

Friends

Proverbs 10:12, 17:9,17

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A. Don't Hate (Proverbs 10:12):

1. Hatred – The hatred described here is a strong feeling that can lead someone to violence or murder.
 - a) Hatred keeps alive the old feelings of revenge, and seeks opportunities of satisfying it; but love puts aside, forgets and forgives all offences against itself. This sentiment comes very near the great Christian principle, “Love covereth a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8; comp. 1 Cor. 13:4; Jas. 5:20). The Talmud pronounces, “To love a thing makes the eye blind, the ear deaf;” and the Arab says, “Love is the companion of blindness.” Septuagint, “Love (φιλία) covereth all those who love not strife.”^[1]
 - b) Hatred dwells in and exaggerates evil or unwise words and acts, and so causes misunderstandings and quarrels. Love hides transgressions, not by condoning wrong, but by making allowances and forgiving; it leads a man to cover up not his own faults (this is condemned in 28:13) but the faults of others (so 1 Cor. 13:7).^[2]
2. Stir people to strife – Hatred rouses (like awaking someone) people to actively act in a contentious manner which can lead to quarrels and much discord.
 - a) The translation attempts to convey the chiasm of the original. The contrast between love and hatred explains why quarrels can be quickly stopped or else prolonged. The meaning of “covering” is “pardoning,” overlooking what may be a personal insult or harm—quite different from the “covering” (= concealing) in v 11. On v 12b see also 17:9a. The “covering of all (multitude of) sins” is taken up in Jas 5:20 (cf. 1 Pet 4:8), where it refers to divine forgiveness; interestingly, saving from death also occurs there; cf. Prov 10:2b; 11:4b.^[3]
3. Love – Love is the opposite of hate in the fact that it is affectionate, like the case of David and Jonathan, in the scriptures, it establishes genuine friendships.
4. Cover; forgive – Love forgives or conceals a multitude of sins.

5. Transgressions - Love either conceals or forgives a person who willfully rebels against the Word of God or chooses to reject the Lord's authority.

a) Hate is not good to establish a relationship with, especially where there are inadequacies in the other person's life.

b) Love on the other hand "*.....bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*" (1 Cor. 13:4-7)

B. Don't Gossip (Proverbs 17:9):

1. He who conceals a transgression – A person who is most willing to forgive or maintain the trust of another person, confides in their behaviors that are sinful; is a person who desires to maintain a genuine friendship. (Matthew 18:15).

a) To conceal a transgression of a brother shows love because they are not bearing a record of wrongs, instead they are seeking to establish trust which can lead to healing in the person's life (James 5:16, 20).

2. Seeks love - The person who conceals or forgives someone who has willfully sinned is a person who has the state of mind to search (pursue) an affectionate care, like in the case of David and Jonathan. The scriptures show a genuine friendship with the person whose trust they have gained.

a) When hate is compared to love, hate destroys but love heals and strengthens even a broken person who sins. It leads to two strands being better than one (Eccl. 4:9-12).

3. Repeats the matter – The person who actively seeks to alter two or more times the words that were shared in complete confidence, damages a good friendship.

4. Separates intimate friends - The person who breaks the confidence of a person who trusts them splits into pieces a genuine relationship of loving individuals and even a family relationship.

a) Like hate, breaking someone's trust with gossip severs relationships, especially the good ones.

C. Endures All Things (Proverbs 17:17; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8):

1. Friend loves at all times – A person who is a personal friend or intimate companion has a strong emotional connection and they are affectionately committed in their relationship at all times.
2. Brother is born – A person who is affectionately committed to a relationship and is of the same mind comes to life when circumstances are distressful.
 - a) The saying that a friend is “born in a time of need”, as a brother, means that for the first time he shows himself as a friend, and he receives the right status of baptism of such a one, and is, as it were, born into personal brotherly relationship to the sorely-trying friend. (From Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.)
 - b) A brother is a natural representative of unselfish love, but Pr. in two places (18:19; 19:7) represents the fraternal relationship as far from perfect, and in two places (18:24; 27:10) puts it below the relationship of friend or neighbor—that is, it estimates the bond of social affection as higher than that of blood.—On the value of friendship see BS. 6:14–16; 22:23. The love of sister for brother or of brother for sister is nowhere directly spoken of in OT. (2 Sam. 13:20 Absalom is next of kin and the natural protector), but the word *sister* is used as = *dear friend* (7:4; Cant. 4:9 *al.*).^[4]
3. Adversity; Distress – When circumstances are so distressful and there is much anguish in the soul of a person, the true character of a friendship is exposed.
4. Adversity; Distress - When the friend is emotionally supportive and provides unrelenting encouragement in difficult times a close friend is born.

^[1] Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). *Proverbs* (pp. 196–197). Funk & Wagnalls Company.

^[2] Toy, C. H. (1899). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the book of Proverbs* (p. 206). C. Scribner’s Sons.

^[3] Murphy, R. E. (1998). *Proverbs* (Vol. 22, p. 74). Thomas Nelson.

^[4] Toy, C. H. (1899). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the book of Proverbs* (pp. 346–347). C. Scribner’s Sons.