

LESSON 9

JONATHAN AND DAVID, BEST FRIENDS



BEFORE YOU TEACH

Jonathan

As the oldest son and heir of King Saul, Jonathan was expected to succeed his father on Israel's throne. Scripture portrays Jonathan as a worthy prince—bold, inspirational, and a pious military leader in Israel's struggle with the Philistines.

Jonathan's essential character is revealed most clearly in his relationship with David. When David entered Saul's service, the two became close friends and formalized the bond between them by making a covenant of total commitment to one another's families. Jonathan supported David even as David's growing popularity and military success aroused the jealousy of King Saul. Jonathan at times openly defended David before his father. He also secretly helped David by keeping him informed of Saul's intentions. Jonathan models the principle of Proverbs 17:17, "A friend loves at all times."

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

In this week's lesson, we will help the students understand how important it is to choose friends that love and fear the Lord. While God wants us to be friendly and show His love to everyone, our very closest friends should be those who love Jesus as we do. God's word says, "Evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Cor 15:33). This means that if the people around us are bad, we will also tend to do what is wrong. It is important to choose our friends wisely. We think and act like our friends, so the wrong friends may influence us to lie, cheat, or steal. Choosing the wrong friends can lead us into bad situations.

Students at this age are beginning to find and value friendship. Although they may not be seeking a specific group of friends, it is important that they understand that a good friend can eventually become a person closer than anyone else in their family. And because of that, much of what the students say, hear, think, and do, can be influenced greatly by their peers.

God promises blessings to those who choose their friends wisely. Just as the wrong friends can influence us to do wrong, friends who love Jesus can encourage us to do right. For example, they can encourage us to attend church, to value the Lord more than material things, and help us do right things and say "No" to sin. Ask your students if they have friends who love the Lord and encourage them to do right. That kind of friend may be hard to find, but we can ask God to help us to find such a friend.

BIBLE TEXT

1 Samuel 18:1-5; 20:1-16

BIBLE TRUTH

A good friend is one that loves and fears God.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To choose friends who love and fear the Lord.

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

(Proverbs 17:17a)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. We praise and thank You, Lord, for Your wonderful mercy and grace. We also thank You for protecting us, our family, and our friends throughout this past week. We know how important friends are—please help us to be wise when we choose our close friends, choosing those who love You. May Your Spirit guide us as we learn about two best friends, Jonathan and David. Hallelujah! Amen.

VOCABULARY

officer: someone in charge of others in the army

crime: something that is against the law; wrongdoing

success: something that goes well; a person that does well

REVIEW

Last week, we learned how God gave success to David in everything he did. Because of this, who became jealous of David? (King Saul.) Because Saul was jealous, what did he try to do to David? (Kill him.) What did we learn in last week's lesson about jealousy? (We should never be jealous of others, and we should be content with what God has given us.)

This week, we will learn about David and his best friend, Jonathan. Today, we will see how friends should love one another through the example of David and Jonathan.

BIBLE STORY

Warm-up

Ask your students if they have any good friends in church or school. How do they treat each other in church and in school? Ask the students to share what good friends have in common or what they share or do together. Create a compare and contrast list on the board and explain the differences between school and church friends.

David and Jonathan Become Friends

Soon, David became the best friend of Jonathan, Saul's oldest son. In fact, Jonathan thought as much of David as he did of himself. Because of this, Saul kept David in his service without letting him go back home.

Jonathan liked David so much that they made a promise to always be loyal friends. Jonathan gave him his armor and his robe, together with his sword, his bow, and his belt. David always did very well in everything that Saul sent him to do, and Saul made him a high officer in his army. An officer is a person who has the power to lead many soldiers. So, David was very important. This pleased everyone, including Saul's other officers.

David Tells Jonathan that His Life Is in Danger

Remember, Saul was jealous of David because God gave David a lot of success. Saul became so jealous that he tried to kill David. Finally, David went to a place called Naioth [show map]. But Saul found out that he was there. David escaped from Naioth in Ramah [show map again] and ran to see Jonathan. When he got there, he asked, "What have I done wrong? What crime have I committed? What have I done to make your father want to kill me?" What was David feeling right now? Name some emotions. What would you have felt if you were David?

Jonathan replied, "Your life is not in danger! My father doesn't do anything without letting me know about it!

Why would he hide this from me? It can't be true!"

But David swore it was true and said, "Your father knows how much you like me, and he didn't want to break your heart. That's why he didn't tell you. But I swear by the living Lord and by your own life, that I am only a step away from death." Swearing in this way meant that it was a very serious promise. Knowing that his best friend's life was in danger, how do you think Jonathan was feeling?

Jonathan and David's Agreement

Jonathan said to David, "Tell me what to do, and I will do it."

David answered, "Tomorrow is the New Moon festival, and your father has invited me to eat dinner with him. But instead of going, I'll hide in a field until the evening of the next day. If your father misses me, tell him that I have asked to go to my hometown of Bethlehem [show map] in order to take part in the sacrifice my family makes there each year. If he says that's all right, I'm safe. But if he gets angry, you will know that he wants to harm me. Please be kind enough to keep the promise you made to me in the Lord's name. If I have done anything wrong, kill me yourself, but don't hand me over to your father." David was thinking that if he had really done something wrong, he would much rather his best friend take his life, than be taken to King Saul.

