



## How To Friend | Doug Wekenman | 5.31

### Weekly Study

#### SHARE

Welcome, Red Rocks, to the first week of our relationship series, **“Summer Lovin’.”** Over the next few weeks, we will dive into the subject of relationships, including friendships, romantic relationships, family relationships, and the community of the church. We begin with Pastor Doug’s message, **“How to Friend.”**

Community is built, not stumbled upon. In this message, Doug breaks down how we are designed for community and how we must be intentional about prioritizing the relationships we deeply long for. Many of us believe we already have a strong sense of community and purpose, yet we often discover how little we truly have when we drift through life isolated and alone. Join us as we explore “how to friend” the way God designed us to, without giving up the gathering of friends and community.

**How do you view yourself within your friendships and the church community?**

#### GROW

##### **Read Hebrews 10:24-25**

Community is sacred. Friendship, real and true friendship, is key. People and purpose are at the center of God’s design. We are called into belonging while also encouraging others to find their place within community. Yet many of us give up the gathering of people because of past hurts or because we avoid drawing close to others in the church.

We have so much to give through the gifts and abilities God has bestowed upon us. We all have “buddies,” people who are around when things are good, but the moment life gets messy, they are nowhere to be found. That kind of friendship is easy.

The community we long for and the friendships we deeply desire take intentionality and the ability to see God’s design for His church. Pastor Doug asks three questions to help us understand this

reality. Without people, we become isolated and easily disconnected. The enemy takes advantage of that by manipulating us into believing we do not need the church, or that we can go through life as a lone wolf and still find success in our purpose.

- How do you allow today's technology to hinder you from stepping into the exploration of true and genuine community?**

A lot of us think of community as something that already exists rather than something that must be built, and that is where the problem lies. We believe we can walk into a group and find our purpose by forcing ourselves to fit their mold, without establishing the proper foundation every friendship requires. We must not forget the time and energy Jesus poured into His relationships. It is through His example that we see what real Christian community is supposed to look like.

- How does the example of the twelve disciples exhort and challenge us to pursue community?**

## MOVE

### Read John 15:13

"Are my friends really my priority?" This question challenges us to examine ourselves. It calls us to think not only about our intentions, but also about our actions concerning our friendships. Hebrews shows us the way to be rich in relationships, and it begins with what we give rather than what we take.

Are you the kind of friend you would look for in community? This question challenges us to examine our hearts and put action behind our intentions. We all need friends who are willing to spur us on in the faith. Friends who help us grow, encourage us, hold us accountable, and are ride-or-die for Jesus are the kind of friends we should all desire.

Our priorities are not truly our priorities until we make them our priorities. Pastor Doug gives us practical application for understanding why choosing who we do life with is crucial for our lives.

- What are some practical steps you can take to prioritize your friendships and Christian community?**
- Are you the kind of friend you would look for? Think of an area where you need to grow in community and begin building on it.**

Community is not built solely on intention, but on intention and action together. Many times, we grade ourselves based on our intentions, but we struggle to acknowledge the lack of action we actually put forth, no matter how pure our intentions may be. We say we want a ride-or-die friend.

We want someone who will be in our corner in every season we walk through. But are we that same kind of person in the friendships we already have?

## **P R A Y**

Get together and share any prayer requests with your group. Take a moment to pray for each person while asking God to search our hearts in how we, as the church, can put John 15:13 into action within our community.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you discernment in how to be the friend we not only want to be, but also how to have the friends God wants for us. Thank God for the community at Red Rocks. Thank Him for creating us as relational beings who thrive on friendship.