

TEXT 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES 1 Samuel 23:16-18; 2 Kings 2:2

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that with Christ in their lives they will treat their friends in a Christlike manner, doing to others as they would want others do to them.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. — Matthew 7:12

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. — Malachi 3:16

ANSWER TITLE: **Staying Friends**

SEARCH TITLE: **Keeping Friends**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Jonathan, heir to the throne, loved David (who in a sense was a rival for the throne) as himself, and was far from being jealous or envious of him. He himself was a hero, as his triumph over the Philistines proved. He also possessed a sterling character worthy of being king. But he had mastered the lesson that God’s will is best and that God had ordained David to be king. To this he bowed with admirable self-effacement. Jonathan’s devotion to his rival is a superbly noble story and one of the finest in history.

Jonathan’s friendship with David was sealed by the covenant between them, but in addition, Jonathan gave David his robe, tunic, sword, bow, and belt. The robe was an elegant cloak worn only by royalty and would have, alone, been a valuable gift. But the sword he gave was made of iron and, according to 1 Samuel 13:22, it was one of only two such swords in Israel. His father owned the other one. Some Bible handbooks say that at that time only the Philistines knew the secret of forging the strong metal, so the weapons of the rest of Israel were made only of wood and stone. Jonathan’s sword was undoubtedly a most highly-prized weapon, yet without a second thought, he gave it to his friend David.

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YOUR OPENER

Keeping Friends

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KEY VERSE: Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. — Malachi 3:16

RESPONSES

1. Your class should bring out that Jonathan was the king's son, and David was the king's servant and former armor bearer. Usually those of the nobility would not think of treating those of lesser status as their equals. Jonathan not only did this, but went a step further, and gave David his royal robes and weapons of war. Use this as an example to show the students that they should not choose their friends according to their social status, worldly goods, or popularity. God will reward them for being friendly to those in need of a friend, and for giving help to those who can give nothing in return but love and appreciation.

2. Although he was Saul's son and next in line to be king, he knew that God had rejected Saul's family, and David was anointed to be the next king. Your class should bring out that he retained his friendship through his love for David, his submissive attitude, and his willingness for David to be king and for himself to be just an assistant. Help your students discuss how true love displaces jealousy and prefers one's brother. See Romans 12:10 and 1 Corinthians 13:4,5.

3. Your students' lists may include such thoughts as promotion of others ahead of themselves, a misunderstanding, thoughtless words, separation, wrong interpretation of actions or motives. After they have made their suggestions, go back through each one and discuss how God would have them handle the situation in order to retain the friendship. This would be a good time to tie in your key verse.

In the account of Jonathan and David we have one of the most beautiful examples of friendship found in the Word of God, one that lasted until Jonathan's death and beyond. The envies, jealousies, and competitions that can so often break up friendships had no effect on them because of the godly love that existed between them.

1. From a natural standpoint, what was especially unusual about the love Jonathan had for David?

2. What was the supreme test of Jonathan's friendship with David, and how did he retain his friendship in spite of this test? 1 Samuel 20:30,31; 23:16,17

3. List some of the things that might come along to test a friendship. In what way would God have us react to these tests if we would keep our friendships intact?

4. What kind of confidence did David have in the strength of his friendship with Jonathan, as Saul

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

made attempt after attempt to take his life?

5. What was David's reaction to Jonathan's death? What did he do to keep the covenant he had made with Jonathan? See 1 Samuel 20:14-17 and 2 Samuel 1:26; 9:6-10; 21:7.

6. Several times in the Book of Proverbs, Solomon gives us instruction as to the way we should treat our friends. As Christians, what are some of the things you feel we can do to prove our love and friendship for others? See Proverbs 17:17, 18:24, and 27:10.

7. Close friends usually enjoy the same interests, go to the same kinds of places, enjoy each other's company, and like to talk about the same things. The prophet Malachi tells us how the Lord feels about those who channel these interests into spiritual pursuits. What has He promised those who do this? Malachi 3:16-18

8. In 1 John 1:3,6,7 we can read of the fellowship Christians should have one with another as they walk in the light of God. What is the meaning of *fellowship* and how can we apply it spiritually?

