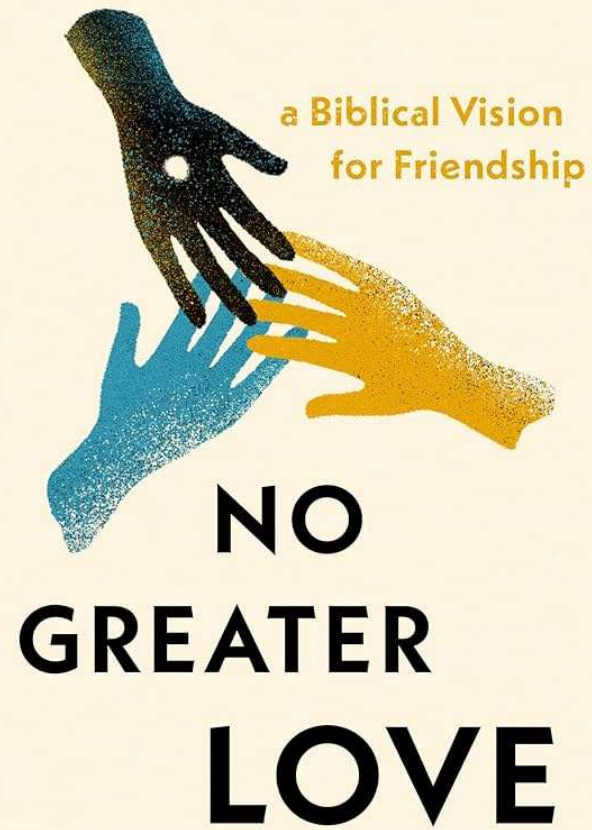


Wisdom for life: friendship

Proverbs (various verses)

Slides from John Percival's sermon at the morning service
Sunday 17th May 2026

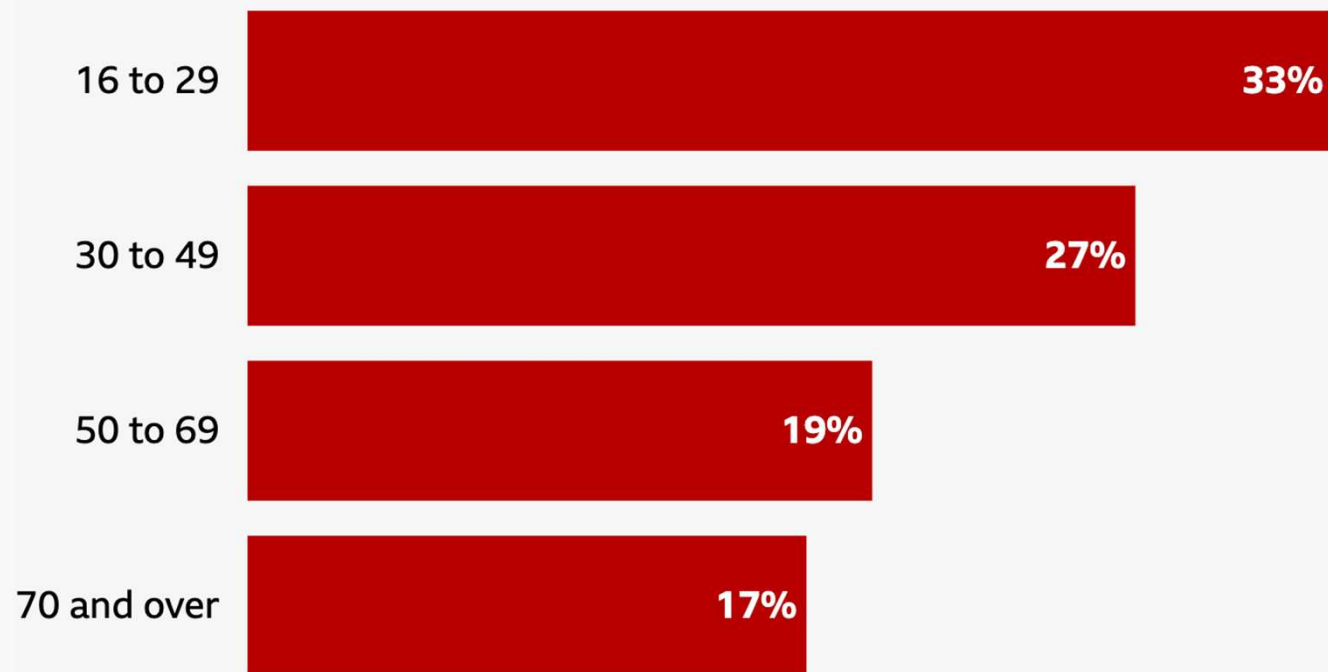


Rebecca
McLaughlin



Young people most likely to feel lonely

Proportion of each age group that felt lonely often, always or some of the time, Great Britain, October 2025



Source: Office for National Statistics

BBC

1. The gift of friendship

Proverbs 18v24

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin,
but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 27v9

Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart,
and the pleasantness of a friend
springs from their heartfelt advice.

1 Samuel 18v1

After David had finished talking with Saul,
Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he
loved him as himself.

2 Samuel 1v26

I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother,
you were very dear to me.

Your love for me was wonderful,
more wonderful than that of women.

“The fear of being misrepresented has ravaged men’s friendships.”

Marisa Franco



2. The characteristics of friendship

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- Consistency

Proverbs 17v17

A friend loves at all times,
and a brother is born for a time of adversity.

Proverbs 20v6

Many claim to have unfailing love,
but a faithful person who can find?

Proverbs 19v4

Wealth attracts many friends,

but even the closest friend of the poor person
deserts them.

Proverbs 19v6

Many curry favour with a ruler,

and everyone is the friend of one who gives gifts.

2. The characteristics of friendship

- Consistency
- Honesty

Proverbs 27v5-6

Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.

Wounds from a friend can be trusted,
but an enemy multiplies kisses.

Proverbs 24v26

An honest answer
is like a kiss on the lips.

Proverbs 28v23

Whoever rebukes a person will in the end gain favour
rather than one who has a flattering tongue.

2. The characteristics of friendship

- Consistency
- Honesty
- Sensitivity

Proverbs 25v17

Seldom set foot in your neighbour's house—
too much of you, and they will hate you.

Proverbs 26v18-19

Like a maniac shooting

flaming arrows of death

is one who deceives their neighbour

and says, "I was only joking!"

Proverbs 25v20

Like one who takes away a garment on a cold day,
or like vinegar poured on a wound,
is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

Proverbs 17v9

Whoever would foster love covers over an offense,
but whoever repeats the matter separates close
friends.

3. The practicalities of friendship

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- Choosing friends

Proverbs 12v26

The righteous choose their friends carefully,
but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

Proverbs 27v17

As iron sharpens iron,

so one person sharpens another.

3. The practicalities of friendship

- Choosing friends
- Nurturing friends

John 15v13

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

“We often know cold demographic details about one another (married or single, type of job, number of kids, general location of housing, etc.) but we know little about the struggle of faith that is waged every day behind well-maintained personal boundaries...”



Paul Tripp

“One of the things that shocks me in counselling, even after all these years, is how little I often know about people I have counted as true friends. I can’t tell you how many times, in talking with friends who have come to me for help, that I have been hit with the details of difficulty and struggle far beyond anything I would have predicted. Privatism is not just practiced by the lonely unbeliever, it is rampant in the church as well.”

Paul Tripp

Proverbs 18v24

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but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.