

GENESIS

begin. belong. believe.

Friends with Benefits...

(part II of the 'I Do' series – 2/12/12)

the big idea...

Marriage is not simply about loving another person, it's about being friends. In Song of Solomon, the lover proclaims “[This is my beloved and this is my friend](#)” (5:16, *ESV*). In order to cultivate a friendship with our spouses, we need to realize that all friendships are based in viewing one another as brothers and sisters ([Romans 12:10](#)) – this is foundational for those who are married or single. Furthermore, within marriage we need to first seek to be friends with Jesus, be committed to being generous to each other, have a shared mission, and enjoy one another in order to cultivate friendship within marriage.

For your Community Group this week – take some time to work through the following questions...

1. How you doing at cultivating friendships with others that treat them as brothers and sisters? Men, what does it look like to view women as sisters? Women, what does it look like to view men as brothers?
2. Being friends with Jesus is foundational to friendship within marriage, thus we need to encourage our spouse towards developing this relationship. How can you help your spouse grow in their friendship with Jesus? Try to be as practical as possible.
3. What would it look like to believe the best of your spouse and friends? How does (or can) / [Corinthians 13:4-7](#) shape your friendship with your spouse & friends?
4. Part of being friends is having a shared mission – to be on the same page about what your marriage is about. What is the purpose (mission) of your marriage? Is your answer God-centered & God-sized? How is how you answer this question being practically lived out? Are there things within your marriage that are currently distracting you from living out your shared mission?
5. How can you be the biggest fan of your spouse – both publically and privately? If you don't know, take some time this week to find out.
6. Do you know what your spouse 'enjoys?' What are some practical ways in which you can begin to enjoy what they enjoy?
7. Do you have 'dates' with your spouse or are you 'dating' your spouse? What is the difference between having 'dates' and 'dating' your spouse? How might you begin to cultivate an attitude and approach of 'dating' your spouse – what might this look like practically speaking?