



Building Friendships – Message 4

Warm-up

Fill in the blanks for these famous friendships.

- Chip & _____, Barnum & _____, Bert & _____,
- Sherlock Homes & _____, Laverne & _____, Laurel & _____.
- What name would you write with yours as a famous friendship? _____ & _____

Overview

The last few weeks, we have been looking at the Old Testament character of David and are learning how God can use anyone in spite of their challenges and weaknesses. This week, we will focus on the biblical friendship between David and Jonathan and learn the characteristics of a true friend.

Word and Application

Three Characteristics of a True Friend

1. Selfless.

Read 1 Samuel 18:4. Jonathan was in the place of strength, and he is the one who initiated the friendship. His robe was a sign of his position. His armor signified his leadership in Israel's army. His sword, bow and belt were used for protection. In essence, when Jonathan gave David all of these things, he gave a part of himself. Why is selflessness a characteristic of true friendship?

Read Philippians 2:3, 4. What role does humility play in having the ability to regard others as more important than ourselves? Pastor Steve has often said that humility is not thinking less

of ourselves but thinking of ourselves less. How is this way of thinking beneficial not only to ourselves but to others?

2. Committed.

Even though Jonathan knew that protecting David from his father, Saul, could cost him the throne, he remained committed and loyal to David. Jonathan risked his life for David. What are you willing to risk for your friends?

Read John 15:13-15. What was the litmus test Jesus gave for the greatest kind of love? Did He do that for us? Jesus called His followers His friends. What qualified them to be called friends of Jesus? Does the same apply to us?

3. Encouraging.

Read 1 Samuel 23:16, 17. Jonathan encouraged and strengthened David. Every time we encounter people with potential, we must make a choice. We can either hurt them, as Saul chose to hurt David, or like Jonathan, we can choose to help them. Because Jonathan helped strengthen David, he helped save the nation of Israel. **Read Luke 22:31, 32.** What was Jesus' command to Peter? According to the Book of Acts, did Peter obey Jesus' command?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. What is Paul's instructions to the church at Thessalonica? Do the same instructions apply to every church today? What are practical ways we can apply 1 Thessalonians 5:11?

Life Challenge

A true friend is selfless, committed and encouraging. Think of your circle of friends. In what ways can you demonstrate these three characteristics to them?

Prayer

Father, thank You that Your Word gives us a model of true biblical friendship between Jonathan and David. By your Holy Spirit, please help us to be selfless, committed and encouraging to those we call friend. We want to honor You in all of our relationships, Lord. We ask You for humility and love to become a true friend to others. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Pray for the specific needs of the group.