

Friendship

THE BOND OF FRIENDSHIP

Focal Verses • 1 SAMUEL 18:1-5, 19:1-7

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **SUMMARIZE** Jonathan's plan to protect David; **APPRECIATE** how the bonds of covenant friendship can endure the challenges of outside forces; and **EXAMINE** whether our own relationships reflect the honesty and loyalty God calls us to experience.

In Focus

Chanel and Breana became fast friends during their first years as undergraduates studying journalism. Chanel wanted to be a news anchor, and Breana was a promising producer.

They were both hired at the television station in their hometown after college graduation. Chanel and Breana loved working together and always had each other's back—both personally and professionally—in their hostile work environment. Chanel was amazing from the beginning, and many of her co-workers felt threatened by her godly confidence and skill. Last year, Chanel was offered the chance to cover a big story about the new ultra-conservative candidate for governor. The head producer was openly critical and harsh of Chanel's efforts. It almost seemed like he purposefully picked her to cover the race so he could set Chanel up to fail.

Breana saw what was happening and decided to do everything she could to help Chanel prepare for the interview with the gubernatorial candidate. It was a difficult situation for Breana because helping her friend would require extra time and energy in her already busy schedule. In addition, her support for Chanel is also a test of her loyalty to the head producer, who was very influential at the station. Breana knew the head producer could make the rest of her days at the station difficult if he found out, but she thought her friendship with Chanel was more important. Much to the head producer's dismay, Chanel did a great job with the story and gained favorable ratings with the network.

How do you determine whether to risk your own comfort for the sake of a friend or loved one?

Keep in Mind

“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul”
(1 Samuel 18:1, KJV).

SCAN FOR VIDEO



his murderous thoughts. The tension is real for Jonathan between siding with his father, his own blood, or siding with his covenant brother and the will of God. Jonathan chooses what is right before God and protects his best friend David.

3. Friends' Covenant is Confirmed (1 Samuel 19:4-7)

Jonathan takes the opportunity to spend time with his father near the field where David is hiding in order to talk him out of trying to kill David. Jonathan makes two important arguments about why killing David is against God's will. First, David is an innocent man; he has done nothing to threaten Saul and killing him would be spilling innocent blood, which is against the will of God. Second, David has been a faithful servant who has brought glory to God and Saul by leading Israel into battle. To kill him would be standing against someone whom God has clearly anointed to bring glory to Himself. Saul listens to Jonathan and decides not to have David murdered. He then swears a very serious oath in God's name that he will not kill David, and David was restored to serving in Saul's house. Sadly, Saul quickly broke his oath before God and tried to have David killed later. But as the oath proclaimed, David was not killed as long as God lives, which is of course eternally. David died of natural causes later in life rather than being killed in battle despite his many wars. God protected him even more than his friend Jonathan had protected him.

Search the Scriptures

1. What inner difficulty did Jonathan face as his father Saul plotted to kill David?
2. In what ways does God show that David is His anointed servant?

Discuss the Meaning

1. Have you ever been in a position where you were willing to make a sacrifice for someone

whose relationship you really valued? How did you make the decision?

2. What are the qualities of a true friendship? What are situations where your friendships have been tested?

Liberating Lesson

In our society today it is increasingly common for people to lack healthy friendships or for adults to state they have very few close friends. With the rise of social media and globalization, the average U.S. American working multiple jobs for longer hours, and time spent tending to family and home, it is even more likely that people lack supportive friends with whom they can spend time. The U.S. Surgeon General has stated many times that one of the biggest health threats of our current era is isolation. This reality calls us as Christians to reexamine the lesson from David and Jonathan and take seriously the need for positive friendships. Jesus taught His disciples that friendship was one of the deepest relationships they could have with Him (cf. John 15:15). How can we as Christians seek to be friendly, build friendships, and maintain them? How can we follow Jesus in love, care for ourselves and one another, and model to the world how to build healthy relationships? With many people in our communities seeing relationships built only on necessity, power, pleasure, or convenience, it is important that we as believers build friendships that protect one another, consider others before ourselves, and demonstrate God's love.

Application for Activation

This week consider the friendships in your life and the friends who have healthy relationships with God and positive relationships with you. Think of ways to invest in those friendships. Spend time with a friend, whether in person or with a simple phone call. If you do not recognize any friendships like that, ask God to

send you supportive friends who have healthy boundaries and can help you grow in Christ. Remember to cultivate your friendships and be a friend—the responsibility is on you to do so and to show the love of Christ.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Sources:

Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.

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"The Biggest Threat Facing Middle-Age Men Isn't Smoking or Obesity. It's Loneliness." *The Boston Globe.* BostonGlobe.com, March 9, 2017. www.bostonglobe.com/magazine/2017/03/09/the-biggest-threat-facing-middle-age-men-isn-smoking-obesity-loneliness/k6saC9FnnHQCUBf5mJ8okL/story.html.

Say It Correctly

Goliath. guh-LAHY-uhth

Jonathan. JON-uh-thuhn.

Philistine. fi-LIH-steen.

Daily Bible Readings

DAY 50

Numbers 23–25

Psalms 25:1–3

DAY 51

Numbers 26–27

Psalms 25:4–11

DAY 52

Numbers 28–30

Psalms 25:19

DAY 53

Numbers 31–32

Psalms 25:20–22

DAY 54

Numbers 33–34

Psalms 26:1–3

DAY 55

Numbers 35–36

Psalms 26:4–7

DAY 56

Deuteronomy 1–4

Psalms 26:8–12