

DAY 4: PARTNERS DO GOOD WORK TOGETHER

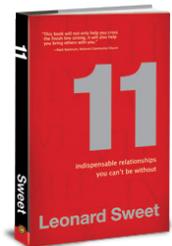
Read 2 Timothy 4:9-22 and Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.

These may be some of the last words of the Apostle Paul. He was in prison, facing a guilty verdict and execution. As he waited, he wanted to be with his mentees, friends, and partners. For Paul, these roles began to flow and mingle together, but certainly many of the people mentioned were his partners in ministry. That means they worked together. They were not only friends, they were missional friends. They had a shared purpose. They were making a difference together. They were united in purpose to do good and worthwhile things. What are some insights you have as you read this passage?

You have a purpose. There is work you are called to do. Most of you reading this have a job that earns income. Most of you reading this also have a ministry involvement where you are doing the work of God. We always need others. The acronym T.E.A.M. means Together Everyone Accomplishes More. We need others if we are to do our best work. And we need to work well together with others to get the best results. Whatever you do, when you do it with others you accomplish more. Good work requires good partnerships.

Think About It: What is the work(s) you do each week: at home, at your place of employment, at the church, and elsewhere? Who are the most significant partners who work alongside you in this work? How are your work relationships? What can you do to improve each partnership you have?

Put It Into Practice: Living Word needs you to join one of the many ministry teams that are serving the purposes of God. We want to help you find your place, alongside others, so that together you can accomplish even more—and have a great time doing so. Contact Connie Milchling at cmilchling@lwccyork.com for help in finding your place, and some partners as well.



Learn more about the variety of relationships you need to flourish!

11 Indispensable Relationships You Can't be Without is a study by Len Sweet. It looks at 11 relationships in the Bible that illustrate what you need.

DAY 5: MENTEES YOU INVEST IN

Read 2 Timothy 2:2.

Did you ever see the movie *Pay it Forward*? The idea was simple. Someone does something nice for you. You don't pay them back, you pay it forward. You pay being nice, being good, being helpful, being a servant, and being generous forward to someone else. And you don't expect them to pay you back either, you encourage them to pay it forward.

Others have invested in you. Don't pay them back. Pay it forward. Invest in others. As you do this, you become the mentor who helps others. That is exactly what Paul was telling Timothy to do in 2 Timothy 2:2. That is exactly what Jesus says in Matthew 28:18-20 to his disciples. I have invested in you. You have become my disciples (learners, followers). Now, go make more disciples. Pay it forward.

Think About It: What do you have that you can pass on to others? Make a list of your greatest assets, strengths, gifts, skills, resources, etc. Now, who needs what you have to offer? Make a short list of two to four people to whom you could pay it forward. Pray, asking God to create opportunities to begin to mentor-pay-it-forward to those people.

Put It Into Practice: Living Word is always looking for people who will pay it forward to the next generation. We need people to work with our kid::life team, as well as our middle and high school students. Check out those ministries. Join the team, whether it is weekly or monthly. The next generation needs what has been given to you.

Put It Into Practice: Every year find just one person to invest in. Find non-Christians to invest in. Build relationships with those at your workplace. Become known as a mentor who is there to help others flourish.



Connected:
The People
You Need to Flourish

Week 5 • March 5 • Pastor Brian Rice

LIFE TOGETHER

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A GROWING DEEPER PRACTICE

Make it personal. Yes, you heard that correctly. I know you've heard the phrase, "Don't take it personal." But when it comes to the Bible—yes, take it very personally. And the same about preaching—take it personally, extremely so. After all, it is all about you taking the general truth of Scripture and receiving it in ways that are particular, immediately relevant, highly useful, and specifically transformative. So, take it and make it personal.

For example, last week the message talked about empathy for others. Make it personal. Think about your own levels of empathy. How empathetic are you? Are there people who could use some more empathy from you? What keeps you from being empathetic? What ideas were mentioned in the sermon that can be the stepping stones for you to grow in the virtue of being an empathetic presence for those in need?

