

## The David Series: Week 3 Devotions

In week 3 of the David Series we explored the friendship between David and Jonathan. For this week Lindile Cele from Encounter Youth has created daily devotions to help us deal with friendships in our lives.

### Day 1: Friendship

Have you ever wondered why we make friends? Why we naturally bond with people? Maybe you haven't thought about it. If your mom anything like mine growing up, she probably tells you all the time "stop playing video games so much and go make friends outside." Why would she say these things? What is the big deal about making friends anyways?

Hopefully this week you will understand what a friend is, what is so special about having friends and why we need them. We will do this by looking at what the Bible has to say about friends and how we can learn about friendship in the life of David.

The word "friend" is used a lot in the world around us today, but do you know what it means? Can you describe it? If you had to explain what a friend is to someone who had lived alone their whole life, what would you say? Go ahead and try to describe it. If you are like me and are struggling at this point, that's ok. That's why you're reading this.

A friend is someone who is attached to another by affection or esteem, a favoured companion or person who gives assistance to another, or someone who favours or promotes something. Pretty much someone who we like to bond or hang out with that helps us. We all have at least one person who fits this description, right?

There are many great examples of friendships in the Bible that show us what true friendship looks like, like Job and his three friends who were with him when he was at his lowest point (Job 2: 11), and David and Jonathan. Even David had a BFF. His name was Jonathan, King Saul's son. When David and Jonathan became friends, the Bible says that they bonded and that "Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him like himself."

Ask yourself, do you love your friends as you love yourself?

Lord, we thank you for creating us the way that you did. Thank-you, that you placed us together and surrounded us with people who we can call our friends. I pray that you would help us to understand what being a friend means with new understanding, in Jesus' name. Amen.

### Day 2: Why do we need friends?

I hope yesterday's devotional helped you understand a bit more about friendship. And know that you do, you are probably wondering why we need friends. But first, I have a question for you. If a child was placed on an island and they had all they needed and could somehow feed themselves, clothe themselves and fend for themselves, would that still be a complete and full life? Some would say yes, because what more could you need in life but food, clothes, and all the material stuff. Others would say no, because somehow there might be something missing from this person's life.

The Bible tells us that we were created in the image of God and in His likeness (Gen 1:26). What does it mean to be created in His image and likeness? Well for starters, the verse says "Then God said, let us make human beings in our image..." Who is the "us" here? God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit. God is a God who is in relationship with Himself. And so, as we are made in His image and likeness, we are made to be in relationship with the people around us. What I mean by that is God is not a loner, so you are not a loner! We all have that desire within us to belong, that's where friendship comes in. In our friendships, we help and support each other. Two are better than one. We are not islands, we are continents.

Ask yourself, am I revealing the image and likeness of God in my relationships?

Lord, thank You for creating us. Lord, created us to be like you. We thank-you God that you have not made us as loners but as a people meant to be in relationship. I pray God that you would help those who feel like they are alone. Place people around them to join hands with them in friendship and relationship. Amen.

### **Day 3: Qualities that make a friend**

What are the perfect ingredients for a friend? If Professor Utonium had to make the perfect friend, what ingredients would he use and what would be the “Chemical X” be? Like any good cake, there are things within a friendship that make it a good friendship. There are also things that can make it bad...

Think of a moment, a moment that was important in your friendship with your best friend. Got it? What about your friend in that moment made you appreciate them? I want you to hold on to it, we will come back to it in a minute.

If we look at the friendship between Jonathan and David we see some awesome moments of friendship; like when Jonathan makes a covenant or promise with David (1 Sam 18: 3), when Jonathan gives David his robe, tunic, sword, bow and belt (1 Sam 18: 4), when Jonathan helps David when Saul wanted to kill him (1 Sam 20). This tells us a bit about the friendships we should build around us. Good friends are trustworthy, willing to sacrifice themselves and their comfort for another, and willing to help and support us in times of trouble. Remember that Jonathan was a prince, he could have been the future king of Israel, but he chose to give David the things that both defined him and protected him because he trusted David with his life. The “Chemical X” in the ingredients of friendship is love. We cannot be friends with someone if we don’t love them.

Ask yourself, does the moment between you and your BFF have the qualities of a good friendship? Are you a good friend? If not, how can I be a good friend to someone else?

Dad, we thank you for Your word that you left for us as a light unto our feet and a light unto our path. I pray that you would enter into our friendships that we may become like Jesus in our love for each other in friendship. I pray for wisdom and guidance through difficult and hard friendship. May your love enter into our lives, in Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

### **Day 4: A friend in need is a friend indeed**

Life can get tough, am I right? Exams are stressing you out, you have assignments due, your family is putting pressure on you about your future... Sometimes, it pushes you to the point of tears, right? In these moments, who do we turn to? When things are so rough and it never seems to end. You are desperate for something. Things are falling apart around you. And you look around you and all the people you thought were your friends have abandoned you. And in that moment, you know that they never really were your friends...

