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*"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another,  
'What! You too? I thought I was the only one.'"*  
[C.S. Lewis]

## ENGAGE & CONNECT

What is something that is unique, interesting, or strange that you have in common with a friend?

## BEGIN WITH PRAYER

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*"Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their efforts. For if either falls,  
his companion can lift him up; but pity the one who falls without another to lift him up."*  
[Ecclesiastes 4:9-10]

## BIG IDEA

We are invited to be tools of love in the lives of those we love, and we need friends that will be the same for us!

## PASSAGE & DISCUSSION

### Proverbs 27:4-6

1. According to this passage, what is better than concealed love? What about this is surprising?
2. What does Solomon say about the "wounds of a friend" compared to the "kisses of an enemy"?
3. Relationships marked only by compliments and flattery can be more like enemies than true friends. How have you found this to be true in your own life?
4. Do you at times avoid giving or receiving rebuke, even when it is loving and necessary? Why do you think that is?
5. In the sermon we heard, *"True discipleship refuses to condemn, but also refuses to condone."* How does this quote challenge or convict you?
6. Why is it crucial for Christ-centered relationships to fully embrace both truth (correction) and grace (forgiveness)?
7. Think of a time recently when someone lovingly corrected you. How did you initially respond? What fruit eventually came from it?
8. Take a moment to reflect on your current friendships. What step(s) could you take to become the kind of friend who "wounds to heal" rather than flatters to avoid?

9. How does remembering that your identity is secure in Christ (approved by God) free you to give and receive correction well?
10. What practical steps can our small group take TOGETHER to move past casual, surface-level friendships into deeper, transformative community?

## STEP OF OBEDIENCE

Superficial affirmation is easy, but true friendship involves grace-filled correction [aimed at our holiness, not just happiness](#). The gospel gives us the courage and humility to give and receive this kind of love. God's design for community is not casual comfort, but Christ-centered transformation!

*As you consider your next step, here are two questions to reflect on:* 1) Who in my life loves me enough to “wound me” for my good—and am I listening to them? 2) In whose life might God be calling me to step in with grace and truth this season?

## Possible Next Steps of Faith

1. PRAY this week for one relationship where you can either receive or offer truth-filled love.
2. INITIATE one honest, grace-saturated conversation that points someone (or yourself) toward Christlikeness.

## PRAYER FOCUS

### Being and Receiving Tools of Love

- God calls us to be tools of His love in the lives of others—encouraging, comforting, challenging, and building one another up in Christ. We also need others to do the same for us. Christian friendship is a two-way street: giving and receiving love that points each other to Jesus!
- As we pray, let's thank God for the people He's placed in our lives and ask Him to make us more faithful instruments of His love. Let's also pray for the humility to receive love and truth from others, trusting that God shapes us through community!

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Proverbs Ch. 27 Summary](#) & [Find a Friend to Wound You](#)
  - Use these for background and encouragement before your group gathers.
- [How to Have a Gospel-Centered Fight](#) & [Beg to Be Rebuked](#)
  - This would be a good resource to use after your group gathers.