

## THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

**DATE:** October 21, 2018

**SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: Friends (1 of 4)—What Is A Friend?**

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 20:1-42; Ruth 1:15-17; 2:18; 3:1; Daniel 2:17-18; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15; Ecclesiastes 4:9-10a

**AIM:** A friend is one we share the same interests with and can talk to honestly. Although we may have friends at school and around our neighborhood, those who know the Lord are the ones who should be our most special friends.

**MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM:** Proverbs 17:17a (A friend loves at all times...); Proverbs 18:24b (But there is a true friend that sticks closer than a brother); Ecclesiastes 4:9-10a (Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor; For if they fall, the one will lift up his companion)

**SUGGESTED SONGS:** 1612 (Companions), 7617 (Wherever You Go, I Will Go – about Naomi and Ruth), 1002 (A Friend Loves You at all Times), 1900 (Let's Sing the Song of Daniel), 9307 *BSS Daniel Song #7* (Oh, Yes, I Can! I can Choose my Friends so Carefully!) 9524 *Vessels Unto Honor Song #4* (What Kind of a Sharer); 9303 *BSS Daniel Song #3* (Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael); 9306 *Daniel Song #6* (Daniel and His Three Companions)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** (1) Make a paper chain of people. Write the names of friends, and decorate with googly eyes, yarn hair, or other materials. (2) Make a paper crown of friends.



**NOTE TO SERVING ONES:** This is the first of four

lessons on friends and friendship. This first lesson shows the God-created need of companionship and friendship and how we should fill that need mainly with friends—of various ages—in the church. The second lesson is about how to make and keep friends by learning to be a good friend. The third is about how to choose proper friends, and the fourth, on how God Himself needs friends.

**APPROACH: (1)** Ask the children to define what a friend is. Why do they need friends? Who are their friends? Do they have a best friend? Do they have any friends in the church? **(2) Alternate idea:** The serving ones can judiciously match the children, and they can write a short letter in which the writer tells the recipient 2 or 3 things about him/herself, and also describes 1 positive point about the recipient. This may help the children to make friends with one another in the church. The younger ones may need some assistance in the writing part.

**CONTENT:** We are continuing the series of lessons about Human Relationships. We have had lessons based on the Bible about our relationship with parents and with siblings. In this lesson, and in the next four lessons, we will talk about friends. Although God created man in a perfect way, man nonetheless had many needs that had to be met in order for him to live and be happy. Man needed food in order to satisfy his hunger, water to satisfy his thirst, and air to breathe. Man was also created with an inborn need of companionship. When God saw that Adam was alone, God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Genesis 2:18b). God met this need for Adam by creating a companion for him, Eve. Eve was Adam’s companion and helper.

The need of companionship is also met by friendship. (Even though it is enjoyable to have pets to play with, people do not feel completely satisfied with their company. They are not able to take away the feeling of loneliness, nor can they meet the deep desire God created within man for companionship.) A friend is a companion whom we spend our time with, someone we can play with, do things with, be with at school, be with in the church, or at home. A friend is one with whom we share some common interests. A friend is someone we

can talk to “face to face” (Exo. 33:11) and “heart to heart”; one with whom we can share our feelings and not be afraid of being laughed at or put down.

In addition to Adam and Eve as companions, the Bible has examples of friendship. We will talk about some of them in more detail in the coming lessons, but can you think of a few examples of friends in the Bible? *We do not need to cover all of these examples. Serving ones can choose which of these examples to cover.*

- **David and Jonathan.** The story of David and Jonathan is a good example of a true friendship. They wanted to be with each other, they enjoyed being together (1 Sam. 18:1), and shared their lives together (1 Sam. 18:2-4). Even when there were very difficult situations, they were loyal to each other (1 Sam. 20:1-42). *This story will be covered in the next lesson, so we do not need to cover this in detail.*
- **Ruth and Naomi.** Some friends may be younger, some may be older, and some may be our age. The story of Ruth and Naomi shows how two people of different ages met each other's needs for mutual caring and companionship. Although their primary relationship was that of daughter and mother-in-law, Ruth and Naomi were also friends (Ruth 1:15-17; 2:18; 3:1).
- **Elijah and Elisha.** The relationship of Elijah and Elisha shows us another Biblical example of friends with dissimilar ages (2 Kings 2:2-6). Elisha chose to remain with Elijah to the end, even though he knew that Elijah would soon be taken away by God.
- **Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.** The book of Daniel gives us an example of four young men who were friends and companions. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were some of the children of Israel, God's people, who were taken into captivity in Babylon. Together, they were able to maintain their purity in a land full of impurity and idol worship (Dan. 1:1-21, 3:1-30). When Daniel faced a very serious and troubling situation, he immediately turned to his three friends to bring the matter to God in prayer (Dan. 2:17-18). These accounts show the importance of having friends who are also believers, (2 Cor. 6:14-15) with whom the children eventually will be able to pray and to stand against the negative things of this age (Eccl 4:9-10).

When it comes to our brothers and sisters, parents and relatives, we do not have a choice since the Lord arranged for us to be born into a certain family. But this is not so with our friends. We choose our friends according to our own desire and selection. So they are persons who are special to us because we want to be with them.

**SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:** *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

- **Choosing good friends.** Because we need friends, we should ask the Lord to bring us the right ones. For example, at school or in our neighborhood, we should choose friends who are honest and behave properly, and not those that keep getting into trouble. Ask the children what kind of friends they have at school? On the positive side, do their friends obey the teachers? Are they kind and helpful to their classmates and family members? Do they take their studies seriously? On the negative side, do their friends cheat on exams or tell lies? Do they gossip or cause trouble with their classmates? Do they disrespect their parents, or waste all their time on their phone?

- **Friends of varying ages.** We can have friends that are younger or older, or the same age as us. We can care for them and they can care for us. We should not reject someone as a friend just because they are younger or older. Ask the children if they have friends that are younger or older.
- **Our most special friends should be those who also love the Lord.** We may have friends at school or in our neighborhoods, and some of these friends may not know the Lord. We should have the heart and the goal to bring all of them to the Lord by praying for them and sharing what we know of the Lord to them. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our friends at school also came to the children's meeting too? We can invite them to come.

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ—Human Relationships*, Vol. 3, Lesson 8, and the Church in New York City Children's Meeting lessons, 10/12/97; 10/14/01; 10/21/07; 10/27/13

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