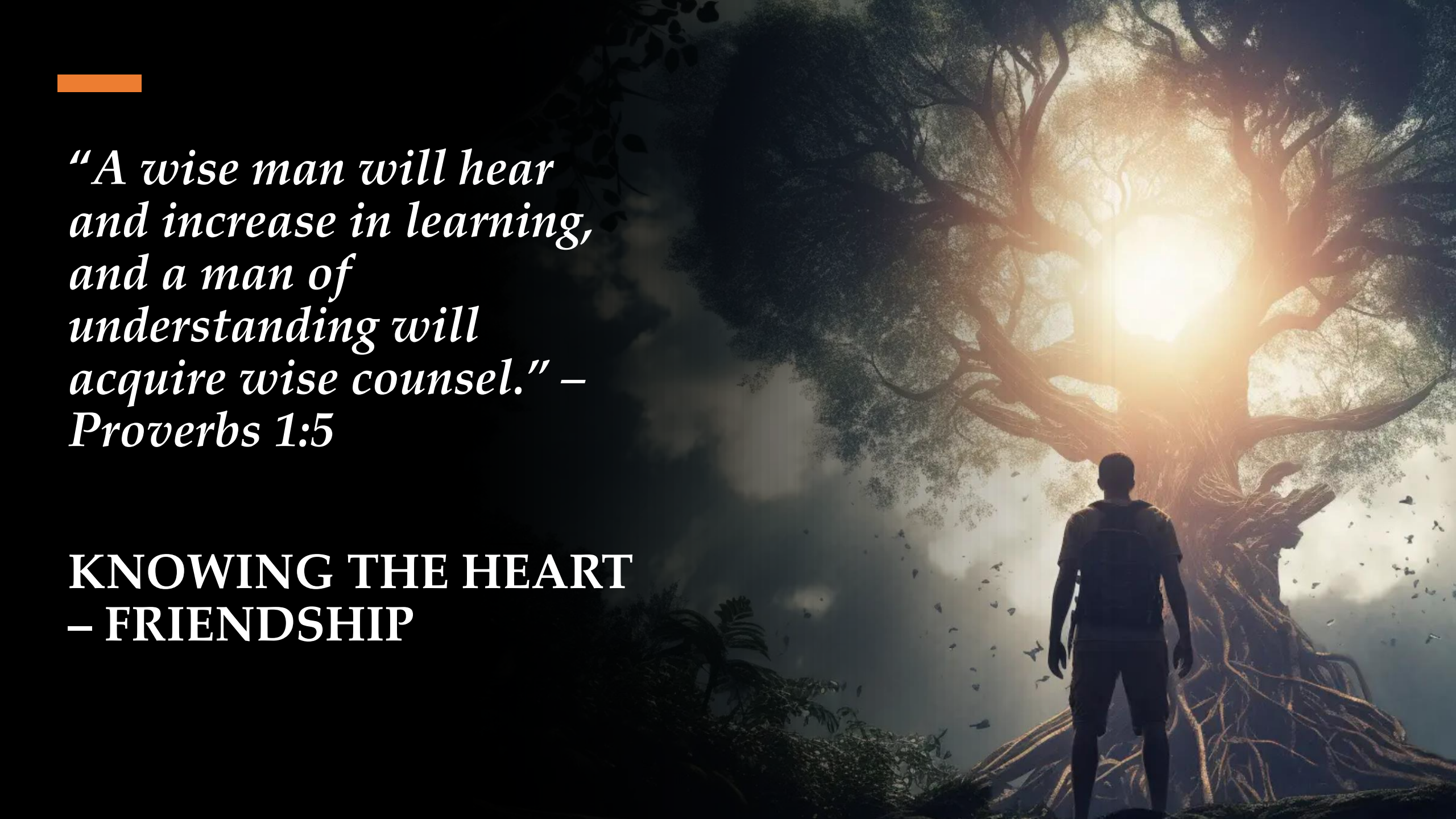


A person stands with their back to the camera, looking up at a massive, ancient tree. A brilliant, golden light emanates from the center of the tree's canopy, creating a strong backlight effect. The scene is set against a sky filled with soft, white clouds. Numerous small, dark leaves or petals are seen drifting through the air around the tree. The overall mood is one of awe, contemplation, and seeking enlightenment.

