

BLOCK-ING or BLOCKHEAD

Series: Friend-ing & Unfriend-ing, Pt1 February 2, 2020 ser3908

I. POINT OF INTRIGUE

A. “Yesterday’s service was just incredible.

The Holy Spirit filled the church so powerfully every minute.

The music was contemporary and yet reverent; Abby Johnson was so good and of course, you are always impactful. I hope your 2020 vision includes more services like this one. Looking forward to Wednesday night.” ~Ms S

B. The answer to Ms S comment is “ASTL.”

What does ATSL mean? “As The Spirit Leads.”

Although the preaching schedule has been completed for the entire 2020 year, the Lead Team is more than open to the Holy Spirit changing the speaker in accordance with God’s will on ANY given Sunday.

I strongly doubt that ALL of you can remember the year’s preaching schedule (I can’t remember it and I put it together). LOL! I believe I can remember all twelve titles; I’m not sure I’ll get them in the right order. (Kind of like the Ten Commandments—I believe I can remember all Ten, just don’t ask me to put them in the right order. LOL!) Here they are:

JANUARY—*Finding Yourself*

FEBRUARY—*Friend-ing & Unfriend-ing*

MARCH—*What Does a Christian Look Like in the 21st Century?*

APRIL—*True Religion*

MAY—*God Made Me that Way*

JUNE—*God's View of LGBTQ*

JULY—*God in the Movies*

AUGUST—*When God Seems Mean*

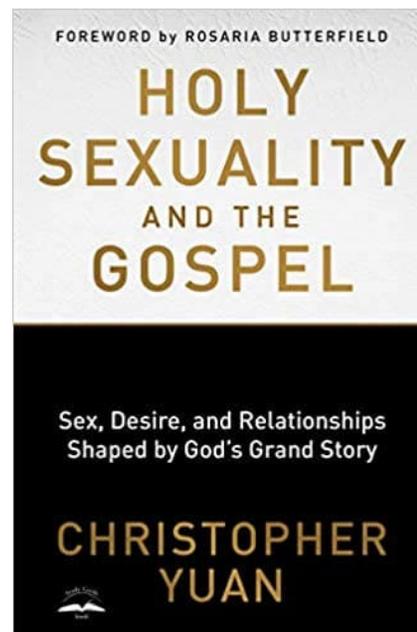
SEPTEMBER—*Friends in Conflict*

OCTOBER—*When Life Sucks*

NOVEMBER—*Alone in the Room*

DECEMBER—*Presence or Presents?*

In June when we will address LGBTQ, it is our goal to have Christopher Yuan, ([show photo of book by Yuan](#)) or someone like him, who has been rescued from a homosexual lifestyle. Mr Yuan is the author of the book, *Holy Sexuality and the Gospel*.



C. Today we look at the first message in the *Friend-ing and Unfriend-ing* series, with a message entitled “Blocking or Blockhead.”

D. Let us pray!

II. FRIEND-ING, UNFRIEND-ING, FOLLOWING, UNFOLLOWING & BLOCKING

A. Most of you here this morning, if you’re on a social media platform, are familiar with this terminology.

For those of you who are not familiar, let’s define them. (I’m going to use Facebook only.) There are many other forms of social media communication today: Twitter, Instagram and Snapshot, just to name a few. However, Facebook is the largest with over 2.7 billion users, therefore we’ll use FB as our example.

Following is when a person follows another on a social media platform. For instance, Franklin Graham, son of the late Billy Graham, has a “fan” page with 8.3 million followers. ([show photo—Franklin Graham](#)) If he has a personal page, we don’t know that because it’s not open to the public.

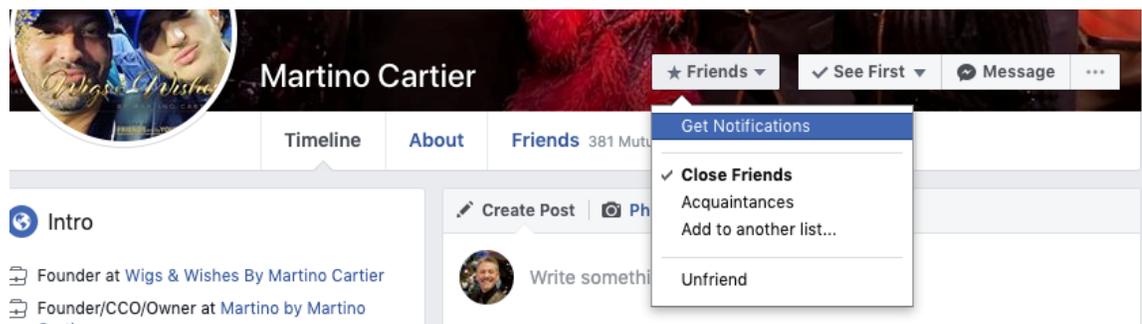


One of my favorite young politicians is Candace Owens. She has 1.9 million followers on her fan page. ([show photo—Candice Owens](#)) If he has a personal page, we don't know that because it's not open to the public.



