



I Am Scent

Week 1: Friendship (Play-Doh)

Find the message podcasts and group guides in this series at actschurchlakeway.com/sermons or the ACTS Lakeway app, available for download in the app store for your phone or tablet.

Big Idea from the Message

The ACTS Value of “Community” is on display this weekend as we consider how authentic friendships with others are the byproduct of our faith in God.

Scent Connection

The Hasbro Corporation recently patented the scent of Play-Doh, recognizing the power of this aroma and its connection to our first memories of school and friendship.

Connect

1. Who was your best friend growing up? Share a favorite memory from that childhood friendship.

Discuss

2. In his message, Pastor Pete listed several ingredients that make up friendship. What are the qualities of friendships that you believe are vital to a healthy, long-term friendship?

Read Proverbs 27:5-9 and 17 as a group.

3. Verses 5-6 speak about friends who are willing to confront one another with hard truths and tough love. Do you have friends like this in your life? What does it take to receive this kind of correction? What permission do you need to give this kind of tough love?
4. Verse 9 speaks of the pleasantness of a friend being like perfume and incense. Who is someone in your life whose pleasantness allows you to relax, be yourself, and be at home? How do you see Jesus live this out? How can we exercise this kind of pleasantness in our own lives?
5. Verse 17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” What does this verse mean to you? Who are the people who make you sharper? Who might be someone you can invite into that kind of friendship?
6. What circumstances prevent surface-level friendships from going deeper? Is it different for women and men? Do those circumstances change as you get older? Despite these challenges, what are some ways we can encourage our friendships to go deeper?

Live It Out

7. Pastor Pete made an important point this week about how Jesus befriended everyone: the downtrodden, the losers, and the lonely. Jesus reaches out in friendship to those who are grieving. Even more shocking, Jesus is called the friend of *sinners* (Matthew 11:19). What thoughts or feelings does this truth stir in your soul?
8. Jesus specifically calls the disciples friends in John 15:13-17. Read this passage together as a group. It's full of immensely powerful truths. According to this passage, how does Jesus define friendship? How does Jesus live this out?
9. How are you being challenged to follow in Jesus' steps as a friend willing to give his life for others? Who will you invite to walk with you in this challenge?

Pray

As you take time to pray in your small group or throughout the week on your own, here are some ideas and concepts which may help focus your prayers:

- Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for the friends that God has placed in your life
- Pray for opportunities to grow and trust your friends to grow deeper in faith together
- Pray for God to help you cultivate a deeper friendship with him

Go Deeper / Journal

If your group still has time, consider diving into these questions. Or use them as prompts for journaling this week:

10. In his book, *The Life of the Beloved*, theologian Henri Nouwen says, "Deep friendship is a calling forth of each other's chosenness and a mutual affirmation of being precious in God's eyes." What does it mean for you to be "chosen" by God (from John 15:16) and precious in his eyes? Do you struggle to see yourself in that way?
11. Who are the people in your life with whom you consider yourself to be in a "deep friendship"? How might you help your friends more clearly see that they are chosen and precious in God's eyes?