



August 31, 2025
A Man After God's Heart
Unafraid of Friendship

1 Samuel 18:1-5, 19:1-7, 20:12-17, 20:32-33, 20:41-42, and 23:15-18

1. **Opening Discussion:** (You will probably want to use only one of these openers)

- a. The 2001 miniseries by Steven Spielberg popularized the term “Band of Brothers” (although it was initially used by William Shakespeare 400 years earlier). What does “Band of Brothers” mean to you? Other than TV or movie representations, have you ever observed a “Band of Brothers”?
- b. What were some of the characteristics of your “best friend” relationships as a child? Are those characteristics still true of your friendships today? How many, if any, of the childhood friendships carried over to your adult life?
- c. The acronym BFF has been popularly used in social media to describe someone with whom a person has a special relationship. What is your reaction to the term? Do you feel it is an accurate way to describe a true friendship, or does it tend to be overused, cheapening the meaning?

2. **Prayer:**

- a. Adoration – Pray a Psalm or other Scripture to focus on praising God.
- b. Confession – Spend time confessing any known sins. 1 John 1:9
- c. Thanksgiving – Thank God for answered prayers, blessings, gifts, and opportunities to serve.
- d. Supplications
 - i. Pray for the activities of His Church locally and around the world.
 - ii. Pray for the spiritual and physical needs of others and yourself.
- e. Least Reached People Group: **Kalanadi of India** (*from the IMB “Loving the Lost Through Prayer” guide*)

“Believers in Kerala, India, trace their Christian heritage to A.D.52, yet most people in their state, including the Kalanadi (kuh-luh-NAH-dee), have never heard the gospel. Instead of following Jesus, the Kalanadi follow Hinduism. They are known for performing ritual dances at village shrines. Through these rituals, Kalanadi people hope to achieve happiness and oneness with Hindu gods and goddesses. They do not know that Jesus is the only way to the Father. Pray that believers will have compassion for the Kalanadi and share the good news of Christ with them. Pray that the Kalanadi would turn from worshipping idols and worship the true and living God.”

3. **Sermon Key Points**

- a. David & Jonathan Demonstrate True Friendship in the Lord
 - i. Rooted In mutual respect for God and each other
 - ii. Courageous
 - iii. Filled with God's love

- iv. Deeply encouraging
- b. Aim to Develop Godly Friendships Like Theirs
 - i. The Bible is full of "One-Another" commands for Christians
 - ii. Obeying these commands requires intentional effort
- c. Grow In Community by Getting In A Thrive Group
 - i. We've got some new ministries kicking off to help you develop godly friendships
 - ii. We've got some new discipleship Thrive Groups launching to grow together in Christ

4. Bible Study:

- a. **Sunday Afternoon** – As soon as possible after the sermon, make time to consider:
 - i. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
 - iii. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
 - iv. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
- b. **Monday:**
 - i. This week's sermon was based on six passages from 1 Samuel. Begin the week by reading all six: 1 Samuel 18:1-5, 19:1-7, 20:12-17, 20:32-33, 20:41-42, and 23:15-18.
 - ii. After reading these verses, how would you describe the relationship between Jonathan and David?
 - 1. What made the relationship unlikely?
 - 2. What made it possible?
 - iii. To properly understand the friendship between Jonathan and David, it is essential to have a correct view of their ages.
 - 1. Read Acts 13:21 to learn how long Saul reigned, and then 2 Samuel 5:4 to learn David's age when he became king. How long must Saul have been king when David was born?
 - 2. Read Numbers 1:3. How old was a man to be in order to serve in the army? Then read 1 Samuel 13:1-3. What was Jonathan doing by the second or third year of Saul's reign?
 - 3. Combining the facts from the two preceding paragraphs, at least how much older than David must Jonathan have been? What insight does this age difference shed on the nature of their friendship?
 - a. Given the nature of interactions between individuals of such different ages, who would you expect to have first reached out to initiate the friendship?