WISDOM

for the journey

A person stands in silhouette on a rocky outcrop, looking up at a massive, ancient tree. The tree's trunk is thick and gnarled, with roots spreading out. A brilliant, golden light emanates from behind the tree's canopy, creating a strong backlight effect and illuminating the scene. The sky is dark and filled with soft, wispy clouds. Numerous small, dark silhouettes of birds are scattered throughout the air, some near the tree and others further away. The overall mood is contemplative and majestic.

*“A wise man will hear
and increase in learning,
and a man of
understanding will
acquire wise counsel.” –
Proverbs 1:5*

**KNOWING THE HEART
– FRIENDSHIP**

A person stands with their back to the camera, looking up at a massive, ancient tree. Sunlight streams through the dense canopy of leaves, creating a bright, ethereal glow. The scene is set in a lush, green environment with other foliage visible in the lower left corner. The overall mood is one of awe and contemplation.

WISDOM

for the journey

We need help to make decisions about work; all relationships – in speech and conduct; who to trust or avoid; along with being measured by the plumbline of true character. Wisdom from Proverbs offers insight into the concrete experiences of human life that help us take charge of our lives.

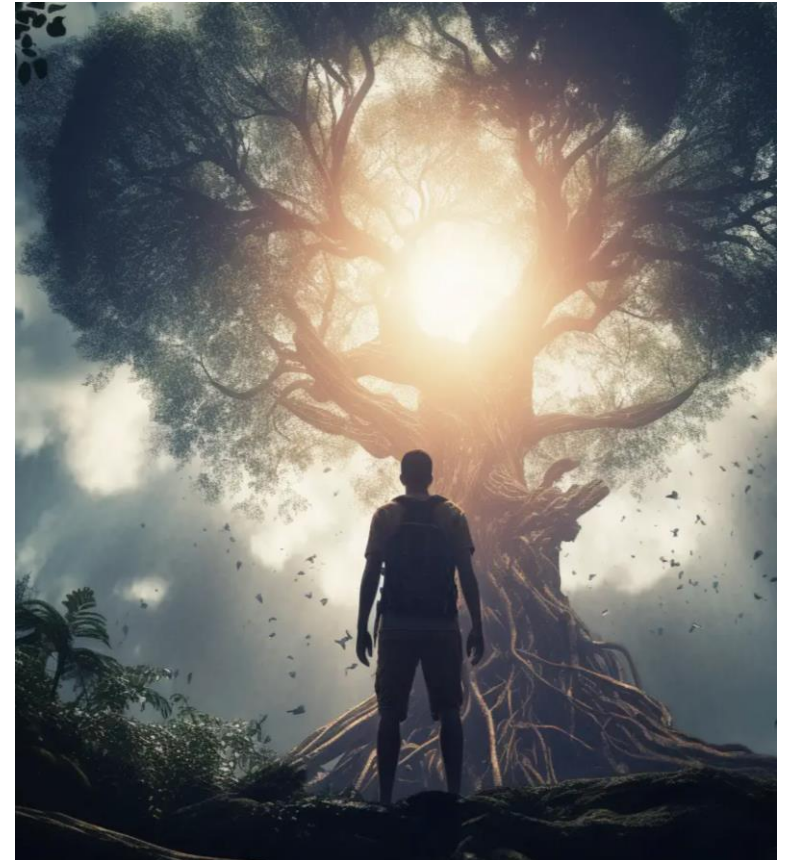
Proverbs is about **how to** live out your faith in God. There is no true wisdom apart from Jesus. Fools are those who rely on their own knowledge to navigate life.

In this study, we will look and listen to hear God's voice and see his Son shining through the book of Proverbs. We will be equipped in every way for our journey!

KNOWING THE HEART -- FRIENDSHIP!

– Who are your BEST Friends NOW?

1. INTENTIONALITY - Proverbs 18:24 → Your family may be there for you but may not really like you, understand you, or be truthful with you. A friend, however, may *stick* with you over the years *closer than a brother*.
2. AVAILABILITY – Proverbs 17:17; 19:6, 7; 20:6 → A friend loves at all times. Friends will be there for you when the chips are down, when you have little to give to them. You can count on your friends to be available—even when it's inconvenient.
3. TRANSPARENCY – Proverbs 27:5-6 → “Faithful wounds” means that real friends do open rebuke, they tell each other things they need to hear even if they are painful. If you are too afraid to say what needs to be said, you are really an enemy of your friend’s soul. Friends practice vulnerability and speaking the truth in love. See Romans 15:14.



