

Friendship || In Search For A King

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Introduction:

- We all have friends of some sort
- Our lives are built around them.
- Facebook = 1,488 friends, Twitter Followers= 565 the number I invited to my birthday party = 50, the # who showed up = 8.
- Friends stand as the foundation to the direction of our life
- “Friendships determine the direction and quality of our lives!” – Andy Stanley
- Tim Keller, Yoda in the eyes of Pastor J.D. says this “ We will NEVER MAKE IT IN LIFE unless we chose, grow and keep good friendships.
- Often times, our friends have greater influence over our lives than our own convictions.
- The problem isn’t the lack of people to whom we can befriend...I mean, our city (RDU) has upwards of 1 million people in them. Our Schools are at an all time high in population/overcrowding. Students are literally sitting hip to hip in their classrooms. It’s not the lack of people we have to chose from....
- **It’s the lack of TRUE FRIENDSHIP.**

- There’s no way of denying this truth: We are over connected, yet incredibly shallow , and we need good friendship.
- **I’m not talking about that “Coming and Going” type of friendship that you thought you had in middle and high school. You know, the people who signed your yearbook something like this:**

- Jason, so great to have you sit next to me in class. Can't believe you got caught by the teacher so many times cheating. You are so awesome! Can't wait for next year! PS: I'm the first to sign your crack!

- **You know what I mean by true friend right? I’m talking the Lloyd and Harry Type friends.....sticking together through thick and thin. (show Image)**

Man, don’t we all wish we had friends like that? Sure we do, it’s the pursuit of our lives: To find acceptance, to find care, to find love, to find someone to have fun with, we are looking for FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship brings something into our lives that family and marriage cannot. TRUE FRIENDSHIP is irreplaceable.

We all need to hear this message today. It doesn't matter what stage of life you are in, or the current state of your friendships. For some of us we are:

- **On the brink of a divorce** because we have nobody to confide in and gain wisdom from
- **Some of us have hit rock bottom** and found ourselves in deep depression because we have nobody to talk to
- **Some of us have given up on friends** because we've been let down so many times. We've been hurt, so we think "If I don't open up my life to someone...I can never get hurt again."
- **Some of us have just succumbed** to our circumstances that "nobody likes me," therefore I'm going to sit in my mom's basement the rest of my life and fondle the computer screen and my video game controller.
- **We've given up on relationships** with real people and distanced ourselves from REAL community and have formed my life around the ONLINE community, because it's there that I have control over how much someone can actually know about me!
- **Some of us, it scares the living daylights** out of us to think that someone could know us intimately, and that's the reason why we've never taken a step to get plugged into a small group.
- **For MOST Of us, we have friends**, but we've never allowed them the freedom to speak truth in our lives.

Get the point? We're ALL IN NEED! We all have a void. We all need friends.

Okay, so what we are going to do today is simple: We are going to continue our study in the life of David, and take an in depth look at David's life and the influence of great friendship in the midst of hard and difficult times.

We are going to pick this story up in 1 Samuel 18, and we'll walk our way through chapter 23, make a few observations in Chapter 23, and then ultimately end up back in 18, where it all went down.

If you are in a Small Group...raise your hand right now...Okay you've been identified...the next 30 minutes should be a free resource for you on what your Small Group should look like.

Ready?? Let's do this.

Timeline of Events:

- 16: Samuel Anoints Shepherd boy as king...nobody saw that one coming!
- 17: David slays the Giant, Goliath
- 17: He's celebrated as a national hero
- 18: Saul wants to know who this dude is!
- 18: He finds out it's David, son of Jesse of Bethlehem...a Shepherd boy whom Samuel anointed as King but nobody cared much about.
- 18:2 – Saul has David brought to his palace and is not allowed to leave. David is a threat to the throne.

- 18:2-3 –It is there in the palace where Jonathan (Saul’s son, the Prince, aka= King in waiting.) and David’s friendship begin.

“18:3- The Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul....”

Important Language used here: COVENANT vs. CONTRACT

- Many of us see relationships as a contract, not a covenant. What I mean by that is this:
 - **Contract:** Limited. It has a timetable on it.
 - As long as you can provide for me, I’ll provide for you.
 - It’s networking at it’s finest!
 - It’s my needs being met by you performing to my standard

*Ex: Professional Athletes and their teams
You do this with your cable bill!
When your provider raises the prices, your getting frustrated with them...so you look elsewhere.*

- **Covenant:** My needs come second. The relationship with the other person comes first.
 - **Ex: Marriage.**

This COVENANT will prove to be a major factor in the big picture of this story, and we’ll come back to it just a little bit later.

