

**Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)** – *“There are ‘friends’ who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.”*

The more we learn how to properly engage in relationships, the more we have potential to HAVE good friends and BE a good friend.

Satan hates Godly relationships and he seeks to destroy them at every chance he gets.

Squad Characteristics:

1. Common Ground
2. Good for Each Other
3. Have Each Other’s Back
4. Have a Sacred Trust

**Week #4 – Love Conquers All**

**5. GRACE and MERCY**

**Hebrews 4:15, 16 (NKJV)**

Because Jesus understands the natural tendency of mankind to do the wrong thing, His blood provides grace and mercy for us.

*Grace – when God grants us something amazing that we DID NOT deserve.*

*Mercy – when God withholds the punishment or judgment that we DID deserve.*

No matter who you marry, who you hire/work for, who you become good friends with, they will never do things right 100% of the time. So, mastering relationships means mastering grace, mercy, and forgiveness!!

How do I live with grace/mercy with my Squad?

*1. Establish Reasonable Expectations*

*When we end up hurt/disappointed, oftentimes it comes back to us having unrealistic expectations on fallible human beings.*

***John 2:23 – 25 (NKJV)***

***Psalms 103:13, 14** – As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; 14 for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that WE ARE DUST.*

*2. Forgive Like Jesus*

***Luke 23:34 (MSG)** – Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; they don't know what they're doing." **Quote:** "The time for forgiveness is right in the middle of your pain, because when we forgive quickly, we eliminate the devil's ability to plant bitterness into our hearts." – George Davis*

***Matthew 18:21 – 35 (NKJV)***

*3. Stop Keeping Score*

***I Corinthians 14:5 (AMPC)** – "...Love takes NO ACCOUNT of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]."*

*4. Keeping score is deadly to a relationship, because we tend to give half points for good deeds and triple points for bad deeds. NO ONE CAN WIN THAT GAME.*

**Quote:** *“You can’t keep score and expect to keep your SQUAD!!”*  
– *George Davis*

Keeping score quietly puts a filter over our eyes and we see every new action through the lens of a previous hurt.

**Lamentations 3:22, 23 (NKJV)** – *Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

**Ephesians 4:26 (NLT)** – *And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry,*

**Ephesians 4:26 (GNT)** – *If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day.*

*4. Resolve Conflict God’s Way*

**Matthew 18:15 – 17 (NKJV)**

Maturity requires us to come up higher in our love walk and handle conflict God’s way.

**Offering Scripture:**

**Luke 5:3, 4 (NKJV)** *Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. 4 When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."*