KNOWING THE HEART – FRIENDSHIP!



From The Mayo Clinic – research indicates that friendship is good for both mental & physical health!

Good friendships...

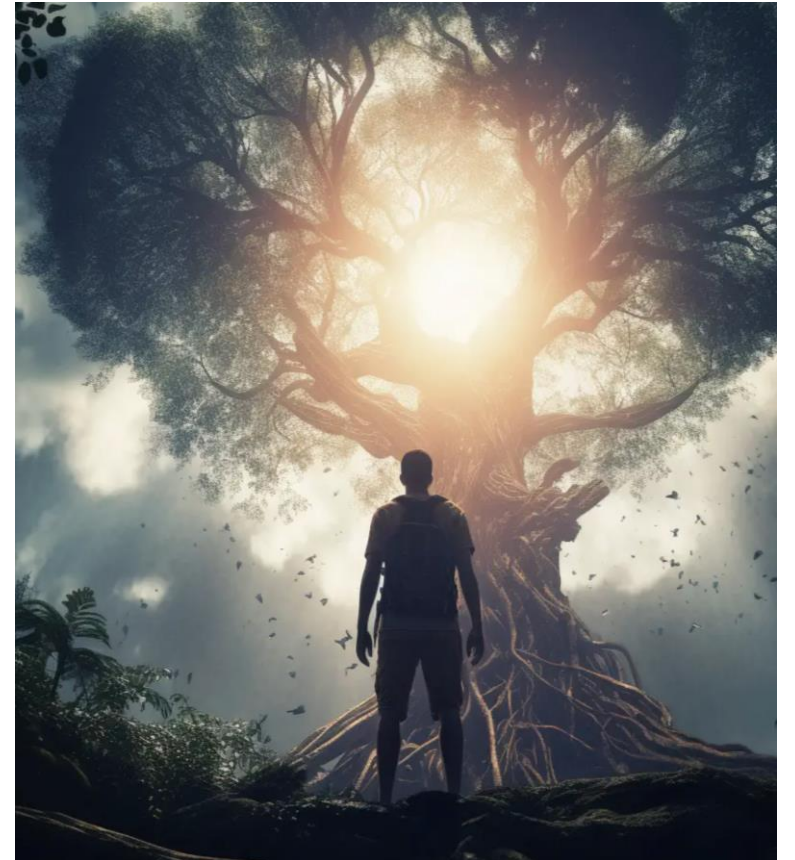
- Increase your sense of belonging and purpose
- Boost your happiness and reduce your stress
- Improve your self-confidence and self-worth
- Help you cope with traumas, such as divorce, serious illness, job loss or the death of a loved one
- Encourage you to change or avoid unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as excessive drinking or lack of exercise

Investing time in making friends and strengthening your friendships can pay off in better health and a brighter outlook for years to come.

KNOWING THE HEART – FRIENDSHIP!

– How much effort to you put forth to be a Friend?

1. EMPATHY – Proverbs 25:20; 27:14 → Friends have a high degree of empathy. They know your inner world well enough to know what hurts or helps, what inspires or bores, what stimulates or irritates. Friends voluntarily tie their hearts to one another. See Romans 12:9-21.
2. COURAGEOUS – Proverbs 27:17 → Friends sharpen and challenge one another, being vulnerable and sensitive to one another but also making proposals for how the other can grow. Friends regularly have constructive clashes that sharpen each party's understanding of the world and of themselves. You will never become the man you need to be, or that you can be, without Friends who sharpen you.
3. AWARE – Proverbs 27:9 → Friendship is sweetness. Friendship begins with discovery. We need Friends with common loves and vision. Friends are empowered by faith in the ultimate friend of our souls (John 15:13-15), where availability, vulnerability, and love cannot be surpassed.





ACTION: JOURNAL THIS!

1. What characteristics do you value in the friends you have now?
2. Do your friends speak the truth in love to you?
3. What friends can you name that can offer wise counsel and critique to your life?