



Building Amazing Relationships

Two questions: Are you a “beneficial” and “refreshing” friend? Do you have any?

The anatomy of spiritual friendships—principles from Philemon. Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus teach us that spiritual friends:

- ...stay connected in hard times. (v 1)
- ...love each other. (v 2)
- ...serve together with each other. (vv 2, 17)
- ...bless each other. (vv 3, 25)
- ...are grateful for each other. (v 4)
- ...pray for each other. (v 4)
- ...rejoice for and with each other. (vv 5, 7)
- ...affirm each other. (vv 5, 7)
- ...share the Gospel and spiritual truth with each other. (v 10)
- ...influence each other in God-honoring, brother/sister-building ways. (vv 8-20)
- ...explain reality and recalibrate each other. (v 11-16)
- ...defer to each other. (v 14)
- ...run interference for each other. (v 15)
- ...make personal sacrifice for each other. (vv 18, 19)
- ...believe in each other. (v 21)
- ...ask for help from each other. (v 22)
- ...connect each other with other believers. (v 23)
- **...benefit each other and refresh each other at a heart-level in Christ. (v 20)**
 - **Benefit:** to give help, usefulness, benefit, profit, enjoyment, advantage, good.
 - Antonym: to be unprofitable to.
 - Application:
 - **Refresh:** to give refreshment, rest, recreation, quiet, stillness, encouragement.
 - Antonyms: toil, trouble, vexation, grief, misery, wearing down, torment.
 - Application:
 - **In Christ:** when I live out of my Christian faith—meaning I am close to Christ, look like Christ, am compassionate like Christ, and imitate Christ—then I am beneficial and refreshing to others who know Christ.

Core Truth: I am obedient, happy, and really fulfilled...when I consistently give “useful help” and “refreshing rest” to other believers.

Yatzee! Here is your chance! “A Taste of Community” Dinner. Thursday March 26th.

“Walking Papers”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

Core Truth: I am obedient, happy, and really fulfilled...when I consistently give “useful help” and “refreshing rest” to other believers.

- A key purpose of God is to draw rescued people into “useful and refreshing” relationships with each other because we are designed for relationships and we need each other in order to thrive spiritually.
- **Today:** Please make a list of the people in your life who have been “useful and refreshing” to you. What did they do and how did they live to make your list?
- **Monday:** What would be your greatest current needs and struggles—the ways in which you could benefit from some “usefulness and refreshment?” How could some people come alongside you right now? Who might you ask for this help?
- **Tuesday:** Do you see people around you who are currently in need of some “usefulness and helpfulness?” What is God leading you to do for them?
- **Wednesday:** In what ways have others been the most “unprofitable” to you? Do you need to forgive someone and set down a grudge?
- **Thursday:** In what ways have others been the most “trouble, toil, vexation, grief, misery, wearing, and tormenting” to you? Do you need to forgive someone and set down a grudge?
- **Friday:** Consider Philemon 7 and 20 and reflect on the relationship between these two verses.
- **Saturday:** What do you need to do in order to be more “helpful and refreshing” to the people in your family?
- **Bonus Question:** What would you be willing to do in order to be more “helpful and refreshing” to the other believers at Cypress Bible Church? And, if you are not in a small group now, would you be willing to join one?

Note for Connection Groups: The full study guide for small group and personal study is available at: www.cypressbible.org and then click on “Get Connected” and the link is on that page.