

Please Pray

- ✳️ **Prayer for Increase and Shepherding:** During the past two years, the Church in Montréal did not realize any increase in attendance. We may have gained some but lost some. May we all be burdened to pray that we abide in the living Christ as the vine and we be branches to bear remaining fruit. Also, may the Lord increase our burden for prayers in the church prayer meetings for the increase and multiplication through more gospel preaching as well as more shepherding of one another.
- ✳️ **The Local French-Speaking Young People and College Students' Conference (February 16-17):** May all the services and preparations of this conference be covered by the Lord; may the speaking brothers be one with the Lord in His burden and be covered by Him; may the Lord release what is on His heart to the French-speaking students in this time; may the students be prepared and ready to receive a fresh speaking from the Lord.
- ✳️ **The 2024 Eastern Canada College-Age Winter Conference, Toronto (March 1-3):** May the students be released to participate in this conference; may the students be prepared inwardly to receive a fresh speaking and dispensing from the Lord; may all the services and preparations be covered by the Lord; may the Lord anoint the speaking brothers to be one with Him and one with His burden; may the Lord release what is on His heart to the students in this conference.
- ✳️ **The Church in Montréal Meeting Hall Renovations:** We are currently in the process of renovating the basement and some areas of the meeting hall's main floor. This project will cost approximately \$100,000. We also have the loan of \$75,000 received from another locality, which loan must be paid back within two years. May all of us continually consider our financial offerings before the Lord. May the Lord direct us in our giving toward the needs of the church, the saints and the needy ones. May we store up for ourselves "treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not dig through nor steal."
- ✳️ **Pray for various local needs in Montréal:** The saints, their contacts, and for the persons in need of care and shepherding.

Weekly Readings

- ✳️ Holy Bible Recovery Version with footnotes: Gen. 41:14 – 47:31.
- ✳️ HWMR: An Overview of the Central Burden and Present Truth of the Lord's Recovery before His Appearing, Volume 1, Week 3.
- ✳️ Life-Study of John, Messages 39 and 40.

Announcements

- ✳️ All saints are invited to join and watch the 2024 International Chinese-Speaking Blending Conference ("ICSC") messages scheduled on zoom for the Eastern Canada saints. Simultaneous translation will be available in English, French, Chinese, Spanish, and Korean. The schedule is as follows:
 - ♦ Message 1: Saturday, February 10 – 09:00am to 10:30am.
 - ♦ Message 2: Saturday, February 10 – 11:00am to 12:30pm.
 - ♦ Message 3: Saturday, February 10 – 07:30pm to 09:00pm.
 - ♦ Message 4: Lord's Day, February 11 – 05:00pm to 06:30pm.
 - ♦ Message 5: Lord's Day, February 11 – 07:30pm to 09:00pm.

Announcements (cont'd)

- ✳️ There will be a local French-Speaking Young People and College Students' Conference in Montréal on February 16-17 in our Meeting Hall. Please register using the online form provided by the Young People serving ones.
- ✳️ The 2024 Summer Olympics Games in Paris, France: We believe that this is a wonderful opportunity prepared by the Lord as the Lord of the harvest. We encourage all the saints to open to the Lord regarding this next milestone in the Lord's move in Europe, and we would like to invite the saints in the Lord's recovery to join us in this labour next year. Please contact brother [Allan Yeow](#) for more information and to be provided with the link to the form to express your interest. May we join the Lord in this move by praying, giving, and going.
- ✳️ Please consider your needs carefully before the Lord and email your prayer requests to Allan Yeow, allan.yeow81@gmail.com, by Wednesday evening of every week. Please also note that due to the limited space in the newsletter, we may not be able to publish all prayer burdens sent to us. May the Lord teach us how to pray for the advancement of His Economy.

Upcoming Events

- ✳️ February 10-11, Taipei, Taiwan: **The 2024 International Chinese-Speaking Blending Conference.**
- ✳️ February 16-17, Montréal: **The French-Speaking Young People and College Students' Conference.**
- ✳️ March 1-3, Toronto: **The 2024 Eastern Canada College-Age Winter Conference.**
- ✳️ April 12-14, Anaheim, California: **Spring International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones ("ITERO").**

Please refer to the church's website where more events are listed.

