

# GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

**Human Flourishing**  
**Week 4: Close Relationships**  
**Ecclesiastes 4:7-12**

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Some universities offer human flourishing programs to study and promote factors important to a satisfying life. But Solomon wrote about this long before. This week's study shows that close relationships, challenging though they may be, play a key role in enriching our lives.

## **Kicking It Off:**

What is something you've been meaning to make time for? What's preventing that?

## **Discussion:**

1. Do you think of friendship as something to actively work at or do you let it grow organically?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 4:7-12. In verses 7 & 8 Solomon gives an example of a man alone. How does this connect to his conclusion in verse 9?
3. It could seem obvious that, as Jeff said in his sermon, "it's better to be in a friendship than to be alone." But why might people choose to be alone or at least choose not to seek out friendship?
4. What case does Solomon make for friendship in verse 10? Jeff used the word "assistance" to describe this. What is your tendency in relationships – are you more independent and apt to go-it-alone? Or have you developed the skill of asking for and volunteering help? What is one way you could practice offering or seeking help from a friend this week?
5. Look at verse 11. Jeff made this concept more accessible by describing this as the comfort friends can offer. When was the last time you enjoyed the comfort of familiarity among friends (being able to be vulnerable, sharing laughter, etc)? What could you do to set the stage for an instance like that in the near future?
6. Read verse 12 again. Like Jeff pointed out, we're not in actual physical battles, but friends can have our back in many ways. Even as simple as outfit checks ("does this work?") or reality checks ("is it just me or..."). Thinking of it this way, who are the sounding boards in your life? Who are the people you can trust to tell it to you plainly because you know they want the best for you and you'd do the same for them?
7. What advice would you give to someone who is in need of more close relationships but doesn't know where to start or how to go deeper in the friendships they have?

## **Wrapping Up:**

Friendship and close relationships can be a touchy subject. Pray each person in your group finds love and acceptance in the body of Christ in life-giving ways.

*"Friendship multiplies the good of life and divides the evil."* ~ Baltasar Gracian