noble nature, your friend also has a fallen, rebellious nature and, without God's intervention, is helplessly blinded by and under the influence of sin.
- c. Even though fallen and separated from God by sin your friend is loved by God and by those who love God. Dignity, honor and love are due to all who bear His image no matter how marred by sin
- d. Though human relationships matter a lot the center of God's plan for your friend is a life of worship and, at root, every problem he/she has at its core is a worship issue
- e. Only through a trusting, loving, worshipful relationship with God can your friend find God's plan for their life and experience personal and relational healing and with it fullness of love and life.
- f. God's plan to bring salvation and a life of worship and healing in your friend's life includes using individuals and communities of love, grace and mercy who are themselves experiencing God's salvation and healing. By His grace this is your calling.

3. Focus your life and ministry on Jesus. This will include:

- a. Pointing your friend to Jesus
- b. Ministering with a Christ-like servant's heart, esteeming your friend and their welfare above your own
- c. Periodically studying the life of Jesus as The One True Healer
- d. Practicing a balanced, Christ-like ministry of truth and grace in sharing with your friend
- e. Choosing a Christ-like devotion to your friend

4. Trust

- a. God's word as containing the solution for your friend's greatest problems
- b. God's power to change your friend's heart and life
- c. God's guidance to guide you as his instrument of healing
- d. God's church as a part of God's healing plan
- e. God's gospel of the cross as the foundation of life and healing

5. Pray for your friend and seek God's guidance each day

6. Become the friend your friend will listen to by practicing those “means of grace” God will use to produce growth in the following character qualities and practices. (To view God’s “means of grace” see our “*How to Grow*” guide at *CrossPointeFellowship.church* and click *Jesus* on the menu bar. For teaching, listen to the *Messages* under *Resources* each Sunday in Jan 2017 titled “*How to Prepare for 2017.*”)

love
compassion
courage
genuineness
honor
humility
patience
peacefulness
respect
tenderheartedness
trustworthiness
truthfulness
weakness-bearing
wisdom

1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak with the

tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

² And if I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

³ And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind, *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant,

⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*,

⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never fails;...

7. Joyfully accept the trials of life as instruments of God’s equipping for ministry
8. Hold your spouse and family as a higher priority than your ministry to your friend and continually consider your spouse’s council concerning this priority
9. Maintain a lifestyle of moral alertness and discretion in heart and practice
10. Maintain confidentiality in your ministry to your friend