

Connect Group Curriculum
“50 Shades of THEY – Week 3”

INTRODUCTION

The power in a friendship can be positive or negative; they can take us up or pull us down. The good news is: you have complete control of who you invite **into** your life and who you invite **out of** your life. As believers, we’re called to avoid being mismatched – or unequally yoked – in our close friendships and relationships, and we can look to the Bible for great words of wisdom on how to do friendship God’s way and discover the right THEY. You can think of “friends” as Forceful Relationships In Everyone’s Natural Domain.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. ***What is one of the craziest/most fun things you’ve done with a friend that you probably wouldn’t have done alone? [Skydiving? Drag racing? Backpacking across Europe? Dance lessons? Etc.?]***

2. ***As believers, what are the most important things to have in common with our closest friends? What is the danger in having close friends who aren’t believers and don’t have those commonalities with us?***

3. ***Paul was a notorious persecutor of Christians who had an amazing, life-changing experience. While he was en route to Damascus, the Lord confronted him and said something that changed the direction of his life. Read Acts 26:12-14.***
A “goad” is a farming tool like a rod, with one sharp end for “encouraging” an animal to move in a certain direction and another end used for scraping mud and mire off the plow. The purpose of the goad is to keep the plow heading in the right direction with as few obstacles as possible. You can think of a goad in your life as “the prod of God.”
How have you seen God guide you in the right direction with your relationships? Do you ever “kick against” what God is calling you to do and to be in your friendships? How has that refusal to go God’s way impacted your life?

4. ***Read 1 Kings 11:1-10. Satan works through our relationships one small compromise at a time. We see this played out in the life of Solomon, one of the wealthiest, wisest people ever to have lived. He had a blind spot when it came to relationships, and Satan crept in and exploited this for 40 years. Unlike Paul, Solomon chose to continue doing relationships his own way, rather than God’s way. What are some of the many things we can learn from Solomon’s story?***

5. ***Ecclesiastes 12:11 says, “The words of the wise are like goads” When you separate yourself from the wrong THEY, you’re going to feel the pinch or sting of the goad. Share with the group a time where it was difficult to obey what God was calling you to do in a particular friendship or relationship, but once you did, you saw Him come through.***

CLOSING

To receive the fullness of God’s relational blessing, we have to have an “inner circle” of friends with whom we are equally yoked. If your close friends hold you back from your full potential, make you feel bad about yourself, or dim the good things in your life (meaning they’re sad over your successes and are fans of your failures), chances are it’s time to move away from those friendships. It doesn’t mean you completely shut them out of your life, but you must be strategic in who your closest relationships and biggest influences are. Be bold enough to obey God’s calling for your relationships, and trust that if He’s asking you to move someone out, it’s because He knows what is best for you!