

## **FOUNDATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP LESSON 3**

**Intro. Tonight we're concluding our series on friendship.**

1. Tonight, we're going to begin the class by looking at what it really means to be a friend
    - a. In our first point we're going to look at two men who probably had the closest friendship in the Bible, David and Jonathan
  
  2. I want to give you a little background to this text
    - a. David had been anointed to replace Saul as king
    - b. Jonathan is Saul's son and heir to the throne
- *It was not in Jonathan's best interests to be David's friend*
    - c. In the text David feels hopeless and at the lowest point of his life up to that time
    - d. Jonathan comes and does what a friend does best; he encourages him
  
  - *It's likely that David would never have become king without Jonathan's help*
  - *It's also very true that you and I will never become the men and women God intends us to be apart from our friends*

### **1 Samuel 23:15-18 (NKJV)**

15 So David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in a forest.

16 Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God.

17 And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that."

18 So the two of them made a covenant before the LORD. And David stayed in the woods, and Jonathan went to his own house.

## I. A TRUE FRIEND IS \_\_\_\_\_ INSTEAD OF \_\_\_\_\_

### A. THIS IS HARD FOR US BECAUSE WE ARE NATURALLY \_\_\_\_\_

1. We naturally think of ourselves first, consider how things affect us, and look out for \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If we're going to be the kind of friend God intends us to be we're going to have to learn a different approach
  - b. We're going to have to learn to think about others first

**John 12:24 (NKJV)** "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

- *Jesus was talking about His own selfless sacrifice*
- *It's as we die to self that we are able to produce much fruit (friends)*
- *If we refuse to die to self we won't ever manage to develop the closeness of relationships we desire*

2. Jonathan thought about his friend over his own \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. This wasn't an easy choice
  - b. If David survived and became what God intended Jonathan would be "demoted"

**1Samuel 23:17 (NKJV)** And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that."

### B. HOW TO DEMONSTRATE \_\_\_\_\_

1. Being \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Philippians 2:3-4 (NKJV)**

3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- a. He's not saying to totally forget about our self but to remember the interests of others

**ex.** *We think about ourselves a lot! It's like a built in safeguard we have so that we're not taken advantage of.*

*"Well if I don't look out for myself, nobody else will!"*

*I've been more conscious recently about how much I think about myself and what affects me.*

*One of my prayers now is, "God make me more sensitive to the needs of others." (Truthfully, I'm still a work in progress.)*

- b. We have to learn the value of thinking about our friends and what's going on in their lives

**Hebrews 10:24 (NKJV)** And let us **consider one another** in order to stir up love and good works.

**Hebrews 10:24 (AMP)** And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities.

- c. One of the surest ways of defeating selfishness is to consciously devote time to thinking about the needs, dreams, and concerns of our friends
- d. Pray for them, talk with them about the things they're concerned about, **be thoughtful**

**ex.** *When David was in trouble, Jonathan was thinking of how he could help his friend.*

2. Be a \_\_\_\_\_

- a. One of the greatest qualities you and I can cultivate in our lives is really paying attention and listening to each other

**James 1:19 (NKJV)** So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be **swift to hear, slow to speak**, slow to wrath.

- b. This is a simple but powerful truth

- c. If we want someone to know that we're really interested in them we need to learn to listen to them
- d. It's a sure sign of selflessness

**Proverbs 18:13 (NKJV)** He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.

**ex.** *Jonathan gave David his attention. He listened to him.*

- *During the last portion of this class we're going to shift focus to another important aspect of friendship*

## II. HOW TO \_\_\_\_\_ FRIENDS

### A. WE NEED TO HAVE \_\_\_\_\_ OF OUR FRIENDS

1. Even our best friends will sometime \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. It may come totally from "left-field"
  - b. When you least expect it they will offend you

**Luke 17:1 (NKJV)** Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come..."

**James 3:2 (NKJV)** For in many things ***we offend all***. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

- *There's one thing I believe we all can agree on- we are imperfect people and therefore have the capacity to offend*

2. If we are going to maintain close relationships we have to learn to \_\_\_\_\_ some things

**Proverbs 19:11 (NKJV)** The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to ***overlook a transgression***.

### **Ecclesiastes 7:21-22 (NKJV)**

21 Also do not take to heart everything people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you.

22 For many times, also, your own heart has known that even you have cursed others.

- a. What this is saying is don't be overly sensitive to what people say

### **B. TO MAINTAIN FRIENDS WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO PRACTICE SOMETHING OVER AND OVER AGAIN;**

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1. Forgiveness isn't meant to be directed just against \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Matthew 5:43-44 (NKJV)**

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

- a. We know that we're required to forgive and bless our enemies
2. More often than not; when the Bible mentions forgiveness, it's not in reference to our enemies but to \_\_\_\_\_
    - a. This tells us something- if we are going to maintain close relationships we're going to have to practice the art of forgiveness; **often**

### **Matthew 5:23-24 (NKJV)**

23 "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that **your brother** has something against you,

24 "leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to **your brother**, and then come and offer your gift.

