high school

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Lesson 5 / October 4, 2026

Friends Worth Keeping

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as STEP 1

Lesson 5
Focus:
Friends are important—choose them carefully.

Lesson 5
Bible Basis:
Proverbs 1:10-15; 13:20; 18:24; 19:4, 6-7; 22:24-25; 27:9

Lesson 5
Memory Verse:
Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.
—Proverbs 13:20

Students will consider friendship in the digital age and will explore what values make a friend worth keeping.

Materials:
☐ Internet access

Artificial Intelligence, or AI, has made great strides in recent years. Many of you have probably used AI, such as Google Gemini, which curates search results, or OpenAI's ChatGPT, which allows users to enter prompts or questions into a chat and receive answers or written content in return. These are just some forms of AI! In fact, there are conversations that can happen entirely between two forms of AI. Let's watch as two AI robots have a chat.

Play the following video for your students [3:08; stop at 1:28]:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViB-NkiNt1I
Two A.I have a conversation with each other (ChatGPT - OpenAI)

It's interesting to think of two forms of AI, such as Ameca and Azi in our video, as being friends and having conversations, but digital "friendships" can't go beyond a surface level.

➢ **Do you have any digital friendships—friends who you know through texting or social media but with whom you don't have a real-life relationship? How did you become friends with them?** (It's typical for middle or high school students to have friends with whom they only interact in a digital space.)

➢ **Are your real-life friends different than your digital friends? Explain.** (Accept all reasonable answers. Students may follow or friend celebrities or strangers they find intriguing on social media. They may be friends with people they met once and now hardly know. Or, it may be the type of friendship that is different—they view their digital friends' lives from afar, filtered, and know their real friends more personally. Or, the opposite!)

➢ **What are some ways we choose our friends?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Friendships may happen by default—the people you happen to find yourself with. Often we seek out friends with similar interests, values, etc.)

Did you know that making friends—digital or otherwise—is actually an important part of our life of faith? Today we'll see what the Bible has to say about making good and lasting friendships.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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Materials:
☐ None

It's good to have friends to walk with in our journey of faith. It's helpful to surround ourselves with friends who can point us to Jesus.

➢ **What are some ways your friends have pointed you to Jesus or encouraged you in faith?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Students may have friends who pray with them, offer wise words, go with them to church, help them see Jesus in all areas of life, etc.)

➢ **How can you be a good friend to others who are growing in faith?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Students may offer to pray for friends, write encouraging notes, invite a friend to church or to a community service project as an expression of God's love and care, etc.)

Encourage students to consider whether they have friends who encourage them in faith. If so, challenge them to invest back into those friendships and be an encouraging Christian friend in exchange. If not, encourage students to be a loving witness to their non-Christian friends and to make it a goal to seek out Christian friends this month who can encourage them to grow in faith. Students might consider this quietly, in pairs, or as a large group.

➢ **Where might you be able to seek out new Christian friends?** (Allow students to share ideas—some may include church, youth group, Bible clubs or Bible studies after school, current Christian friends may be able to introduce them to others, etc.)

➢ **How might your digital friendships encourage or discourage your life of faith?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Those we follow will promote or emulate certain values or worldviews. Many are good and can help us remember God's character and recognize God's hand at work in many circumstances. Others may devalue fellow humans, and make us want more [or feel worthless without], etc.)

Encourage students to look through their social media accounts and consider whether those they follow challenge and encourage them spiritually, or tempt them with greed, lust, power, etc. Challenge students to find a diverse group of Christian leaders to follow on social media, and/or to take a break from social media when those digital "friends" are bringing them down.

Close in prayer.

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