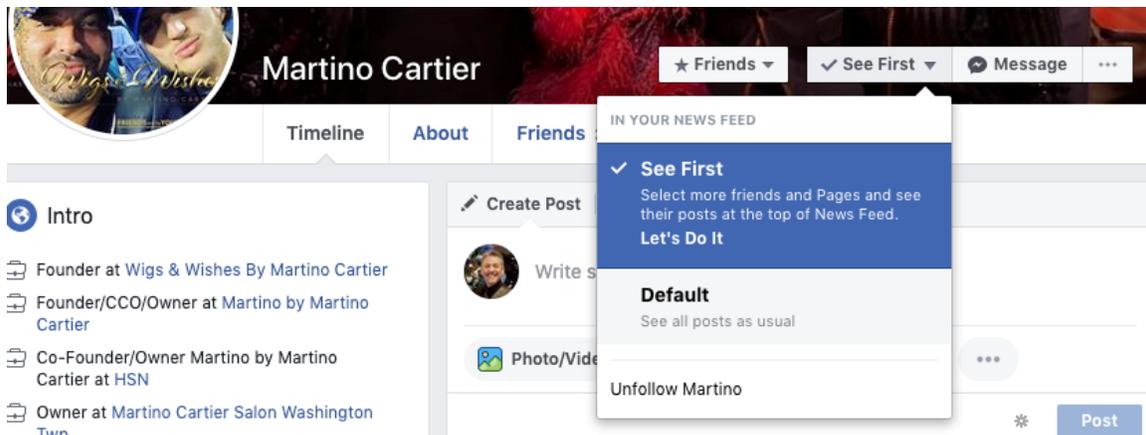
If you're confused now ... hang in there ... it gets even more confusing. Here's more. Martino has a *personal* page and a *fan* page. On his personal page he has 4,984 friends. But he is followed by 12,560 Facebook users. A Facebook user is only allowed to have 5,000 friends.

B. Here are my options, which are the same for every Facebook user.



NOTICE Martino is my *close* friend and I see his posts *first*. (I've got to make sure he stays on the "straight and narrow." Whew! That's a job. Only kidding!)

Now there's still another option. I can choose to *unfollow* Martino. Which means, he can *follow* me, but I don't have to follow him (of course he has the same option). (**show photo—"Unfollow"**)



C. So, on social media the Facebook user has all of these options:

1. You can have a *friend* but not follow that friend. For instance, I have 3,937 followers on my personal Facebook page. But I only follow 3,800.
2. You can *Follow or Unfollow* someone who is a friend. Now, if you “unfollow,” that’s a one-way friendship. Which means, they see what you post/write, but you don’t see what they post/write.
3. *Fan*—which I am of Franklin Graham and Candace Owens. I am also a fan of Martino’s Wigs & Wishes page and Dez Childs music page. Now, just because I am a fan of Franklin or Candace doesn’t mean they follow me. (If I were either of them, I would follow me, but I’m not them. LOL!)
4. *Categories*—a person can categorize their friends: Acquaintance, Close, Other.

5. One other interesting fact about Facebook, with whatever you post you can *choose your audience*.

Your post can go:

- a. to the public—that’s anyone (Things have to be public to go “viral;” viral is when a post gets 40,000 hits within 4 hours)
 - b. to acquaintances,
 - c. to close friends
 - d. to family,
 - e. or any other category you want to make.
6. You can *block* a person from seeing your Facebook page completely. By completely, I mean you don’t exist to that person.

FOR INSTANCE #1: There was a person who attended GCCC for a number of years. He was cantankerous by nature. Whenever the opportunity arose where he disagreed with a doctrinal position of the church, or with me, he would use the church or my platform to create a scene. He was, sadly, opposed to the church’s position on the tithe. So, whenever there was something remotely relational to money or finances, he’d go off. He had no platform of his own, so to speak, and had lost many friends because of his argumentative attitude. We had to *block* him. Which means GCCC or me, or most of the staff, are not visible to him; we don’t exist and he can’t find us.

FOR INSTANCE #2: A few months back I officiated a funeral. There were people who attended the funeral and were impressed by the service, for lack of better

phrasing, who wanted to “friend” me on Facebook. However, shortly thereafter, one person disagreed with my position on “sanctity of life” and “same-sex marriage.” He nicely told me he was going to “block” me. So, to him, I no longer exist.

D. Some would say, “*Wow! Mark Zuckerberg is a genius.*”

How did he figure all that out? He didn’t. All those principles already were in existence when Mr Zuckerberg designed Facebook. What Mark Zuckerberg brilliantly did, was apply them to a modern-day means of communication.

God has been addressing levels of friendship and their respective boundaries since creation.

1. They are found in the book of the Law.
2. They are found in the book of Psalms.
3. They are found in the book of Proverbs.
4. They are found in the words of our Lord Jesus.
5. And, they are found in the epistles to the churches.

III. FOUR BASIC LEVELS OF FRIENDSHIP

A. Bill Gothard put friendship into four levels long before there was a Mark Zuckerberg.

He stated that understanding these levels of friendship is the key to helping us develop meaningful relationships. They are:

Acquaintance – occasional contacts (Hi, looks like it’s going to be a nice day today.)

