

## The Covenant Of Friendship

I. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary defines friend in this way: "*one who is attached to another by affection.*"

**A. Proverbs 17:17** - "*A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*"  
NASB

1. Some definitions of a friend.

**a. Somebody that knows all about you and loves you anyway.**

b. The one who steps in when the whole world steps out.

**c. One who never gets in the way, except when you are on the way down.**

d. A friend attaches himself to someone and never let's go. (mine)

**e. A friend is a person with whom I may think aloud.**

**B. John 15:13** - "*This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends.*"  
THE MESSAGE

## II. Jonathan's friendship was essential to David's life.

*1 Samuel 18:1-5* - "*By the time David had finished reporting to Saul, Jonathan was deeply impressed with David — an immediate bond was forged between them. He became totally committed to David. From that point on he would be David's number-one advocate and friend. Saul received David into his own household that day, no more to return to the home of his father. Jonathan, out of his deep love for David, made a covenant with him. He formalized it with solemn gifts: his own royal robe and weapons — armor, sword, bow, and belt. Whatever Saul gave David to do, he did it — and did it well. So well that Saul put him in charge of his military operations. Everybody, both the people in general and Saul's servants, approved of and admired David's leadership.*" THE MESSAGE

**A. This problem between David and Saul is puzzling, for it is a problem that has been provoked by goodness. Saul hated David because David was good.**

1. David was doing everything right when Saul tried to kill him.

**a. He had killed the philistine giant and he had brought healing to Saul's tortured spirit. He was just what the nation needed; he was just what the king needed.**

b. It is always disorienting to be attacked when we're doing something good, doing our very best and then suddenly and violently opposed.

**2. Interwoven throughout this murderous plotting is the extraordinary friendship between David and Jonathan.**

a. Friendship is a much underestimated aspect of spirituality. It is every bit significant as prayer and fasting.

**b. Friendship takes what is common in human experience and turns it into something holy.**

3. Friendship with David complicated Jonathan's life enormously.

**a. He risked losing his father's favor and willingly sacrificed his own royal future.**

b. But neither the risk nor the loss deterred him; he became and stayed David's friend.

**4. This friendship was one of the sources of David's success.**

a. It was probably this example of friendship that Solomon heard about that caused him to write

- **Proverbs 17:17** - *"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."* NASB

- **Ecclesiastes 4:9** - *"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart."* NASB

**b. It's highly unlikely that David could have persisted in serving Saul without this friendship.**

- The Covenant of friendship is lived out in marital, family, work, and cultural conditions that are that are hostile to a vowed intimacy.

- **But it is the covenant, not the conditions that will win out in the end.**

B. Jonathan saw the anointing of God in and on David and as a result made a covenant with him in order to help him become all that God wants for him.

**1. The greatest thing any person can do for another is to confirm the deepest thing in him and then bring encouragement and correction to it.**

2. Each of us has contact with hundreds of people who never look beyond our surface appearance.
  - a. **We have dealings with hundreds of people who the moment they set eye on us begin calculating what use we can be to them, what they can get out of us.**
  - b. These people treat us as something less than we are; and if we're in constant association with them, we will become less.
3. **We need someone to enter our life who isn't looking for someone to use.**
  - a. Who is leisurely enough to find what's really going on in us, who is secure enough not exploit our weaknesses or attack our strengths.
  - b. **Who recognizes our inner life and understands the difficulty of living out our inner convictions, confirms what's deepest within us.**
  - c. This person is called a friend.

### **C. It's a great thing to be a Jonathan.**

1. Without Jonathan, David was at risk of either abandoning his vocation and returning to the simple life of tending sheep or developing a murderous spirit of retaliation to get even with the man who despising the best that was with Him.

***John 13:3-17*** - "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God, rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. And so He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter." Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." And so when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master; neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him." NASB

- a. Lacking confirmation by the word of a friend, our most promising beginnings fizzle.
  - b. Lacking confirmation in the presence of a friend, our bravest ventures unravel.**
  - c. It's not unusual for any of us to begin something wonderful, and it's not unusual for any of us to do things that quite good. But it is unusual to continue and to persevere.
  - d. The difficulties aren't for the most part external but internal, finding the energy and vision to keep the effort going.**
  - e. We need friends to help us and sustain us.
- 2. Being good and doing good are seldom adequately rewarded.**
- a. More often they get us into trouble.
  - b. The world, the flesh, and the devil are in fierce opposition to us and seeking to wreck our lives.**
  - c. We need friends who will stand with us.
- 3. What is revealed in this friendship between David and Jonathan is that massive resources are ranged against this young warrior.**
- a. The raging king is set against the singing shepherd, a spear is pitted against a harp.
  - b. What happens? After each outbreak of violence, King Saul is weaker and more distraught; and after each outbreak of violence, David is stronger and still befriended.**
4. Evil doesn't diminish David; it doesn't narrow him.
- a. Bound in the covenant of Jonathan's friendship, David is protected; none of Saul's evil get inside of him.**
  - b. In the face of such concentrated goodness, evil is powerless to maintain itself.