

# When Should We Cancel Friendships?

## Asking for a Friend



Questions from July 27, 2025

### A. Biblical Reasons *to Not* Cancel a Friendship

- (1) Outreach. Matt 9:10-13; Luke 19:10.
- (2) Judgmental Legalism is Sin. Matt 7:1-2; Romans 14.
- (3) Marriage. The Bible allows separation from abuse, but a marriage must not be cancelled unless it is irrevocably broken through adultery and abandonment.

### B. Biblical Reasons *to* Cancel a Friendship

- (1) To Protect Yourself
  - Physically – Proverbs 22:24
  - Emotionally – Psalm 55:12-14
  - Financially – 2 Thess 3:6-8
  - Spiritually – Proverbs 12:26; 1 Cor 15:33; Matt 15:13-14.
- (2) To Warn the Person and Others through Church Discipline
  - 1 Corinthians 5
  - In extreme cases, a church must not allow an unrepentant member to attend their gatherings in order to show the person the seriousness of their sin and to warn others.
  - Individuals can still love the person outside of church gatherings, but must not give false spiritual assurance.

### Ice Breaker

- (1) Share how you are doing and pray for each other.

### Digging Deeper

- (2) Read Point A1, Matthew 9:10-13 and Luke 19:10. What is the first biblical reason to consider not canceling a friendship? Why is it a problem when Christians have no non-Christian friends?
- (3) Read Point A2, Matthew 7:1-2 and Romans 14:1-12. What is the second biblical reason for not canceling a friendship? What is wrong with being judgmental and legalistic?
- (4) Read Point A3. What is the third biblical reason for not canceling a friendship? How is marriage different from other friendships?
- (5) The Bible does say that we should cancel friendships when necessary to protect ourselves. Read Point B1 and all the verses listed there.
  - One of the struggles many Christians have is ending or pulling back from friendships with people who are taking advantage of them financially (especially their adult children). Yet, Paul is very clear that we should do so. Why?

### Living Out

- (6) Finally, the Bible is clear that a church must not allow a professing Christian who is blatantly disobeying God and unwilling to repent to attend their gatherings. Read B2 and 1 Corinthians 5.
  - Why does Paul say church discipline is sometimes necessary?
  - Jesus tells us to treat such people like pagans and tax collectors, i.e., with love but not as part of the church. How can we love friends or family members in these situations without giving false assurance that God is okay with their unrepentant sin?