Casual – common interests (Friendships developed around cooking, sports, music, church, profession, etc.)

Close – mutual goals (Friendships developed around similar or same aspirations—usually career or conviction focused.)

Intimate – commitment to develop each other’s character.

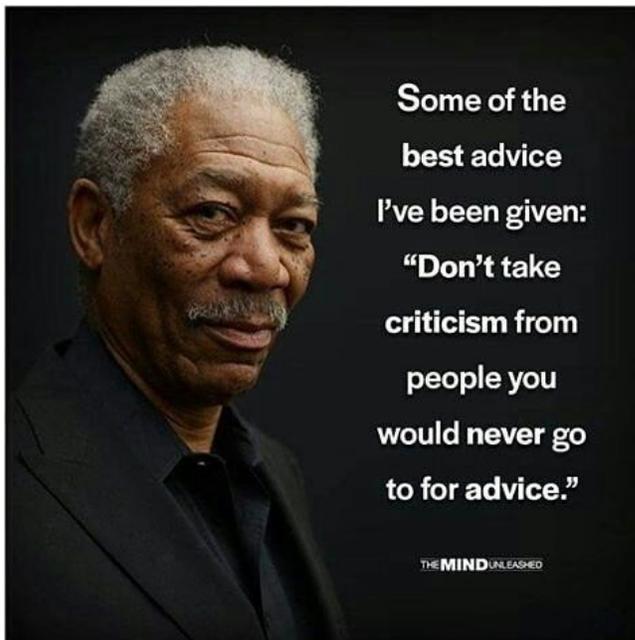
The latter can be painful. **Proverbs 27:6** tells us, the “Wounds of a friend can be trusted” (NIV). The NKJV words it this way, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.”

ILLUSTRATION: When Sheryl and I first married, 44 years ago, she was young (19), quiet and phlegmatic (non-confrontational). Reluctant to correct or rebuke—I was her knight in shining armor. But as the years have gone by—man, has that changed. She now feels she has the right to rebuke and correct; and may I say, rightly so.

Acquaintance has moved to casual, casual has moved to close, and close has moved to intimate. Intimate gives Sheryl the right to develop who I am to be in Christ. And, yes, at times it hurts. At times it’s painful. At times the words are daggers thrust into my heart. But I know

she loves me and truly desires that I become the man God created me to be. More times than not she's right. (Not always. LOL!)

HERE'S WHAT'S SCARY ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA. It's easy to blur the distinguishing components of each of these levels of friendship because you can say things in writing and go places with your words that you would not say or go in person. A person can jump from "casual" to "intimate" without earning the right to have intimate say in your life. If you give them that place, guaranteed they'll not only take it, they will wound you



and the wound WON'T be thrust for your well-being, but for their gain. Whenever we skip steps in developing lasting relationship, the relationship is fractured, sometimes beyond repair.

I love this quote by Morgan Freeman: *Don't*

take criticism from people you would never go to for advice. ([show photo—Morgan Freeman, p9](#))

B. Words can be deceptive and misleading.

Psalm 120:2 (NIV)

Save me, Lord,
from lying lips
and from deceitful tongues.

C. God designed friendship to enhance, enrich, and sharpen our focus towards the Eternal.

Friendships can either strengthen or weaken, build up or tear down our potential to contribute to the world in which we live (family, church, community, country, profession, etc.) and the Kingdom of God.

IV. WHEN & WHEN NOT TO BLOCK A FRIENDSHIP

A. Block when:

1. Words and actions are meant to bring death and not life. Jesus said, "The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy; I have come to bring life and that more abundantly." *John 10:10*

PEOPLE THAT STAY in abusive relationships are no good to anyone—their family, their friends, themselves or God.

2. Words and actions are divisive. Paul says, "Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them." *Titus 3:10*

PEOPLE THAT STAY in divisive relationships live in opposition to God's command to be one (***Amos 3:3 & John 17:21***).

3. Words and actions take you away for Christ rather than towards Him. ***Proverbs 22:3*** says, "The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the naïve keep going and suffer the consequences."

B. Don't block when:

The relationship makes you more like Christ and a better person no matter how painful that relationship is. (I wish time permitted me to give illustrations; it does not.)

Philippians 2: 2-5 (JBS)

² Now make me completely happy! Live in harmony. Be united in your thinking, as if you were only one person. ³ Don't be jealous or proud; remove all rivalry. Be humble and consider others as important than yourselves. ⁴ Care about them as much as you care about yourselves. ⁵ Have the same mind of Christ—think and act like Him.

V. INVITATION

Is that humanly possible? I don't think so. At least it isn't for me. But if He lives in you, then the task becomes not only possible but probable. You say, "Where do I begin?"

Admit— your sins have separated you from God. (***Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23***);

Believe – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.) (*Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22*);

Commit – yourself to His righteousness by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (*Isa 53:5; Col 1:22*);

Do it today! (*Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2*).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit, come into my heart; Jesus, be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen!

ser3908, *Block-ing or Blockhead?* (Sermon Series *Friending & Unfriending, Pt 1*. 1966 words with Invitation; 1898 without Invitation.