This Week's Activities

Sun-Feb-04 LORD'S DAY	♦ 10:00am-12:00pm: Lord's Table and prophesying meetings.
Mon-Feb-05	♦
Tues-Feb-06	♦ 07:30pm-09:00pm: English, French and Chinese Districts prayer meetings by conference calls.
Wed-Feb-07	♦
Thur-Feb-08	♦
Fri-Feb-09	♦ 06:30pm-09:00pm: English, French and Chinese Districts home meetings in person and on Zoom.
Sat-Feb-10	♦ 09:00am-10:30am: ICSC Message 1. ♦ 11:00am-12:30pm: ICSC Message 2. ♦ 07:30pm-09:00pm: ICSC Message 3.
Sun-Feb-11 LORD'S DAY	♦ 10:00am-12:00pm: Lord's Table and prophesying meetings. ♦ 05:00pm-06:30pm: ICSC Message 4. ♦ 07:30pm-09:00pm: ICSC Message 5.

FRIENDS

Scripture Reading: James 4:4; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Psa. 1; 1 Cor. 15:33

IV. Replacing friends with brothers in the church

A person must settle the matter of friendship during the first few weeks of his Christian life. He must change all his friends. You must tell all your friends what has happened to you. You may still maintain some friendship with them, but this friendship cannot be intimate in any way. You must change all your friends. You must learn to be a brother in the church and replace your former friends with brothers in the church.

We do not want to go to the extreme. We do not hate our former friends, and we do not want to ignore them altogether. But now our contact with them must be on a different level. Learn to testify to them and bring the Lord to them. We should be with them for only five minutes, fifteen minutes, half an hour, or an hour. Do not continue to sit among them. Do not talk about worldly things with them. Learn to take your stand and try your best to bring them to the Lord and the church. Testify to them and preach the gospel to them. Try your best to make them brothers and sisters in the church. Do not make friends or have friendship outside the circle of brothers.

I can assure you that a believer with too many unbelieving friends will surely be a defeated Christian. Even if he does not sin, he will become worldly. If a person loves the Lord, serves Him, and is faithful to Him and is exercised in himself, he cannot possibly have many worldly friends. If a person has many frivolous friends, it proves that he is sick.

We should not have unclean lips, and we should not dwell among people of unclean lips. In the sight of God, it is wrong to have unclean lips. It is equally wrong and requires equal confession to dwell among people of unclean lips. It is wrong for us to sin, and it also is wrong to dwell among sinners. We need to ask God for grace so that we ourselves do not sin. We need His grace so that we do not cultivate intimate friendship with sinners. You would be angry at someone if he said that you were a thief. Neither would it be a compliment if he said that you were in the company of thieves or that you were a friend of thieves.

The first question a person should ask before the Lord is about himself. The second question he should ask is about his friends. Next to the person himself, a person is represented by his acquaintances. If he wants to remain strong, he must not be careless about his acquaintances and friendships. The minute he becomes careless about his friends, he is defeated. Never be careless in this matter. You must leave all your former friends behind. Learn to make friends with those who fellowship in the church. Your communication with them should be something in the Lord. You should replace all of your former communication with communication that is in the Lord.

V. The meaning of friendship in the church

A. Friendship being something that goes beyond normal relationships

By now you should see that friendship is something very special. It is a relationship which goes beyond social status. It is a relationship that is free from formality. When a communication goes beyond social status and formality, that is friendship. I once said that some fathers are friends to their sons, while other fathers remain fathers for life. I know that some mothers have never been friends to their daughters; the mothers are strictly mothers and the daughters are strictly daughters; they have never been friends to each other. There are many people who never become friends to those in their family; the husband remains strictly a husband, and the wife remains strictly a wife. Many supervisors in offices take a very lofty position, and their subordinates remain inferior to them. There is only an employer-employee relationship between them; they have never been friends to each other. Although some become friends, these are rare exceptions. Being a friend to someone means going beyond the normal relationship. It means to have an acquaintance that extends beyond the normal relationship.

Abraham was a friend of God. If he had behaved strictly as a man and God had behaved strictly as God, they would not have been friends. Abraham forgot his status, and God also set aside His status. Thus, Abraham could be a friend to God.

The Lord Jesus also became a friend to sinners. The Lord Jesus could not have become a friend to sinners if He had remained in His own position. He became a friend because He left that position. If He had not stepped from His position, He could only have been a Savior and not a friend to man. I hope you can see what a friend is. As sinners we could never be joined to the Lord. He is the Judge and we are the judged. He is the Savior and we are the saved. But the Lord laid aside everything to become a friend to sinners. This is why others called Him the Friend of sinners. This is how He leads them to accept Him as their Savior.

I believe that after a person has been in the Lord for a long time and has developed a deep relationship with Him, he will find some brothers in the church to be his friends. He can go beyond the normal relationship. The third Epistle of John is quite clear about this matter. In 3 John, John no longer seemed to be an apostle. He had become an elder instead.

Note: This content is extracted from CWWN, Vol. 49, Messages for Building Up New Believers (2), Chapter 34, *FRIENDS*, by Watchman Nee, published by Living Stream Ministry, available at <http://www.ministrybooks.org>.