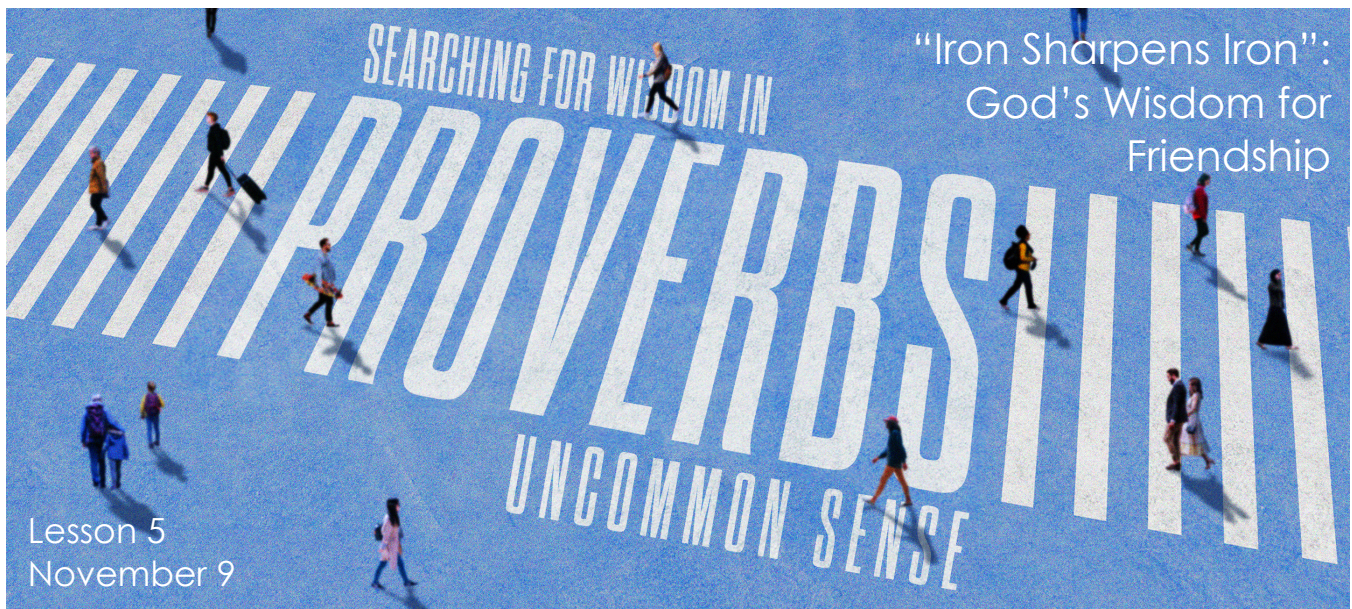




The book of *Proverbs* has a great deal to say about **the value of a friend**.

A friend _____ at all times,
and a brother is born for adversity. (Prov 17:17)

A man of many companions may come to ruin,
but there is a friend who sticks _____ than a brother. (18:24)

Oil and perfume make the heart glad,
and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest _____. (27:9)

Iron sharpens iron,
and one man _____ another. (27:17)

Proverbs 27:5-6 highlights the value of a friend who is willing to tell us what we need to hear, even when it's tough to hear:

Better is open _____
than hidden love.

Faithful are the _____ of a friend;
profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

As you look back over that wisdom, how would you summarize what a real friend is?



Based on these wise statements, what will a true friend be willing to do? How does God's wisdom conflict with the attitude of many in what they expect from their "friends"?

How do good friends "sharpen" one another?

With all of this in mind, *Proverbs* emphasizes that there are some **friends we DON'T want**.

Whoever goes about _____ reveals secrets;
therefore do not associate with a simple babbler. (20:19)

Make no friendship with a man given to _____,
nor go with a wrathful man,
lest you _____ his ways
and entangle yourself in a snare. (22:24-25)

Be not among _____
or among gluttonous eaters of meat,
for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty,
and slumber will clothe them with rags. (23:20-21)

A man who bears _____ witness against his neighbor
is like a war club, or a sword, or a sharp arrow.

Trusting in a _____ man in time of trouble
is like a bad tooth or a foot that slips. (25:18-19)

What do you see? How would you summarize the sort of friends we ought to avoid?

So what sort of friends DO we want?

Whoever walks with the _____ becomes wise,
but the companion of fools will suffer harm. (13:20)

The _____ of the wise is a fountain of life,
that one may turn away from the snares of death. (13:14)

What makes this sort of friend so valuable? Where should we look for such friends? Making it personal, how can we *be* this sort of friend to others?

Proverbs Made Personal

Warning: a message of caution I needed to hear...

Insight: a point I need to remember...

Strength: I was helped and encouraged to walk in wisdom by...

Exalt: God is worthy of honor and praise because...

For next week: read Proverbs 17 & 19