- 18:5- David was successful in everything he did. Anything Saul asks David to do...he did it, and he did it well

- 18:7-9 – The men return from war, and they were all shouting “Saul has slain his thousands...David his Tens of Thousands!”
- Saul is not a happy camper. David gets all the credit.
- 18:10- Saul slings a spear at David, trying to kill him. David eludes him. **David 1, Saul 0.**
- 19: Saul wants David dead. This is now his mission. His fire has been lit, and it’s his burning passion.
- 19:3-7: Jonathan, David’s friend steps in on David’s behalf and convinces his father not to kill David.
- War breaks out, David is once again victorious.
- Saul becomes angry.
- 19:11 – Saul plots to kill David again. His wife finds out about it, tells David to flee in the middle of the night.
- Saul’s men come to get David out of bed, what do they find??? A bunch of pillow cases stuffed with Charmin Ultra! **RUN AND TWEET THAT HOMEBOY!!!!**
- **David 2 – Saul- 0**
- This is the constant story of David’s life in these few chapters.
- Chapter 20 takes us into even more madness.
- David is supposed to dine with King Saul
- He wants Jonathan to tell Saul that he had to travel back to Bethlehem, cause they were about to get all crazy and make a sacrifice on behalf of the entire clan.
- If Saul gets mad...he wants me dead!
- If Saul is pretty cool with it....I’m straight!
- So, David flees into the fields....waiting to hear the response.
- Guess what....he’s in trouble.

- David flees again. **(3-0 David...he's runnin up the score!)**
- Saul hears about this going down, runs to get David again, David flees. Ahimilech gets slaughtered along with his family for helping David.
- **David 4- Saul -0 Ahimilech out of luck.**
- David goes to war in 22, wins, is victorious, has to flee again. GET THE POINT HERE PEOPLE!?!?!?!?
- **David is a man on the run...he was born a ramblin man!**

And now we find ourselves here in Chapter 23, where David finds himself hiding out once again, but this time he's in the city of Horesh.

You see, there are two stories running parallel here. There's one story of flight and fear. But there's another going along with it the whole way, a story of Friendship. And Jonathan displays it beautifully.

Jonathan, probably sitting back... And he takes action.... **Check it, verse 16-18.**

"And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went to David and Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God."

1. Jonathan displayed true friendship by being INTENTIONAL.

How do you know when friendship has gone past surface level?

Answer: When you begin to be INTENTIONAL in your relationship with that person.

Intentionality is a true sign of friendship.

David was alone and afraid. He was far from home, and in great need. So, what did Jonathan do? He ACTED!

- **Jonathan had everything to lose and nothing to gain by going to David.**
- How do I know that?
- By this time, Saul is in a STINKIN RAMPAGE! He's thrown a hissy fit that he couldn't get his hands on David, and he's not happy.
- **Jonathan was risking his father's wrath**

"Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, 'You son of a perverse and rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame...'" – 1 Samuel 20:31

- Saul was ANGRY at Jonathan for siding with David.
- **He was risking his position.**

"For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established." 1 Sam. 20:31

He had everything to lose, nothing to gain...yet he still acted.

NOBODY likes a passive friend.

- **Passive Friends: The ones who don't call you back, the ones who don't step in on your behalf, etc...**

What do you do with a passive boyfriend/girlfriend?
TO THE STREET.....

That's not Jonathan! Jonathan is everything EXCEPT passive in his relationship towards David.

When Jonathan arises, and goes to David....it was going to cost him something!

In fact, many historians would tell you that this is over a 30 mile trek for Jonathan to even go and see David.

The Truth of the Matter is Simple:

These guys had an intimate friendship.....and....

- We can't have intimate friendships with 5,000 people.
- We need people who can speak into our lives...who know us and are intentional towards us!
- We need a Jonathan.

Here at the Summit, if you've been here 6 weeks, you've probably heard us say "Discipleship happens in relationships." It happens in small groups! We want you to grow as a disciple by getting connected to relationships where people can be intentional in your life.

Two Objections:

1. Some of you say "I already have a group of friends!"

- You probably need to learn to be intentional towards one another. Maybe your group of friends needs to become a Small Group!
- You can talk to your Campus Pastor today on how to make that happen.

2. Some of you say "I've tried to be "intentional" and find a small group, but I just can't find one!"

- Maybe you need to lead one.
- Maybe you take the lead on ensuring that you find intentional relationships by leading a group.
- We have SG leader training on January 8th
- Talk to your campus pastor today to find out how you can get hooked up with that!

Jonathan acts intentionally, not just to act, but to strengthen his hand in GOD!

Intentionality is pointless if it doesn't have a purpose. In fact, many of you have withdrawn from relationships because people have intentionally set out to hurt you.

2. True Friendship should always build us up in our walk with Christ.

He goes to STRENGTHEN his hand in GOD!

