

Choosing Good Friends

The one who walks with the wise will become wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm.

Proverbs 13:20

The Bible reminds us in Proverbs 13:20 that walking with the wise brings wisdom and choosing companions wisely can shield you from harm. Our friends shape our character. Engage in conversations with teens about the significance of surrounding themselves with friends who embody wisdom and godly values. Encourage them not to simply receive but be good friends to others. Conversations about friendship might be difficult for teens who fear finding themselves without any friends. Approach these discussions with love, offering guidance rooted in faith.

➤ **conversation starter**

Start by presenting a story, either from your life or a hypothetical situation. For example, you could share an experience where a friend's influence had a positive or negative impact on you. Ask your teens how they think the choice of friend influenced the outcome in the scenario.

Collaborate with your teens to discuss the characteristics they value most in a friend. Guide them in self-reflection to determine whether these same values are evident in their friendships.

➤ **navigating the conversation:**

- **Start with Openness:** Begin the conversation by expressing your interest in their friendships. Say something like, "Hey, can we talk about your friends? I want to understand who you're spending time with, and how those relationships are going."
- **Discuss Values:** Ask teens to define the qualities they appreciate in a friend. For example, "What do you think makes a good friend?" Listen actively and encourage them to share their thoughts.
- **Bring in Biblical Values:** Connect the discussion to biblical principles. You might say, "The Bible talks a lot about the kind of people we are to surround ourselves with. Proverbs 13:20 says, 'The one who walks with the wise will become wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm.'"
- **Encourage Reflection:** Guide teens in reflecting on their friendships. Say something like, "Now that we've considered what makes a good friend, do you see these qualities in your friendships? How do your current friends align with the values you find important?"
- **Share Personal Experiences:** Share stories from your life, if relevant, about the impact of good and bad friendships. Personal anecdotes can make the conversation more relatable.
- **Discuss Peer Pressure:** Address the topic of peer pressure. You might say, "Sometimes, friends influence us in ways we don't expect. How do you handle situations when your friends push you to do something that goes against your values or teachings from the Bible?"
- **Encourage Praying Together:** Suggest praying together for their friendships. You could say, "Let's pray for your friendships. Ask God to bring you friends who uplift and support you on your journey of faith."



Relationships