

Keeping Friends

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

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

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

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 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?