

Single & Single-Again TUES NITES Meal, Message & Mixer Guardrails

Jane Stolz's video teaching, handout, and audio Mp3 file of this message will be online to share with others at www.christiansinglesindenver.com

A **G** _____ is a system designed—system is a key word—it's a system designed to keep vehicles from straying (another key word there), from straying into dangerous or off-limit areas.

An interesting thing about guardrails is that guardrails are never placed in the **D** _____ zone.

What if we began to establish some mental guardrails that, again, kept us a safe distance back from disaster **R** _____, Disaster Financially, Disaster in our Business, Disaster in our Ethics or our Morality? What would that look like?

A guardrail, in our lesson, is going to be a **Standard of Behavior**, or you could even say a personal standard of behavior, that becomes a matter of conscience.

So here's my goal for you in this lesson. I want you to personally begin to develop some behaviors, some personal behaviors, which function as guardrails. By guardrail in our discussion I mean that become a matter of conscience, that instead of doing things that you know are wrong and tripping your conscience, to step back, establish some personal behaviors that trip your conscience in the same way, and in doing so, keep us out of the danger zone in any area of life.

Friends influence the **D** _____ and quality of our lives

I close down around **R** _____. I open up around **A** _____.

Your greatest regrets don't revolve around your enemies, do they?

Your greatest regrets revolve around being with friends.

Friends have the power to influence the direction and the quality of our lives.

Proverbs 13:20 (NIV)

Keep company with the wise and you will become wise. If you make friends with stupid people, you will be ruined.

He promises that it is **C** _____. If you surround yourself with people that the Bible would consider wise it's contagious. You will by nature of proximity become a wiser person simply by being in the company of—walking with -the wise.

The warning is not if you are a companion of fools you'll become a fool. And this is where we get tripped up because we assume that if I spend time with the wise and that's

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contagious, then that means if I'm a companion of fools that I'll become a fool. The warning in the verse is this: that the companion of fools, the person that does life with fools, is a person who will eventually be impacted by the behavior of the fool.

The Bible says a fool is a person who knows the difference between right and wrong but doesn't care.

If you have friends who don't care about their lives, they are not going to be very concerned about your life.

FIVE Goals:

1. Your conscience should light up when it dawns on you that your core group isn't moving in the direction you want your life to be moving in.
2. Your conscience should light up when you catch yourself pretending to be somebody other than who you know you are.
3. Your conscience should light up when you feel pressure to compromise.
4. Your conscience should light up when you hear yourself saying, I'll go but I won't participate.
5. Your conscience should light up when you hope the people you care about most don't find out where you've been or who you've been with.

Friendships are AWESOME!

Those who find me find life, and the LORD will be pleased with them"
(Proverbs 8:35, NIV)

God loves you and He is for you! He is for your good; He is for your success; He is for your future. He desires for you to have every blessing and every promise declared in His Word. This is what the Bible calls His favor. At some point in our lives, even if we didn't recognize it, we have all experienced God's favor. It is simply His undeserved, unearned, unexplainable goodness in your life. God's favor causes you to reap where you haven't sown. His favor protects you, promotes you and opens new doors. His favor takes you places you could never go on your own.

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Discussion Questions:

1. Has this lesson challenged you to different Standard of Behavior? What makes this so difficult for you? Or if you have already decided to live this standard of life, what has been the most difficult in doing so?
2. **The truth is, your greatest regret—your greatest regret financially, relationally, in terms of your health, any other thing—your greatest regret would probably have been avoided if you had had guardrails in your life. Can you remember a time when the guardrail was very clear but you avoided it? Talk about that.**
3. Disaster! Have you ever asked the question “Is it a sin to _____?” “How far is too far?” Talk about it.
4. **Did your parents ever try to keep you from certain people in your life? What did they do?**
5. Tell about a friend that encouraged you to do “The Right Thing.” How have they impacted you today?
6. **Talk about the FIVE GOALS and how they may be helpful or if you disagree why.**

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HELPFUL TIPS for Great Table Discussions

**Each table should have a designated
Table Host.**

Use God's ear-to-mouth ratio:

Listen two times more than you speak. 1 or 2 people should not dominate the time, and EVERYONE should contribute during the discussion.

1. **Smile and be friendly.**
Avoid excessive complaining about people or personal problems.
2. **God's grace rules the day**
Recognize that everyone will not always agree – be gracious and give grace to one another. People are at different places in their spiritual walk and in their life journey.
3. **Moving the discussion along.**
Table host/facilitators are to move the discussion along. They have permission to limit any negative comments, to invite people to answer a question, to ask someone for their perspective, to limit the amount of time some people speak, and to move on to the next question.
4. **Help for the hurting:**
This is a supportive group, but it is not a support group or a therapy session. But if someone is really hurting, take a moment and have someone in the group specifically pray for them.