"Don't worry," Jonathan replied. "If I thought my father wanted to kill you, wouldn't I tell you?"

David asked, "How will you let me know if your father is angry with me?"

Jonathan answered, "Let's go out into the field." When they got there, Jonathan said, "By this time the day after tomorrow, I swear by the Lord, the God of Israel, that I will find out what my father is thinking! If he is friendly

to you, I will surely let you know. But if he wants to hurt you, then may the Lord punish me very strictly if I do not let you know and help you escape. May the Lord bless you, as He used to bless my father! Please be kind to me as the Lord has been and do not kill me. But after I die, and the Lord has taken away all of those who hate you, still be kind to my family."

So, Jonathan and David made an agreement that David's family would always have to take care of Jonathan's family. And Jonathan said, "May the Lord punish David's enemies!"

David and Jonathan Say Goodbye

The next morning, Jonathan went out to the field to meet David. He brought a small boy with him, and he said to the boy, "Run and find the arrows that I'm going to shoot." As the boy ran, Jonathan shot an arrow past him.

The boy then picked up the arrow and returned to his master. Then Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy and said, "Go, carry them back to town."

After the boy had gone, David came from where he was hiding and bowed before Jonathan three times. Then they cried together, and David cried the most. Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have sworn to be friends in the name of the Lord." Then David left, and Jonathan went back to town.

We can see that Jonathan and David were such good friends. Jonathan would do almost anything for David. Even though Jonathan's father wanted to kill David, David was still Jonathan's best friend. They never said anything bad to each other; they did not fight each other; and they did not argue or get into trouble. Instead, they continued to care for each other. This is how good friends should act.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Who was David's best friend?** Jonathan, Saul's oldest son.
2. **When Jonathan found out that Saul was trying to kill David, what did Jonathan do?** He warned David and told him to run away.
3. **What did David and Jonathan promise each other?** They promised that they would always be friends.
4. **Why is it so important to make friends who love and fear the Lord?** They can tell us what the right thing to do is, because they fear the Lord and keep His commandments.
5. **Think about your closest friends. Do they help you to do what is right? Do they help you to get to know and love Jesus better? If so, thank the Lord for them. If not, ask God to help you find a friend who will.**

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"A friend loves at all times." (Proverbs 17:17a)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. True
2. False; Saul didn't want Jonathan to know.
3. False; he hid in a field.
4. True
5. robe, sword, belt
6. Naoth
7. New Moon
8. punish
9. three
10. Answers may vary.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

When King Saul heard the people praise David in song, singing, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," he sought to kill David from that day forward. However, Jonathan and David's friendship was so strong that they promised to never let anything come between them. In fact, Jonathan's love for David grew even more! Many times, he warned David that his father was coming to take his life. Jonathan went out of his way to defend David by pleading to his father not to kill him. In 1 Samuel 19:4-5, Jonathan said, "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his works have been very good toward you. For he took his life in his hands and killed the Philistine, and the Lord brought about a great deliverance for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood, to kill David without a cause?"

1. Loyalty toward God and David

Jonathan loved and cherished David so much that one time, he almost got killed at the hands of his father. At another time, he traveled for a long distance just to see David, who was in hiding. Jonathan knew that one day, David would be the king. He could have refused to accept God's plan. But instead, he became best friends with David. In all of this, Jonathan showed great loyalty not only to David, but also to God.

David always remembered the covenant he made with Jonathan, "And you shall not only show me the kindness of the Lord while I still live, that I may not die; but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the Lord has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth" (1 Sam 20:14-15).

When Jonathan died, David composed a song called "Song of the Bow". In it, David laments over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. It can be found in 2 Samuel 1:19-27. Three times it repeats the refrain, "How the mighty have fallen" (2 Sam 1:19, 25, 27). David asked that this song be taught to the children of Judah. This is truly amazing. David didn't rejoice at the death of Saul, but rather showed great loyalty toward Jonathan and Saul.

2. Best friends always keep their promise to remember their covenant

Even after the death of Jonathan, David kept his promise to show kindness to his friend. He searched out Jonathan's son Mephibosheth and provided for him the rest of his life. Let's read 2 Samuel 9:1-11. This passage shows David's kind heart and great love toward Jonathan and Saul. "Now David said, 'Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?'" Did you know that it was customary in those days for a new king to completely kill anyone connected with the prior king? David remembered his covenant with Jonathan (1 Sam 20:14-15); he went against the tradition and asked what he could do for the family of his enemy. This was indeed a very brotherly friendship that called for the laying down of one's life for another.

Summary: Having friends in Christ is important to our spiritual life

Friendship is so important that the Bible addresses it several times. Proverbs 18:24 says, "A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." If we haven't realized already, our friends can be closer than a brother, sister, mother, or father. We may share many things with our friends that we would not share with our families. Therefore, friends are the families we choose for ourselves, and we must choose wisely.

