

**MESSAGE TITLE:** Marks of a Faithful Friend

**SCRIPTURE:** I Samuel 18:1-5

**KEY TRUTH**

The biblical account of David and Jonathan vividly displays several marks of faithful friends.

**GETTING STARTED**

What quality do you feel is most important in a friend and why? Take a moment to picture the faces of people in your life you count as friends. What makes them your friends? I think we would all agree that friendship is a gift from God worth guarding and nurturing. Our friends are for us, even if they sometimes get on our nerves. They care about us. They celebrate with us when things go well and they cry with us when life goes south. Everyone needs friends. Today's passage will help us explore ways we can glorify God with our friendships and learn to enjoy and preserve the purity of the gift of friendship.

**OBSERVATION**

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-5.

*How would you describe Jonathan and David's friendship based on this passage?*

*What comes to mind when you consider that Jonathan and David's souls were knit together? How do you think that happened?*

*What did Jonathan give David as a symbol of his commitment to David? How were these gifts significant and sacrificial gestures of friendship?*

*Twice in this passage, we read that Jonathan loved him (David) as his own soul. What did this mean for their friendship?*

*Read John 15:13. Based on this passage, would you say that Jonathan would be willing to lay down his down for David?*

*This passage describes what happened immediately after David defeated Goliath. What did Saul do with David? What did Saul not permit David to do?*

*How would you describe the relationship between David and Saul based on these verses?*

*How did David fare in his new role as a military commander?*

*At first, everyone loves David, including Saul, Jonathan, Saul's servants and all of Saul's family and officials. Does this passage record the names of anyone who disliked David?*

Of all the people who could have been jealous of David, Jonathan developed an especially close friendship with this new celebrity. As Saul's son, Jonathan was in line to inherit the throne. Jonathan could have fostered resentment and animosity toward David. Instead, he received David as well as any friend could receive someone. Jonathan loved David as himself and his gifts to David revealed the depth of his commitment. It seems David and Saul had a good working relationship. David was a good commander and fighter, as well as best friends with Saul's son, Jonathan. Saul was initially pleased with David; David was not only loyal but also successful for the sake of Saul's kingdom. But soon his attitude toward David soured.

### **APPLICATION**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

*What does this passage indicate about the quality of a "Jonathan-David type" friendship? What marks of faithful friendship do you see in this passage? How can we nurture these qualities of God-honoring friendships?*

*Is there a relationship in which you need to work on being a better friend? Who is someone you need to reconcile with or apologize to for the type of friend you've been?*

*What is a step you can take this week to make Jesus the center of your friendship?*

### **PRAYER**

*Pray and ask God to give you a greater awareness of and appreciation for the friends in your life. Has God placed people in your life who are truly for you? Take time to thank God for them! Ask God to show you how to glorify Him by honoring your friends this week. Pray that we would be the type of people others want to be aligned with.*

### **COMMENTARY NOTES**

Immediately after David's conversation with the king, his relationship with the royal family changed forever. This was understandable because David and Jonathan had much in common; they were both courageous and capable young warriors who possessed profound faith in the Lord. Both had initiated faith-motivated attacks against militarily superior Philistines that had resulted in great victories for Israel. It is not surprising, then, that they would become close friends.

Jonathan, like his father Saul (16:21), loved David. That love inspired him to make a covenant with David, one that was expressed with extravagant gifts to the new celebrity. In a single day David had acquired the finest sword in the Philistine army as well as one of the finest swords in Israel's armory; he had been permitted to wear the king's clothing in the time of conflict and was given princely clothing in times of peace. The fact that Jonathan gave David the garb and armaments originally reserved for the heir to Saul's throne clearly possesses symbolic and thematic significance. David

received the official garb of Israel's prince, foretelling his own royal role in the kingdom. Not only did David's relationship with Jonathan evolve that day, but so did his relationship with the king. He became a member of the royal household and as such did not prove disappointing.

The term translated "caused to prosper" is theologically significant; according to the Torah (Deut. 29:8), those who would keep the words of the Mosaic law would "prosper in everything" they did. The author's employment of language that brings this Torah promise to mind is not accidental. The comment in verse 5 underscores the claim made elsewhere (16:13) that David was a man under the control and direction of the Lord's Spirit—the same Spirit who had brought into being the covenant between God and Israel and rewarded its adherents with prosperity. David was rewarded with a position of great responsibility: a high rank in the army. Saul's action was met by the approval of "all the people and Saul's officers as well."

Before the victory over the Philistines, David would sometimes return to his father's house in Bethlehem to look after family matters. Now the king wanted David to remain constantly with him. Everything in David's life would change from this point on.

#### **SOURCES CONSULTED**

ESV Study Bible

HCSB Study Bible

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