



#### MAIN POINT

Healthy relationships help us become more like Jesus.

#### MAIN VERSE

Proverbs 27:17, Proverbs 13:20, 1 Corinthians 15:33

#### TEACHING GOAL

Students will understand that the people they spend time with influence who they are becoming, and they will be challenged to choose relationships—including friendships and dating relationships—that help them grow in wisdom, faith, and Christlikeness.

#### HOOK (2 minutes): WHO'S SHAPING YOU

- If someone watched your life for a month—
  - who you hang out with,
  - who you text,
  - who you listen to...
    - ...what would they say you're becoming?
- Because here's something we don't always realize:
  - Relationships don't just reflect who we are. They shape who we're becoming.
- Whether we notice it or not, the people closest to us are influencing the direction of our lives.

#### SCRIPTURE (3-5 MINUTES): THE BIBLE IS CLEAR ABOUT INFLUENCE

- Consider calling up students to read each of these verses:
- READ PROVERBS 27:17
  - This verse means that relationships will naturally shape us.
  - They aren't neutral.
  - They either sharpen us or dull us.
- READ PROVERBS 13:20
  - Notice what it doesn't say:
    - It doesn't say "you might become wise."
    - It says "you will"
- READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:33

- All three verses point to the same truth: Who you walk with shapes who you become.

## **TENSION (5 MINUTES): COMFORTABLE VS. HEALTHY AND HELPFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

- Most of us choose our friends based on:
  - Who makes us laugh
  - Who makes us feel included
  - Who's easy to be around
    - And none of that is bad
    - But comfort isn't the same thing as growth.
- Some relationships – the best ones...
  - Encourage you to follow Jesus
  - Encourage good decisions
  - Challenge you even when you drift
- Others
  - Normalize bad choices
  - Pull you away from Jesus
  - Make following Jesus harder
- Here's a line worth remembering:
  - Your best friends aren't the ones you're closest to. Your best friends are the ones who consistently point you to Jesus.
- And here is a word to the wise from a pastor named Jonathan Pokluda:
  - "If you want to see real change in your life, change your playmates and your playground. Where you go and who you go with is half the battle in life. If you want to change your life, change where you go and who you go with. That's going to be half the battle."
- **NOTE ON DATING:**
  - Each week, we're talking about every relationship you have, but I realize that some of you are at a stage where you're either interested in or you are dating someone. So let me say this about dating and crushes...
  - Here's what matters:
    - The person you choose to be with one day is the person you choose to
      - Listen to
      - Trust
      - Be influenced by
    - That's why dating isn't just about feelings. It's about formation.
    - The person you date will either:
      - Help sharpen your faith
      - Or slowly shape you away from Jesus.
    - That's why choosing healthy relationships wisely is so important.

## **APPLICATION (4-5 minutes): CHOOSING RELATIONSHIPS THAT HELP YOU GROW**

- So what do we do with this?
- Start by asking important, honest questions:

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- Are my relationships helping me grow or holding me back?
- Do the people closest to me encourage wisdom or excuse bad choices?
- Am I becoming more like Jesus because of these relationships?
- Is there a place for me to influence others towards Jesus?
- Healthy relationships:
  - Sharpen your faith
  - Tell the truth in love
  - Help you grow, even when it's uncomfortable.
- Remember:
  - Every relationship is shaping you somehow

#### **LAND THE POINT (1 minute):**

- Proverbs tells us to walk with the wise
- Paul warns us that bad company corrupts good character
- God reminds us that growth happens in community.
- Healthy relationships help us become more like Jesus.
  - Choose relationships that help you grow.

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