Men, do you understand that your wife cannot meet all of your relational needs? You need men in your life that can sharpen you, encourage you, spur you in ways that your wife never can.

Proverbs 27:17: As IRON sharpens IRON, so one man sharpens another

Wasn't David a man after God's own heart? Didn't he have great faith? Why would he need someone to help him?¹

We often say the same things about ourselves....

- But I'm doing great
- I'm really growing in the Lord
- Yeah.....FOR NOW!

David would have his high's and his lows, just like all of us

- At this time in his life, David was tempted with bitterness, disillusionment, anger, fear, you name it
- The MOMENT Jonathan got to David, he strengthened his hand in God. He did not minimize the problem. The problem was real. The fear was real
- He pointed to a greater solution: TRUST IN GOD'S PROMISE TO YOU!
- Be careful about presenting yourselves as the answer to people's problems instead of presenting the GOSPEL as the answer.

How do we know that David was strengthened? Listen to these words, most likely penned during the course of the time that Jonathan was with him:

¹ John Piper, Friendship

Psalm 35: 1-3

Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me! Take up shield and armor and rise for my help! Draw the spear and javelin against those who pursue me! Say to my soul "I am your salvation."

Psalm 36:5-7

"Your steadfast love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgements are like the great deep! Man and beast you save, O Lord! How precious is your steadfast love, O God!"

Story of my friend Spence:

- 2 years ago, my father dies in a motorcycle wreck
- IN SINGAPORE...that's some hard stuff
- So, somebody has to go over and clean out his apt.
- Spence was the first one knocking on my door.
- He went...not to see a city....not to drink coffee that we're pretty sure had crack cocaine in it as it made our hearts race all night
- But to strengthen me when I needed it most.
- TO encourage me in the gospel.

Question: Are your friends STRONGER or weaker in their relationship and understanding of God due to their time with you?

Question 2: Flipped, are YOU stronger or weaker in your relationship with God due to your time with them?

Let's face it, some of our friends are just idiots. And for some reason, we care more about what they call us to and not the gospel. We literally allow them to carry our convictions for us.

You know, that friend that's telling you

- You're not happy...just get a divorce!
- If you really wanna be a good father, you have to work 90 hours a week and never spend time at home because you are the provider.
- The ones that tell you that you should take the short cut and not study for your exams, but just cheat. I mean, it's online...who's looking anyways?
- Yeah, those are the people I'm talking about.

I think this is something that we must all deal with...and ultimately radically change the way we view our friendship.

Well, how in the world does a Relationship get to this point? How can 2 men be so committed to one another, that one goes 3 day journey to see the other and encourage one another in the gospel?

It all goes back to what went down in the beginning, in 1 Samuel 18:2

3. Real Friendship is built on Sacrifice.

- Remember Jonathan's covenant with David in chapter 18?
- Guess what? That covenant was very costly to Jonathan. It cost him pretty much everything by human standards.

Sacrifice is GIVING UP something and COMMITTING TO something greater.

Examples:

- **Marriages:** Giving up personal rights and committing my rights to my spouse
- **Workplace:** Giving up my personal gain/ideas/ and committing them to the company
- **Church:** Giving up the blessings of ourselves this Christmas with stuff, and committing to blessings the nations by giving to the CMO.
- **Story of HS Student:** Took the \$\$ used to build floats at his local high school (thousands of dollars) and committed it to giving clean water to the people of Sudan

Remember something about Jonathan...he's the king in waiting.

He literally took off his robe, placed it at David's feet and said this "My inheritance, my place on the throne, what is rightfully mine....I lay it all down at your feet and commit myself to you....why? Because God has anointed you as the true king over Israel."

Jonathan sacrificed it all, and committed his life to David.

His commitment was carried all the way through, even when things got nasty. When adversity struck. When death seemed certain. When the odds were stacked against them.

You can't help but see something interesting happening here

In all our previous stories in the life of David, David has been the key Christ figure, pointing us to a greater understanding of the King who was to come. But this time, it's Jonathan.

JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE OF FRIENDSHIP!

Jesus is the better Jonathan.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

Philippians 2:3-8

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing,

taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!

Friendship is at the heart of the gospel. Please do not miss this.

When Jesus was talking to His disciples about what friendship was in the Gospel of John, he said this "As I have LOVED YOU, LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

The real ability to be a good friend comes from knowing God's friendship towards us in King Jesus. He IS THE KING/FRIEND WE ARE SEARCHING FOR!

He is intentional towards us, so that we might be reconciled to God, so much so that it would cost him...he would sacrifice himself for sinners.

What a friend we have in Christ!

In Christ we never have to search for the approval from people, you no longer have to leverage them to have your needs satisfied.....JESUS ALONE SATISFIES!

When you experience and put your faith in Christ, you'll begin to know what it means to be loved and what it means to truly love one another.