4. He knew he had an intimate ally in Jonathan, and that he would do everything within his power to save his life. Bring out that Christian friends today should be able to have the same kind of confidence in each other, and that they should show themselves to be worthy of this trust.

5. David lamented over Jonathan's death, remembering his deep love. He showed kindness to Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, restoring his father's land to him, and sparing his life when it was in jeopardy. Ask your students to explain the importance of keeping their covenants and promises with their fellowmen relative to maintaining a friendship.

6. Encourage the students to express their thoughts. These could include: being friendly to others at all times; showing oneself to be a true friend even in times of trial, adversity, or affliction; giving material help when it is needed; giving spiritual encouragement. Help the students realize that actions of this type strengthen friendships.

7. Their names will be in His Book, and they will be numbered with those who are rewarded at His coming for the righteous. Discuss the advantages of maintaining Christian friendships.

8. Definition: "Companionship, friendly association, a mutual sharing." Christians can pray with each other, share their joys and sorrows, and enjoy the love of God together. Sum up your lesson by discussing with your students that in doing these things, they will find their friendships growing and also find a continuing Christian unity that will enrich their lives.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Do you think Jonathan's feelings for David were more than just admiration for a giant slayer? What were they?

Have you ever lost a friend? Analyze what happened to break the relationship. Could you have done something to alter the outcome?

In what ways might jealousy damage a friendship?

What was a long-range result of the covenant between David and Jonathan?

What is the Golden Rule? How do you think putting it into practice will help in forming and maintaining friendships?

Contrast worldly friendships with Christian friendships. How does Christ make a difference in our friendships?

The ANSWER story gives a clue for making friendships. What is it?

THINGS TO DO

Bring yarn in two colors, knitting needles with double yarn cast on and several rows already knitted. The Bible says that, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David." Discuss ways of "knitting" friendship while adding a little to the knitted work for each suggestion.

Provide materials (paper, stickers, colored pens, lace, etc.) for your class to make their own friendship cards. Suggest appropriate sayings such as, "Hello, I like you," or "Special thoughts for a special friend."

For each of your students, run off a copy of the following story:

"Kimberly had many acquaintances in her fifth grade class, but she didn't have any close friends. It seemed that as soon as she got to be a good friend with anyone, they found someone else to pal around with. Many times she felt really lonely at school, even though there were lots of kids around her. One day she decided things had to change. She had to find a way to keep her friends. She decided to . . ."

Allow room for your students to write a conclusion. As an alternative, read the story aloud and allow students to verbally complete it.

Divide your chalkboard into three columns. Mark the first column "Need," the second, "What I Could Do," and the third, "How I Could Do It." In the first column list the following needs: An elderly person is lonely; Baby is crying; Friend is hurt; Mother is cooking; Classmate can't do math problem. With your class, read James 2:14-18. Then fill in your chart to tell ways you could show friendship to those around you.

Everyone likes to know they are appreciated. When was the last time you thanked someone just for being your friend? It is one sure way to bring a smile to someone's face. Have your students write a thank-you note to a friend, just because . . . You may want to supply some cards you have purchased or have the students make their own.

Answers for ANSWER

Am I a Good Friend?

We all have our own thoughts about what friendship is. But is your definition a little tight-fitting when you try it on yourself? Maybe you should think about what kind of friend you are. What are your responses to the statements below?



Ten "YES" answers show that you are a good friend to have.
The "NO" answers show ways in which you might improve.

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| 1. I am willing for my friend to have other friends. | YES | NO |
| 2. I let my friend suggest what we do as often as I do. | YES | NO |
| 3. I praise my friend for doing well or receiving honors. | YES | NO |
| 4. I can take criticism and suggestions for improvement. | YES | NO |
| 5. I can take a joke on myself, and laugh too! | YES | NO |
| 6. I keep secrets told me by my friends. | YES | NO |
| 7. When I borrow things, I make sure I return them. | YES | NO |
| 8. When I know my friend's "touchy spots," I keep from "bumping" them. | YES | NO |
| 9. I understand my friend may like people, things, and activities that I don't. | YES | NO |
| 10. I lend things to my friends as often as I borrow things. | YES | NO |
| 11. I listen to my friend's problems as often as I tell mine. | YES | NO |
| 12. When I "fall out" with a friend, I am sometimes the first to offer to make up. | YES | NO |