

# The Watford Word

[www.watfordchurchofchrist.org](http://www.watfordchurchofchrist.org)

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## What's on

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**Sunday** 26 Nov - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking.  
**Sunday** 03 Dec - 10:30AM. Stefan speaking  
**Saturday** 09 Dec - AIM session: Biblical counselling  
**Sunday** 10 Dec - 10:30AM. Dr Andy Boakye speaking  
**Sunday** 17 December - 10:30AM. Carol service  
**Sunday** 24 December - 10:30AM. Service  
**Sunday** 31 December - 10:30AM. Service  
**Sunday** 07 January - 10:30AM. Church service

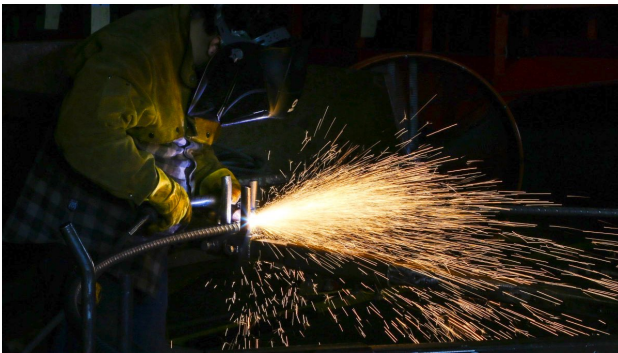
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## Iron Sharpens Iron

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*"Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another."*  
Proverbs 27:17 (NAS95)

How do you feel about being 'sharpened'? Sounds painful to me. All that friction!



The sparky nature of the proverb might have been overplayed in the past. However, it reflects other parts of Scripture that have to do with us being refined and growing spiritually. Perhaps you will be reminded of,

*"He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness."* (Malachi 3:3 NAS95)

Or,

*"For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined."* (Psalm 66:10 NAS95)

We need challenging experiences and relationships because they shape and refine our character to be more Christ-like.

### What it *doesn't* mean

This verse should not be used to justify harsh criticism. It doesn't endorse a contentious or hostile approach. At all times Christian must talk to one another in respectful dialogue, with a desire for mutual learning, and growth through constructive interactions. The verse below sums this up nicely.

*"...speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ."* (Ephesians 4:15 NIV11)

### No man is an island

We need one another.

*"He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm."* (Proverbs 13:20 NAS95)

One person sharpening another enhances our fellowship as well as our communal growth as a church. Wise companionship leads to wisdom and good character. Additionally, it aligns with the biblical emphasis on mutual encouragement and support as taught here,

*"and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."* (Hebrews 10:24-25 NAS95)

## Metaphorical meaning

This proverb aligns with Jesus' teachings about the importance of relationships and community, reflecting mutual growth and sharpening through positive relationships. It is an out-working of the command to love one another (Matthew 22:39; John 13:34-35). Jesus did some iron-sharpening in his relationship with the disciples. Just think of all the times he challenged their faith (e.g. Matt 14:31; 16:8; 17:20).

## Examples in Scripture

**Old Testament** — the friendship between David and Jonathan in 1 Samuel demonstrates mutual support and sharpening. Their relationship was characterised by loyalty, encouragement, and genuine care for each other's well-being, exemplifying the positive influence one person can have on another (1 Samuel 18:1-4, 1 Samuel 20:16-17).

**New Testament** — the relationship between Paul and Timothy serves as an illustration of this proverb. Paul, an experienced mentor, sharpened Timothy, his younger protegee, through guidance, teaching, and encouragement (just read 1 & 2 Timothy). Timothy grew in his faith and leadership abilities through this relationship, exemplifying how one person can sharpen and positively influence another (2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:14-17).

## Summary

David and Jonathan are a peer example of the Proverb, while Paul & Timothy are an example of a training relationship. We are usually best placed to grow as Christians when we have both. Someone to be our fellow-sharpening buddy, and someone to be our mentor/mentee-sharpening trainer. Do you have both, or something equivalent? Could you invite people to walk the iron-sharpening-iron path with you? What do you have to lose? A few sparks will brighten your day!

## Questions for Reflection

- How do you honestly feel about having iron-sharpening-iron friendships in Christ? Have you talked about it with God?
- What personal spiritual benefits do you think could develop for you from having deeper, more open friendships with other people in the congregation?
- How could God be glorified if we had a culture of relationships like this in the congregation?

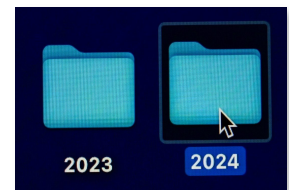
If you would like develop iron-sharpening-iron relationships but do not know where to start just talk to me. I have ideas!

Your brother, Malcolm

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2024

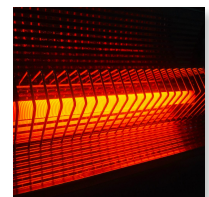
If you have suggestions for events or subjects for preaching and teaching next year please pass them on to me. Malcolm




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## Heating

The heaters will be fixed starting 20th December. Until then please bring extra layers and, if you like, your own heater to plug in!




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## Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-raef9o>