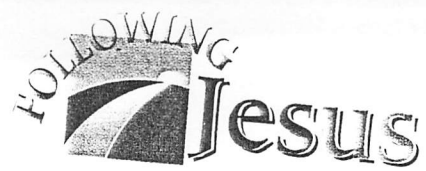


CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP

By his witness, Jesus demonstrated that good friendships promote God's family on earth. But Christian friendships don't just happen. Like every relationship, friendship takes commitment, attention, and learning certain skills to maintain the friendship. These skills include

- **Being open to other people's opinions.**
- **Accepting other people's strengths and weaknesses.**
- **Being truthful.**
- **Listening carefully and paying close attention to what others say and do.**
- **Being generous.**
- **Having the ability to forgive and to ask forgiveness.**
- **Using the courage to stay true to one's values, even in the face of pressure.**



Model your way of being a friend on the behavior of Jesus. He made friends with people who were unpopular. What do you do to reach out to people who are not well liked? Jesus washed his disciples' feet. When was the last time you did an act of kindness for your friends? Jesus forgave his friends when they let him down. How do you act when a friend lets you down?

FRIENDS

Sirach's words also point out the value of *positive* peer pressure. True friends respect you and influence you to do what is right. They encourage you to honor the Lord.

People who are truly your friends will challenge you to always do your best. They will never force you to disrespect yourself or others. Instead, they will respect you, your gifts, and your values. They will inspire you to try harder, to stand up for what you believe, and to dream great dreams.

After your family, your friends are the biggest influence on your future. Out of true

Christian friendships come mature adult choices: good marriages, strong religious vocations, dedicated single lives. The gift of good friendship will help you to make wise choices, persevere in chastity, and live more actively as a follower of Jesus. Anyone with that kind of influence is truly, as Sirach wrote, a "life-saving remedy, a treasure."

- 1. What is one example of positive peer pressure?**
- 2. How are your friends treasures?**