**Matthew 18:15 (NKJV)** "Moreover if **your brother** sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained **your brother**.

**Matthew 18:21-22 (NKJV)**

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall **my brother** sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

**Matthew 18:35 (NKJV)** "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive **his brother** his trespasses."

**Colossians 3:12-13 (NKJV)**

12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

13 bearing with **one another**, and **forgiving one another**, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

- b. There's something consistent in all these verses
- c. It's talking about forgiving our "brother," "one another" (those in the church)
- d. These verses are talking about our friends!
- e. This is where so many miss it
- f. When we are offended, wronged, or hurt, it's easier just to say, "forget about them" instead of attempting to reconcile

- *This is one of the primary reasons people don't develop more than "surface relationships"*
- *It's hard work keeping friends*

**Philippians 1:27 (NKJV)** Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, **that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.**

**C. HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY DEAL WITH \_\_\_\_\_**

1. If possible \_\_\_\_\_

**Proverbs 19:11 (NKJV)** The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression.

a. We need to learn to let a lot of things slide

2. If it's something that we can't ignore we need to \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 18:15 (NKJV)** "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

a. It matters "when" and "how" we talk to them

**ex.** *When it is NOT a good time to talk to someone about something is when we're still really mad about it. Take a breath or two and chill.*

b. "How" we talk to them is just as important

**ex.** *"You really offended me, you thoughtless, senseless, jerk."*

3. Catch it \_\_\_\_\_

**Hebrews 12:14-15 (NKJV)**

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

15 looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; **lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble**, and by this many become defiled.

a. The longer we let things go without dealing with it the deeper the roots go

- *In closing, friends are worth the effort we put into them*

**Psalms 133:1-3 (NKJV)**

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments.

3 It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing-- life forevermore.

**PRAYER AND CONFESSION:** *Thank You Jesus for giving me the ability to make and keep friends. Give me grace to be a good friend to others. Help me to consider their needs instead of just my own. When others offend me help me to forgive them quickly, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

### **FILL IN THE BLANKS FROM LESSON #3**

#### **I. A TRUE FRIEND IS \_\_\_\_\_(SELFLESS) INSTEAD OF \_\_\_\_\_(SELFISH)**

##### **A. THIS IS HARD FOR US BECAUSE WE ARE NATURALLY \_\_\_\_\_(SELFISH)**

1. We naturally think of ourselves first, consider how things affect us, and look out for \_\_\_\_\_(number 1)
2. Jonathan thought about his friend over his own \_\_\_\_(welfare)

##### **B. HOW TO DEMONSTRATE \_\_\_\_(SELFLESSNESS)**

1. Being \_\_\_\_(thoughtful)
2. Be a \_\_\_\_\_(listener)

#### **II. HOW TO \_\_\_\_\_(KEEP) FRIENDS**

##### **A. WE NEED TO HAVE \_\_\_\_(REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS) OF OUR FRIENDS**

1. Even our best friends will sometime \_\_\_\_\_(offend us)

2. If we are going to maintain close relationships we have to learn to \_\_\_\_\_(**overlook**) some things

**B. TO MAINTAIN FRIENDS WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO PRACTICE SOMETHING OVER AND OVER AGAIN; \_\_\_\_\_(**FORGIVENESS**)**

1. Forgiveness isn't meant to be directed just against \_\_\_(**our enemies**)
2. More often than not; when the Bible mentions forgiveness, it's not in reference to our enemies but to \_\_\_\_\_(**our friends**)

**C. HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY DEAL WITH \_\_\_\_\_(**OFFENSES**)**

1. If possible - \_\_\_(**ignore them**)
2. If it's something that we can't ignore we need to \_\_\_(**talk to them**)
3. Catch it \_\_\_\_\_(**early**)