This has happened to all of us. In your moment of need, you look around you and friends are dololo... In the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15: 11 – 31, I sure that he did spend all his money alone but in his moment of need, where were these “friends” he had spent his riches with? In David’s time of need, when king Saul was looking to kill him, who was there in his time of need (1 Sam 20)? Jonathan. He is not only there for David in that moment but he also comes up with a way to help him. That’s what true friends do, they have your back in times of trouble, they help you see situations from another point of view, and they give you advice.

Ask yourself, can you be someone else’s shoulder to lean on?

Lord, I thank you for all that you have done in our lives. Thank-you for the people you have placed around us, I pray that you would strengthen all of us in our time of need through our good friendships. May our friends help us to see You in every situation, even the difficult ones. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

### **Day 5: Love and Sacrifice**

When people normally think of a sacrifice, they think of an animal being slaughtered on an altar somewhere in the bushes... Creepy but true, that’s what people think. But what it also means is the surrender of something for the sake of something else. What does this have to do with friendship? Everything.

Think of the first time you saw someone give up something precious to them, it could be your parents, sibling, guardian. Got it? Why did they do that? Because they love you. Whether you want to admit it or not, they love you.

The friendships you build with people around you should be built on love and sacrifice. Jonathan was willing to give up his possessions to give them to David, as we spoke about on Day 4. He was willing to risk facing his father’s, the king’s, anger to help his friend David.

Love and sacrifice go hand in hand. Because if you love someone there is nothing you wouldn't give for them, because you love them that much. In John 15: 13, Jesus says "there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for ones friends." This means you would sacrifice yourself for this person. He also says in the verse before that that we must "love one another in the same way that I have loved you." Jesus commands us love each other like we love ourselves, Jonathan reflected this (1 Sam 18: 3).

Ask yourself, would you be willing to give everything up for your friends like Jesus did for us?

Dad, thank you for knitting us into a family of friends that can lift us up in time of trouble, that we can pour your love onto. I pray God that you would reveal the truth of your love and the sacrifice you made for us on the cross, that we may see and understand love like you see it. We love you Daddy. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

### **Day 6: The impact of friendship**

What happens when we get friendship right? When it is filled with love, reflects the nature of God, is a strong support system and glorifies God? Let's have a look.

In 1 Sam 19: 14-15, Jonathan asks David to treat him with the fruitful love of the Lord. Now before you start thinking of fruit salads, let's keep reading. Jonathan then asks David "But if I die, treat my family with this fruitful love, ..." Was Jonathan asking for a gift of a fruit basket every year? What does he mean? He is asking David to treat him with a love that comes from an understanding of God's love that overflows from within in him, a love that bears fruit. And that he would treat his family with same love. Now watch this. After

Jonathan is killed along with his brothers and his father, David becomes king of Israel. In 2 Sam 9, David fulfills this promise, Jonathan's son is blessed through the relationship David and his father had. David has not forgotten his promise to his dear friend Jonathan.

So what does a Godly friendship look like? It is a blessing not only to those involve, it is also a blessing to those around them and then next generations to come. Build well, people.

Ask yourself, am I building friendships that will be a blessing to the next generation?

Lord, we thank you that you are with us in our spaces right now. You see our hearts, you know our thoughts. Help us to build relationships like you made them to be, by your Holy Spirit. May they be a blessing on this generation and the generation to come, in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

### **Day 7: Friends are like flowers**

Well, now you know and understand a bit more about friendship and why we need them. But actually building these friendships is hard... So how do we start? Where do we start? The same place Jesus did when He brought you into His Kingdom. With you.

We are all made in the image of God, so we were created to be in relationship with other people. Like David and Jonathan, we can build loving, supportive, joyful, strengthening, relationships that not only bless us but bless the generations to come. You might be thinking, I want that but how do I do it? Here's the answer, you become than friend you want someone to be to you. Jesus did it. He came and died for us while we were all sinners.

When he was talking about sacrifice one's life for the sake of another in John 15: 13, He was about to show us exactly what He meant. So take courage and be the ultimate BFF to those that are already around you. Lift each other up. I once heard someone describe a friend as someone who brings out the best in you. And I know that we were all made in God's image, so our best is the image of God in us.

Daddy, I thank you for every single person reading this. I thank-you that you created them with your very hands and that you love them. I pray that you would reveal more of who you are to them. I pray that they may learn, by the power of your Holy Spirit, to build friendships like you intended from the beginning; fill of you love. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.