

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

**DATE:** October 28, 2018

**SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONSHIP: Friends (2 of 4)—How to Make and Keep Friends (Conference lesson)**

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Samuel 18:1-9; 19:1-10; 20:1-42; 2 Samuel 9:1-13

**AIM:** To show the children that in order to make friends and keep good friends, we must first be a friend. We must learn to be friendly, loyal, trustworthy, and selfless, esteeming others more highly than ourselves.

**MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM:** 1 John 4:11, 12b (Beloved, if God has loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another...if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us); Ephesians 4:32a (And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another...); Romans 12:10 (Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.); John 13:34 (A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.)

**SUGGESTED SONGS:** 17 (What is sharing all about?); 19 (When we're kind to others); 9216 *Bible Story Songs David #16* (When Saul troubled David, God gave him a friend...); 9219 *BSS David #19* (I'd like to honor you); 9224 *BSS David #24* (Come eat at David's table, son of Jonathan and Saul!); 9225 *BSS DAVID #25* (Let's honor with manners!); 1612 (Companions); 9524 *BSS Vessels Unto Honor #4* (What Kind of Sharer); 9527 *BSS Vessels Unto Honor #7* (No one likes to be left out); 199 (Only a boy named David); 9307 *BSS Daniel #7* (Oh, yes, I can! I can choose my friends so carefully!); 175 (God's Helpers); 1003 (A Friend Who Never Fails); 9029 *BSS Go Jesus Go #10* (Jesus is Here); 6711 (The Great Command)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** For older children, use lanyard or embroidery cords to make friendship bracelets or keychains. Younger children can string together large-hole beads.

**NOTE TO TEACHERS:** This is the second 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:** Ask the children, among the many friends that they have, do they have some good friends? What are the qualities that they value in that friend or friendship? Write down their answers on the board or chart paper. (Honest, trustworthy, friendly, kind, get-along, similar interests, loyal, selfless, fair, stick together, stick up for each other, thoughtful, etc.) Can you name some positive friendships in the Bible? (Moses and Aaron; Ruth and Naomi; Elijah and Elisha; Daniel and his companions; Mary, Martha and Lazarus; Paralyzed Man with Four Friends; Paul and Timothy, etc.). Today, you will heard the story of two friends, David and Jonathan.

**CONTENT:** Israel's first king, Saul, had lost the kingship because of his disobedience to the Lord. The Lord then chose David (the youngest of eight sons of Jesse), and had him anointed by Samuel to be the new king (1 Samuel 16:11-13). Although David was anointed to be king, it would be many years under the Lord's training and perfecting before the kingship was transferred from Saul to him.

Still, during Saul's reign, the Philistines (Israel's enemy) assembled their armies for battle and Saul and the men of Israel also assembled themselves. A champion named Goliath came forth from the camps of the Philistines, threatening and challenging the army of Israel. Young David, in the name of Jehovah of hosts, boldly met Goliath's challenge and killed him; Israel defeated the Philistines. When King Saul saw

what happened, he had the boy brought to him and asked him whose son he was. After David finished speaking to Saul, "...the soul of Jonathan [Saul's son] became knit with the soul of David; and Jonathan loved him like his own soul." Saul took David that day and did not allow him to return to his father's house. Then, Jonathan and David made a covenant. Jonathan gave David his robe, his armor, his sword, his bow, and his belt.

David acted prudently on every mission that Saul sent him, so Saul set him over the men in battle. When the men came home, as David returned from striking the Philistines, the women came out of all the towns of Israel singing and dancing to meet Saul the king. The women sang to one another and said, "Saul has struck down his thousands; But David his ten thousands." This saying displeased Saul and he grew very angry.

Saul eyed David from that day on. After he unsuccessfully tried to kill David, he eventually told Jonathan and all his servants that they should kill him. However, because Jonathan took great delight in David, he immediately warned David of his father's intent. He then talked to his father and spoke well about David. He reminded Saul how David had risked his life for Israel when he struck down Goliath. He asked Saul why he would sin against innocent blood by slaying David without a cause. Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan and swore he would not be put to death.