- b. How is that illustrated in 1 Samuel 18:1-5 and other passages that you read?

c. **Tuesday:**

- i. Today, read and meditate on the passage describing the initial establishment of the friendship between David and Jonathan: 1 Samuel 18:1-5.
- ii. How would you explain the meaning of the phrase “the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David”? We often talk about people being “kindred spirits”. How is that true of David and Jonathan (compare 1 Samuel 14:6-15 and 17:31-50)?
- iii. Do you think Saul’s decision to keep David had anything to do with David’s relationship to his son? What motive did Saul have for his action in verse 2 (see 1 Samuel 8:11 & 14:52)?
- iv. The Hebrew word translated “love” in verses 1 & 3 is a technical term with political implications that go beyond the affection we associate with love to include loyalty and reciprocal responsibilities. How are those characteristics shown when it is used in 1 Samuel 16:21 and 1 Kings 5:1 (see also 2 Samuel 5:11). How does this relate to Paul’s definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7?
- v. What do Jonathan’s actions in verse 4 signify? What does it suggest about what Jonathan knows about David’s future? How is that view supported by other passages that you read on Monday (especially 20:14-15)?

d. **Wednesday:**

- i. Read and meditate on 1 Samuel 19:1-7.
- ii. What does this passage tell us about the importance Jonathan attached to the covenantal relationship he had established with David?
 1. What decision was Jonathan required to make at this point? What were the potential consequences of that decision (see 1 Samuel 20:30-33)?
 2. How does that compare to the decision Jesus tells us we may have to make in Luke 14:26, Matthew 10:37, and John 12:25?
- iii. Which of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10) does Jonathan demonstrate in this passage? What tactic does he use to accomplish it (1 Corinthians 13:6 & John 8:32)? What lessons might we learn from his actions for when we must deal with interpersonal conflicts?
- iv. In verse 6, Saul takes an oath to God not to kill David. Knowing the rest of the story, how serious does Saul take his oath? What does that say about his character as compared to his son’s?

e. **Thursday:**

- i. Today, although it is more than the focal passage, read 1 Samuel 20.
- ii. What would account for the very different perception of Saul’s behavior and plans that David and Jonathan have?
- iii. How does Jonathan reconfirm his love and commitment to David (verses 4 & 16)?

- iv. Who do you think was being protected by the elaborate scheme they established to communicate what Jonathan learned?
 - v. What does verse 8 tell us about David's behavior towards the king?
 - vi. As far as we know from the Scriptures, David and Jonathan will only see each other once more after chapter 20. How would you describe their parting? What is the foundation for their ongoing commitment to friendship? In what way are we dependent on the same foundation (Ephesians 2:19-20)?
- f. **Friday:**
- i. Read and meditate on 1 Samuel 23:15-18.
 - ii. In earlier passages, Jonathan has shown several times an acceptance of the fact that God has chosen David to be king in place of Saul. How does he convey that recognition most clearly in this passage?
 - iii. What future role did David and Jonathan seem to have in mind for Jonathan?
 - iv. What does the end of verse 17 imply about the state of Jonathan's relationship with his father? How do you think Saul would have reacted to knowing Jonathan was helping (strengthening) David?
 - v. In this last recorded meeting between the two friends, where did they turn for help in the future?
- g. **Saturday:**
- i. Read once again the six focal passages for this week. As you read, look for lessons and illustrations that you can apply in your life as a Christian in today's world.
 - ii. Jonathan clearly demonstrated his love for David by living up to the covenant they had made with each other, even to the point of putting his own life on the line. Jesus tells us in John 15:14 that we are His friends if we do what He has commanded: "Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." How are you doing at obeying?

5. Application:

- a. Close, intimate same sex friendships were common in Biblical times and are still so in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, that is not often the case in Western society, particularly among men. We can learn a great deal about the importance and value of such relationships from these texts about David and Jonathan. What changes do you need to make because of the messages in these texts?
- b. Jonathan not only had to choose between future "career paths," but he had to choose between the path God had chosen and his family. Christians often try to dismiss Jesus' words in Luke and Matthew about having to put Him before family as some kind of a hyperbole. But in many parts of the world today, becoming a Christian forces one to make that choice. Are we as ready to stand up to family for our Lord as Jonathan was for his friend?