

When a Friendship Falls Apart Discussion Questions

Chapter 1

1. Take a moment to ponder, or write down, how you are feeling right now about your friendship issue. What hurts the most? What confuses you the most? What do you most regret?
2. How do you hope this book will help you? For example, do you most need encouragement? Help overcoming feelings of guilt and shame? Help conquering bitterness? Practical, biblical guidance for attempting reconciliation?
3. When you picture yourself in a place of resolution with your issue, with your heart beginning to heal, what do you envision? How do you hope you will feel?

Chapter 2

1. Take another look at the list of issues that can cause friendship problems on pages **22–23**. How would you diagnose the cause of your breakup?
2. How might this diagnosis change the way you think, feel, or speak about your loss in the future?
3. What is your biggest fear in friendship? What Scripture might help you to face that fear with a godly perspective?

Chapter 3

1. If you haven't already done so, write down your answers to the questions on page 34.
2. Which friendship strengths do you feel most excited about exercising?
3. What is one new friendship quality or habit you want to cultivate?

Chapter 4

1. Which do you most struggle with: the inclination to shoulder all the blame, the temptation to point the finger at others and overlook your own mistakes, or the tendency to become cynical?
2. List a few thoughts you know need some revision. How might you rewrite those thoughts so they reflect a more godly perspective?

Chapter 5

1. If you've experienced a faded friendship, how might you look back on the loss with a different lens? How might choosing a different perspective affect the way you feel about the break—and about your friend?
2. Have you experienced ebb and flow in a long-term friendship? What helped to preserve your friendship in the time when the friendship wasn't as close as usual?

Chapter 6

1. What quality of God's friendship do you need the most right now? How might you seek to experience and enjoy that quality a bit more?
2. When have you felt the most emotionally close to God? What helped you feel that way?
3. Which of the suggestions for connecting with God would you like to try?

Chapter 7

1. Which of the forgiveness myths resonated with you? How might a new perspective on that misconception (or misconceptions) make forgiveness feel easier?
2. How does kneeling at the foot of the cross and considering Jesus' example affect the way you feel about your own hurts?
3. What might it look like for you to forgive your friend even if you still have some difficult feelings to work through? How might you forgive even while you are still "processing"?

Chapter 8

1. Bitterness presents itself differently in every person's heart. What symptoms tell you bitterness is becoming a problem for you?
2. You can't control the way your friend acts through your conflict—you can only control yourself. Who do *you* want to be during this conflict, regardless of how your friend conducts herself?
3. Which do you most need right now to help protect your heart from bitterness: Scripture, prayer, choosing the right confidants, or showing proactive grace? How might you begin applying that protection to your heart?

Chapter 9

1. Which type of outcome currently feels most realistic for your broken friendship: a truce, an impasse, or a reconciliation? Why?
2. If reconciliation feels impossible but you still hope to achieve it one day, how might you keep that door open? What conversations, decisions, or extensions of proactive grace might be helpful?
3. How are your prayers about your broken friendship going? What have you been hesitant or even afraid to pray about, and why? What prayers might help your heart begin to heal?

Chapter 10

1. What concerns or frightens you the most about initiating a reconciliation conversation?
2. What would help you feel ready to sit down and talk to your friend? Who can you turn to for guidance if you need help preparing for or following up on a difficult conversation?
3. James 1:19 says, "Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." Which piece of James's advice do you most need to focus on when you speak to your friend?

Chapter 11

1. Describe a time when you have witnessed or experienced God working change slowly, over a long time period. What does that situation teach you about God's heart and his ways? How might those insights help your perspective on the situation with your friendship?
2. If you are currently living with an unresolved conflict, what is the most difficult part of that heartache? How might you give that pain to God in prayer?

3. If you are currently estranged from a friend, in what ways do you see or sense God working on you, on your situation, or on your friend? If you struggle to see anything happening, pray that God will help you to feel his presence and see his hand at work— even if his work is slow and quiet.
4. Even if your friendship is not restored, how might God eventually use the things you learn through this situation for some good? What growth or change would you like to see in your own heart as you work through this difficulty?

Chapter 12

1. If you are thinking about taking a break from a friendship, what are your reasons for doing so? What do you hope the break will accomplish—in your heart, in your friend’s heart, or in your dynamic?
2. Who are some godly confidants and counselors you can turn to for guidance in your conflict?
3. If you take a break, how will you know it’s time to reach out to your friend again? What would need to happen or change before you attempt to resume your friendship?
4. What will it look like for you to “take the high road” during a break? What situations or conversations do you want to avoid?

Chapter 13

1. What are you most tempted to fret over when you suspect someone is talking about you behind your back? Do you worry about your reputation? Your job? Your other relationships? How might you hand those fears over to God?
2. How might meditating on God’s faithfulness, fairness, and future justice help to settle your thoughts and calm your fears? What Scriptures can you cling to?
3. In what ways do you want to imitate Jesus’ example in enduring unjust suffering? What most inspires or challenges you about his example?
4. If you need to defend your reputation or correct false information or lies, how can you do so in a way that preserves your integrity and honors God? (And if you need advice about your approach, who can give you godly counsel?)

Chapter 14

1. What pain do you most need God to comfort and heal as you work through a lost friendship? What Scriptures speak to those hurts?
2. If it’s time for you to mourn a lost friendship, what might give you a sense of closure?
3. Jesus experienced betrayal and abandonment from some of his closest friends. How does knowing that Jesus suffered relational hurts and losses affect the way you experience your own pain?

Chapter 15

1. What aspects of God’s and Jesus’ vulnerability do you most admire? Why?
2. List two or three specific thoughts or fears that sometimes prevent you from being vulnerable. How can you rewrite those thoughts in a more godly way?
3. What makes your heart feel safe opening up to a new person? Talk to God about those things, asking him to bring people into your life who help you feel safe.

Chapter 16

1. Take a look at the list of friendships described on pages **235–236**. Which type(s) of friendship are easiest for you to cultivate? Which type(s) are more difficult?
2. If you are hoping to find some new friends, which step do you want to take next: praying about your hopes and needs, putting yourself in a position to meet potential new friends, being a little bit brave, or being patient?
3. What does close friendship look like to you?
4. What existing friendship would you like to invest in more? How might you take a step or two toward deepening that relationship?