But as David continued to succeed in battle, Saul tried to kill David again. David was able to flee and escape. He then came to Jonathan and asked him why his father wanted to kill him. Jonathan said to David, "Far from it! You shall not die. My father does nothing great or small that he does not disclose to me. So why should my father hide this matter from me? Such would not happen." David told him that Saul knew that he had found favor in Jonathan's sight and thus made sure Jonathan didn't know of his intent. David convinced Jonathan that Saul was determined to kill him. Jonathan said to him, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."

Jonathan and David together devised a plan—Jonathan was to find out what Saul's intention was towards David and then tell David what he had found out. Jonathan told David, "...may Jehovah be with you as He was with my father. And while I am still alive, do show me the lovingkindness of Jehovah, that I may not die; and never cut off your lovingkindness from my house..." So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, and made David swear again by his love for him.

At dinner at Saul's table, Jonathan found out that Saul did indeed want to kill David. Saul told Jonathan that as long as David was alive on the earth, Jonathan and his kingdom could not be established. When Jonathan defended David by asking Saul what David had done to deserve to be killed, Saul threw his spear at Jonathan to kill him. It was then that Jonathan knew that his father was determined to kill David. Jonathan rose up from the table in burning anger and did not eat any food that day, for he was grieved about David because his father had shamed him. The next morning he went to fulfill his promise to David. According to plan, using a small boy, he secretly let David know that he should flee and no longer stay there. When the boy left, David rose up from his hiding place and fell on his face to the ground and bowed himself three times. Jonathan and David kissed each other, and wept for each other, but David more greatly. Jonathan sent David away in peace and reaffirmed the covenant between his seed and David's seed. Then David rose up and left, and Jonathan went into the city.

In later years, after Jonathan was killed in battle and David was king, David kept his promise to Jonathan by caring faithfully for Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13). David restored to Mephibosheth all the land that belonged to his family, and invited him to eat at the king's table continually.

**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.*

There are some hints in the story of Jonathan and David that show how we can make friends and keep friends:

- They both **loved the Lord** and cared for the Lord's interests. It is important that our most special friends be those who believe in the Lord, know the Lord, fear the Lord and love the Lord. This is a big key to being a good friend and keeping good friendships.
- Jonathan was a person who **shared**. When he first met David, he immediately gave him some of his possessions. To make and keep friends, we need to learn to share our things with others.
- Although Jonathan was a king's son, he was **not bossy or pushy**. A person who is bossy and pushy will not have friends for long.
- Jonathan was **not jealous** of David's success. We should not be jealous if our friends do better than we do. We should be happy that they do well.
- Jonathan was **loyal** to David. Jonathan could have so easily gone along with his father to kill David. He must have known that if David were killed, he himself would be the king. Time and time again, he would not betray his friend, even though he knew his loyalty might cost him the kingship.
- When Saul spoke poorly about David, Jonathan **spoke well of him** and defended him in a proper way. We should not listen when others speak poorly of our friends. We can, instead, speak well of them and remind others of their good points. (We should never be argumentative, however. If we need to, we can change the conversation or walk away in a polite way.) Also, we ourselves should never gossip about our friends, or even expose their weaknesses to others. This will hurt their feelings and cause them not to trust us any more.
- Jonathan must have been a very **trustworthy friend**. David trusted his friend Jonathan to the uttermost—he, more than once, exposed himself to great danger as he would come out of hiding to talk to Jonathan and ask him for help.
- Jonathan was a person who cared for others more than himself. He was a **selfless person**. It is so easy for us to be selfish, even in the matter of friendship, caring only for our own needs and interests. We must learn to be concerned with others' needs and interests. This will make us a good friend to others.

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, 10/26/97; 10/21/01; 10/28/07; 11/3/13