Some of the crimes we often read or hear about are carried out by more than one person. For example, some friends will work together to steal something from a store that they're shopping in. Other friends may influence each other to disobey and lie to their parents. As you and your friends get older, they may influence you to commit even greater sins against God.

Therefore, having friends in Christ is extremely important to our spiritual life. Because friends in Christ have God in common, it is very easy to be of one Spirit and one mind. Some good friends form "prayer buddies" and pray together all the time. Some of you may not have the Holy Spirit yet. Having a prayer buddy to pray for the Holy Spirit with is something worth having. There could be other times you just need someone to talk to. Just remember that a friend hears what you say, a good friend listens to what you say, but a best friend listens to what you don't say. Ask God to grant you the wisdom to know the difference between a good friend and a bad friend.

ACTIVITIES

1

Good Friends

Instructions

David and Jonathan were best friends. Draw a speech balloon around each sentence and make it point to the person who might have said it. The first one is done for you.



DAVID

1. My name is David, and I have a best friend who always helps me.

2. I played the harp for my king, who had an evil spirit.

3. I did not want to go away, but my friend knew it was best for me.

4. My best friend knew it was wrong for his father to hate me.

5. I was so sad to see my friend go away, but we promised to always be good friends.

6. I made a plan to save my friend's life. He had to run away because my father wanted to kill him.

7. I knew it was God's plan for my friend to be king.

9. My friend gave his best things to me. I was so touched.

8. My friend has a good heart. He was always kind toward my father.

10. I promised to take care of my best friend's family no matter what happened.



JONATHAN

2

Friendship Chain**Materials**

- Colored construction paper
- Stapler

Preparation: Cut the colored construction paper into 1" x 4" strips, making at least six strips per student.

Instructions

1. Have the students sit around a table or in a circle on the floor. Give each student five paper strips of various colors. One student begins by saying the memory verse to the student on his right: "A friend loves at all times. Proverbs chapter 17, verse 17." They will each join one of their strips together to form links for you to staple together, forming a chain. The next student in the circle (clockwise) will say the verse and add his link for you to staple to the chain.
2. The game continues until each student has said the verse several times, making one long chain. Help the students say the memory verse together. Then, hang the friendship chain on the wall.
3. Ask the students, "How can we show love and friendship?" Then, create a classroom chart that shows the students' names and their ideas.

How Can We Show Love and Friendship?

Sally says: "We can share our toys."
 Joel says: "We can pray for one another."
 Chris says: "We can play nicely."
 Jenny says: "We can talk to the loneliest person in class."
 etc.

"A Circle of Friends"

Our lives are filled with simple joys
 and blessings without end.
 And one of the greatest joys in life
 is to have you as a friend.

3

A Circle of Friends**Materials**

- Colored construction paper
- Black markers
- Scissors
- Paper plates
- Glue

Instructions

1. Ask each student to trace and cut out his handprint using his favorite color of construction paper. Trace one handprint for each student in class. For example, if there are 4 students in the class, each student must trace and cut out 4 handprints (1 for himself and 3 for the other classmates). Each student should have 4 handprints.
2. Have each student write their name on the handprints they cut out.
3. Exchange handprints.
4. Cut out the center of a paper plate and let the students glue their handprints around like a wreath. You can also let them add decorations (buttons, sequins, ribbon, etc) or leave it plain.
5. You can print out or write the poem shown above and glue it so that it hangs from the bottom of the wreath. You can call it "A Circle of Friends".

4

Friendship Tree**Materials**

- Photographs of students
- Various shades of green construction paper
- Brown cardboard or brown construction paper
- Tape

Instructions

1. Draw a tree trunk with branches using the brown cardboard or construction paper and hang it up on a board or classroom wall.
2. Then, have each student use construction paper of various shades of green to make the leaves.
3. Each student pastes his/her photograph on a leaf and writes a saying about friendship (e.g., "Friends always share.") on it. The students can decorate it before gluing it onto the tree.



Map of Naioth (indicated by the pin)



Map of Bethlehem

E1 Year 2 Book 1 Lesson 9—Jonathan and David, Best of Friends

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: A good friend is one that loves and fears God.**Lesson Objective:** To choose friends who love and fear the Lord.**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Proverbs 17:17a)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

True or False

1. Saul made David a high officer in his army. _____
2. Jonathan had always known that Saul wanted to kill David. _____
3. David hid in a house. _____
4. David did not commit any crime. _____

Fill In the Blank

(robe, punish, Naioth, belt, New, sword, three, Moon)

5. Jonathan gave David his cape and his _____, together with his _____, his bow, and his _____.
6. David ran away to a place called _____, but Saul found out that he was there.
7. Saul invited David to dinner during the _____ festival.
8. Jonathan and David made an agreement together. Jonathan said, "May the Lord _____ David's enemies!"
9. When David came from hiding, he bowed before Jonathan _____ times.

Life Application

10. Friends are the families we choose for ourselves. How are our church friends different from our school or non-church friends? What are some things other people can do that we cannot do? Sometimes, we will be the only ones that are different. How can we ask God to help us choose the right friends?
