

## Lessons from David's life

### 3. David & Jonathan – 1 Samuel chs 18-20

**Theme: David & Jonathan's relationship is described as 'they became one in Spirit'. It's a pattern for our relationships.**

Groups may like to run through the story in chapters 18-20. David and Jonathan faced immense difficulties and could easily have betrayed or let each other down when the opportunity to further themselves arose. However they sought a deep, long-lasting and God-based friendship that meant trust and sacrifice. Jonathan, in particular, gave himself for his friend's welfare, and for the furtherance of God's purposes.

#### **Questions:**

1. Think of some famous friends: Stan and Ollie, Bill and Ben, Bill and Ted, Tom and Jerry, Batman and Robin, Starsky and Hutch, Rachel, Monica and Phoebe. Do any others come to mind? What is special about their friendship?
2. Do you think the church is a place where people can find deep and meaningful friendships? What has your experience been?
3. How do we know what our relationships should be like when some of the examples offered by the world are not helpful?
4. What makes someone a good friend?  
What made David and Jonathan's friendship a good one?
5. How can we bring God into our relationships in a way which is natural and genuine?
6. What kind of things do people put their trust in? Are there things which as Christians we might be tempted to trust other than God?
7. These passages are about the need for us to be trustworthy.  
1 Tim 3:11, Proverbs 11:13, Proverbs 13:17, Proverbs 25:13, 1 Cor 13:7. Can we learn anything from these verses?
- 8 What did Jonathan sacrifice?  
What did he see in David that made him willing to do it?
9. Do you think Jonathan is an example of Jesus' attitude?  
Why?
- 10 What has been the cost to us of following Jesus?  
Can you think of people who at the moment are making a real sacrifice for God? You might want to pray for them later.

#### **Your stories:**

#### **Key Point**

If our relationships with each other are to be a picture to others of God's relationship with us we need to reflect God's character.

If God is trustworthy we need to be trustworthy.

If God is willing to trust us with his work in the world, with bringing about the Kingdom of God we need to trust each other too.

If trust is part of love, it should be part of our relationships as we learn to love each other.

More over the page....

**You may wish to refer to the questions overleaf as you read these notes.**

Q1, 2, 3

For those who follow Jesus, our friendships should reflect the example we find in the Bible. We should also demonstrate our relationship with Jesus in our relationship with others. It is a personal walk, but, as with everything to do with being a Christian, it should also make a difference in our world.

This is probably the most famous friendship in the Bible - 'they became one in Spirit.' A friend like that is very special. And it cost Jonathan - more than David.

Chs 13/14 show us Jonathan's background, one of the real tragedies is that he would have made a great king, better than his father Saul. He was brave, trusted God, loyal to his father, had common-sense and integrity, he was respected by his men who defied Saul to protect him. No wonder he and David became friends, despite the enormous difference in their backgrounds they actually had a great deal in common.

Maybe for the first time they felt they had found a friend who shared their enjoyment of adventure and their love for God. That's a great combination.

Q4

This was a friendship which could have easily foundered early on. Jonathan was the king's son; David won battles and got the glory. Jealousy could have eaten away at him as it did his father.

ch 18 - Jonathan loved David as himself, but this was not just hero worship. When they part for the last time (ch20) David weeps most and Jonathan comes up with the plan which will deliver a message to David to let him know if he is safe from Saul.

These men were equals; there was mutuality in their relationship, they were not vying to be the greatest. There was a great combination of action and God.

They didn't have to sit down for a time of prayer and study before they went off to do some act of

*derring-do*. God was woven into their friendship. He was part of their conversation, they covenanted their friendship before God and committed each other to him.

Q5

Two aspects of this friendship tell us something about David and Jonathan, and about God and us.

### **1. A relationship of trust.**

Three times we read of Saul's fear of David, of David's success, of losing his throne.

David & Jonathan had plenty to fear about each other. Was this deception? Jonathan could spy on David or betray him. David could use Jonathan's information at court and then kill him or at least exile him. But there's no sign of this. This friendship was a real work of God. God is involved all through the conversations in ch.20. Everything they do, they trust to the all seeing and sovereign God. ***Saul had taken himself out of God's will, David and Jonathan put themselves right in the centre of it*** - and so they were able to trust each other.

They encouraged each other in their faith. When David was afraid, Jonathan offered strength, when Jonathan despaired of his father, David offered encouragement.

There are about 250 Bible references to trust, trusting, trustworthy, trustful. It seems it's important to God!

Trusting in other things (riches, kings, chariots, idols, neighbours, worldly wisdom, yourself) is not a good idea.

Trusting in God, however, is. The Psalms are full of references to God's trustworthiness, especially in times of trouble and danger.

Q 6, 7.

If our relationships with each other are to be a picture to others of God's relationship with us we need to reflect God's character.

If God is trustworthy we need to be trustworthy.

If God is willing to trust us with his work in the world, with bringing about the Kingdom of God we need to trust each other too.

If trust is part of love, it should be part of our relationships as we learn to love each other.

This works on a 'virtuous circle' basis. ***We take a risk when we trust each other, just as David and***

***Jonathan did. But being trusted can make us more trustworthy and more able to trust.***

Imagine the difference it would make in the church, (and the world!) if we really trusted each other with our weaknesses, failures and secrets as well as our joys and successes.

We might look rather more like the Kingdom which God is growing.

If our friendships reflect God's nature they'll attract people not just to us but to him.

### **2. Sacrifice.**

Sacrifice is at the heart of who we are and what we believe.

Jonathan could have left his father and joined David, we know that the behaviour of his father both angered and grieved him but he risked his life defending David. See 20:30-33.

Q 8

It is important when we look at the OT to think forward to the NT, know that everything in the old points to the new and is fulfilled in the new.

Any picture of sacrifice in the OT is a 'backwards reflection' of Jesus' sacrifice. Read Phil 2:3-5.

Q9

Jonathan's sacrifice led to the establishment of David's house and line and which led ultimately to Jesus, the final sacrifice.

Q10

***A hen and a pig have a different attitude to breakfast. The hen donates an egg, the pig sacrifices everything.***

We might be willing to give something to God or friends or even to those we don't know, but that's not the same as a sacrifice.

Sacrificial giving or sacrificial living, means giving and living till it hurts. We like to concentrate on the nice and easy parts of following Jesus, But Jesus said there would be a cost, a cross to bear.

Jonathan probably didn't think of his love for David as a sacrifice. It was simply a godly response to a friend.

People who make enormous sacrifices for God probably see it in the same way. Not a sacrifice, but a godly response to a friend - ***the friend is Jesus.***

When we think of it that way maybe the possibility of reward doesn't matter so much.