

# TOOL: Introduction to Significant Friendship

One hour of significant friendship • Weekly



We believe God does some of God's best work in the context of relationships. There is a power in significant friendships that changes us. In our busy lives, no matter how much we value those around us, our relationships can be the first thing to be crowded out. When we have a busy week at work or our kids have a lot going on, that time set aside to connect with someone we love can feel like something that can wait – until next week, next month, until things slow down. But, it would be impossible to imitate the life of Jesus without prioritizing the habit of connecting with people around us in a significant way.

This practice of spending time cultivating friendship is about more than having fun with each other or catching up on life, although we hope it includes both of those things. This habit is about practicing intentionality in our relationships – being vulnerable, putting our phones away and giving one another attention, listening to each other, and opening our relationships up to the work of God.

We hope the tools in this toolbox will help you go deeper with one another and God in practicing this important habit of significant friendship.

## Practice

Here are some things to think through as you begin to practice this habit.

- 1. Explore the tool box.** Use the tools in this toolbox to help you go deeper into your friendships.
- 2. Prioritization.** Pick a day and a time that you will meet with your friend(s). Be flexible and filled with grace, but also be sure to prioritize the relationship(s).
  - Be flexible. Life is hectic and often we have to reschedule things with one another. It's important that we have friends who understand and trust our intentions when we have to shift things around.

- **Prioritize.** At the same time, it's easy to neglect the important for the urgent. We want to prioritize time with friends – even and maybe especially – when our week feels out of control. Get creative with how you can make sure to keep connection and keep friendships a priority.

**3. Be intentional.** Significant friendship used to be something we fell into. When we were in school or college, or even with co-workers, we spent so much time side by side that significant friendships emerged organically over time. We could notice who we connected with organically and then choose to pursue a more significant friendship. In adulthood, however, day-to-day proximity with the same people is harder to come by. We have to learn a new way of doing friendship, where we pursue, prioritize, and be intentional. You'll find tools within this toolbox to help you with this, but as you dive in, keep in mind that sometimes connection comes *after* we pursue significant friendships.

### What's next?

Dive into the tools provided! For each practice, you'll find a series of tools to help you explore and go deeper. Each tool will unpack a specific method or practical way to engage with that habit.

Within each tool you'll find three sections: (1) an introduction to the tool, (2) instructions on how to practice utilizing the tool, (3) a few questions to debrief your experience with your Praxis Group.

We encourage you to practice using a tool for at least one week before you debrief your experience. Remember, practicing isn't the same as accomplishing or perfecting! Practicing can be messy, imperfect, and a learning experience!