

HE
CALLS
ME

friend

*The Healing Power
of Friendship in a Lonely World*

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To Think About and Talk Over

Chapter 1: The Hound of Heaven Who Pursues

1. We learn from Abraham that God pursues us for friendship and relationship. How have you felt His pursuit in your life, both before and after conversion?
2. Dr. Perkins struggled to believe that God could really be his friend. What is your view of God? How has this chapter impacted how you see Him?
3. God makes and keeps His promises. Why is this important? What is the promise that means the most to you? Explain.
4. Abraham gave up everything in pursuit of friendship with God. Have you given up everything, or are you still holding on to things that interfere with your friendship with God? What are those things that are standing in the way of full devotion to Him?

Chapter 2: The Intimate, Holy One

1. The poor man wanted nothing more than to share his heart with the Shah of Abbas—no gift could compare to that. Does this describe your attitude about time with God? Why or why not?
2. The story of Moses allows us to see how God was working behind the scenes to prepare him for His purposes. How has He directed your life to prepare you for what He has called you to do?

3. What does it mean to you that God wants you to know Him? How would you characterize your knowledge of Him right now? What are you motivated to do to know Him better?

Chapter 3: The Great Forgiver

1. David said that all sin is against God. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
2. David did some pretty awful things: lust, adultery, deceit, murder—yet God forgave him. How does that speak to you with respect to the sin you commit? How can this truth serve as a bridge to reach those who need to know God as friend?
3. “When someone hurts us we should write it down in the sand where the winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where no wind can ever erase it.” How closely does this reflect your attitude and response toward how others treat you?

Chapter 4: The God Who Came to Us

1. Dr. Perkins suggests that friendship with God requires humility; that we “stay low.” What does that mean in a very practical way to you as you approach and interact with potential new friends?
2. What does it mean to you that He will carry your burdens? How can this truth help us to connect with others, especially those who are hurting?
3. Jesus modeled intentional friendship for us. He shared His heart, spent time, and made the ultimate sacrifice for His friends. Who are you intentional about being a

friend with, and how have those friendships developed over time?

Chapter 5: Friend of Prostitutes, Thieves, and the Outsider

1. Jesus befriended the outcasts of His day. Who are the people who fit into this category today? When you think of befriending them, how much control does fear have over you? How can fear of God cast out your fear of people?
2. Do you live a life that is isolated from unbelievers? What can you change that will bring you in close contact with them regularly?
3. How comfortable are you in crossing class and racial barriers to form friendships? What aspect of these potential friendships makes you uncomfortable? Are there persons that the Holy Spirit is prompting you to go a little further with?

Chapter 6: The God Who Dwells Within

1. Dr. Perkins describes the tugging of the Holy Spirit and says that He uses circumstances in our lives to cause us to cry out to God and to seek His will and His purposes. How aware are you of the Holy Spirit directing your life?
2. One of the first clear acts of the Holy Spirit was reconciling the Jews with Gentiles—people they previously saw as unclean. How is He moving you to reconcile with people who are different from you?
3. The Holy Spirit came in a bold way, and He gave boldness to the early Christians to talk about Jesus. Are there opportunities that you have missed to boldly

speak for Him? Share about them and pray together for boldness at the next opportunity.

Chapter 7: The Fruit of Friendship

1. How aware are you of the battle between two wolves that is raging inside? Which wolf have you been feeding? How have you been feeding it? Are there changes that He would have you make?
2. If we are known by the fruit we produce, what type of fruit do the persons who know you best see?
3. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Which of these is most lacking in your life? Pray together that the Holy Spirit would fully develop this aspect of His character in your life.

Chapter 8: Crossing Hard Lines

1. Dr. Perkins suggests that friendship always begins with the other person, and an understanding of what his or her needs are. How can service to others who are outside your normal circle of friends help you get started?
2. What does Dr. Perkins's friendship with Tommy Tarants teach you about crossing color lines? What do you believe about friendship across color lines?
3. Dr. Perkins benefited from great friends who were mentors in his life. They had wisdom about life that they poured into him. What opportunities for mentoring or being mentored is the Holy Spirit directing you to?

Chapter 9: The Friendship Challenge

1. How would you define the good life? Who are the persons that you know who need this? Pray for

- opportunities to help them know and experience God.
2. Friendship pursues, goes deep, forgives, crosses lines, is “with,” and bears fruit. Which aspect is most challenging for you? Share why. Ask the Holy Spirit to develop you in this area.
 3. If you were to die tonight, consider the size of your friendship circle—how many of them know Jesus as Savior? Do they all look alike? Are they all from the same social class? How would He desire your circle to grow before you see Him face-to-face? Every day is an opportunity to grow this circle until our very last breath.

Into Life: Dr. Perkins has mentioned a number of his special friends throughout this book. Make a list of your circle of friends.

- *How many of them are friends of Jesus?* Pray regularly that they would each begin to reach across lines to befriend others and bring them into the circle.
- *How many of them are not yet friends of Jesus?* Pray regularly for them to find the joy and peace in knowing Him as friend.

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