When you engage with the Word of God in this very personal way, God's Words become living and active and powerful and they change you. When you don't make it personal you quickly become a forgetful hearer and not an active doer of the Word. Take a look at James 1:22-25 for help in making God's Word personal.

to flourish // walk with the dreamers, the believers, the courageous, the cheerful, the planners, the doers, the successful people with their heads in the clouds and their feet on the ground.

DAY 1: MENTORS INVEST IN YOU

Read Mark 3:13-19.

Think About It: What are some insights you see in this story of Jesus and the disciples about mentoring relationships?

A mentor is anyone who helps you learn, grow, and develop. One leadership author describes mentoring as, "the relational transfer of resources from one who has them (the mentor) to another who needs them (the mentee)." Mentors invest in you. Mentors are there to help you reach new levels of personal growth and fruitfulness in your work.

Many years ago, I did an exercise where I identified as many people as I could who contributed to my life in some form of mentoring. My mom and dad made the list, as well as various (but not all) teachers. I had a coach on the list. Eventually, my list added Christians who taught me; disciplined me; provided me with wisdom, guidance, and direction; trained me in skills I needed; and opened up doors of opportunity. For each person I identified, I wrote in my journal the impact of their investments in my life. I was very humbled and grateful. I wrote a few letters of gratitude, thanking them for their love and time.

Put It Into Practice: Do some form of reflection for your life, like I did for mine. Identify the people who have empowered you. What kind of resources did they transfer to you? How did you benefit from their mentoring? Spend time in gratitude. If you are so led by God's Spirit, send them a note of appreciation.

Think About It: What about your current season of life? Are you at a place where you could use a new mentor? Are there resources you are lacking but which you need to grow further and deeper? Who can invest in you? Pray, consider options, and then approach them to ask for their help. If you are one of us who finds it hard to ask for help, remember this: When you don't ask, the answer is always no. If you do ask, the answer may still be no, but it may be YES!

DAY 2: FRIENDS WHO DO LIFE TOGETHER

Read Proverbs 12:26, 17:9, 18:24, 22:24 and John 15:13-16.

Friendships. These are the people we enjoy being with. We have shared interests. We want to spend time together. We understand each other. We are peers, equals, and companions. We can be real (transparent, vulnerable, and authentic) with them. We don't have to hide or pretend with them. They accept us as we are. They want us to become even more of who we are meant to be. They encourage us, comfort us, challenge us, and bless us. We are much richer and deeper for having these friends in our lives.

Because our time and space is quite limited, the number of deep friendships we can have is also limited. There are few of us who can have more than two or three close friendships, but to those we can add a few other good friendships. The number of good and close friendships

you can have will depend on your personality, your season of life, and your personal desires and needs.

Think About It: Make a list of your really deep/close friends and, if you want to, add a few of your other good friends. For each friend, jot down a few things that you most appreciate about them.

Put It Into Practice: Spend some time in prayer for each of your friends this week. For several of these friendships, think about one thing you can do to deepen that friendship.

Take A New Step: If you are in a season of life where you find yourself needing some more (and deeper) friendships, a good place to start is with a growth group. To find out more about growth groups and become part of one, contact Ned Keene, the Director of Growth Groups at Living Word, at 717.755.0089 x 106 or nkeene@lwccyork.com.



DAY 3: JESUS: A MENTOR & FRIEND

Read John 15:12-17.

Jesus is our Lord, our Savior, and our God. In all of these relational roles, he brings resources into our lives that we need. From him we receive power, wisdom, grace, mercy, love, direction, and much more.

But in this passage, Jesus adds another dynamic to our relationship. He calls us his friends! Just stop and think about that. You are a friend of Jesus. He enjoys being with you. He opens his heart to you. He wants to spend time with you.

Listen, Pray, Enjoy. That's all for today. Just sit with Jesus. Listen to what he says. Pray about the things on your heart. Enjoy being with him.