



# Made For Friendship: David and Jonathan

1 Sam 18:1-4, 23:15-18 | Ryan Pfeiffer | April 26, 2026

INTRO. Tolkien... CS Lewis... The unplayable debt that I owe to him was not “influence” as it is ordinarily understood, but sheer encouragement. He was for long my only audience. Only from him did I ever get the idea that my “Stuff” could be more than a private hobby. But for his interest and increasing eagerness for more I should never have brought the Lord of the Rings to a conclusion.

Imagine all that wouldn't have happened w/out friendships:

1. Alexander Graham Bell/ Hellen Keller... Bell opened the world to me!
2. Watson/ Crick— pushing ea/ other to discover the double helix- DNA
3. M.Twain/ Nikola Tesla— 1984 vibrating platform... relieved constipation
4. Ruth/ Naomi— the lineage of David and Jesus
5. Barnabas/ Paul— Pauls apostolic ministry
6. Jesus/ Mary Magdalene— first proclamation of resurrection
7. Paul/ Timothy— the growth of the churches.

What if there's a work of God in us only possible thru the grace of friendship? Like the story of King David— from peasant to unforgettable King... You get a sense w/out his friendship w/ Jon... this journey may not happen. Specifically I want to look at the power of spiritual friendship...

FOCUS. David's friendship with Jonathan shows us two powerful aspects of spiritual friendship. First Spiritual love Second Spiritual Encouragement.

FIRST. Spiritual Love. READ 1 Samuel 18:1-4.

This moment comes right after David kills Goliath... Immediately a powerful friendship between David and Jonathan begins. I love this... Jonathan became one in spirit with David and loved him as himself... That word love in Hebrew. אָהַב ('ā.hăḇ) means to love, to have affection

1. Used of Abraham's love for his son Isaac in Gen 22:2.
2. Used in Lev 19:18 as the command to “love your neighbor as yourself”

Three things I want us to notice about Jonathan's love:

- Jonathan isn't jealous of David's fame and attention!
- Jonathan rejoices with David's victories (later joins him in trial)
- Jonathan uses his status to elevate David's thru a covenant.

This is a unique kind of love. Saul loves David for what he can give him. Jonathan loves David for who God is making him.

Bonhoeffer distinguishes between “Human love” and “Spiritual Love”. Human love is directed to the other person for his own sake, spiritual love loves him for Christ's sake... Human love makes itself an end in itself... Spiritual love, however, comes from Jesus Christ, it serves him alone; it knows that it has no immediate access to the other person. Bonhoeffer, Life Together, Ch1.

Spiritual love means a few amazing things:



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1. We see Jesus standing between us and the other person.
  2. We allow Jesus to define what love is. Not our opinions or desires.
  3. We see others through Christ's perspective not our own.
- This makes us free to truly want God's best for the other person... not our best or even their best.  
This protects us—> jealousy, envy, possessiveness, idealistic expectations.

SECOND. Spiritual Encouragement. READ 1Samuel 23:14-18.  
As David's fame grows... Saul's jealousy grows... David spends 13yrs running!  
This key moment happens somewhere in the middle of this period.  
Can you imagine David... "Hey God! What happened to all that King-anointing"  
It's here Jonathan, again, takes initiative... Encourages David.

Look at the way Jonathan encourages David:

1. He shows up. Meets David where he's at V16 "went to David at Horesh..."
2. Helps David find God in the trial... v16 find strength in God.
3. Reminds David of God's word to him... v17 You will be king over Israel.
4. Reaffirms his friendship... v18 made a covenant before the Lord...

God has willed that we should seek and find his living Word in the witness of a brother... Therefore, the Christian needs another Christian who speaks God's word to him. He needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged...  
—Bonhoeffer, Life Together.

Where is there a friend who might need encouragement from you?  
Where has God put a friend to help draw you to Himself?

Practical Next Steps:

1. Take initiative rather than waiting for them to reach out.
2. Don't offer unsolicited advice
3. Nobody cares how much you know till they know how much you care
4. Just being present with a friend who's in trial is a gift.
5. Can I give you some encouragement or do you just need me to listen?

INVITE WORSHIP TEAM. RESPONSE. Jesus the True Friend.

Jonathan is the hero of this story... he points to Jesus in such a powerful way  
Jonathan took off his robe and weapons and handed it over to David.  
He met David at his lowest moment and helped him find God in the trial.  
In the same way Jesus put aside his heavenly glory & power in order to lay his life down for us  
He humbled himself so that He might exalt us...

Phil 2:5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ  
Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with  
God something to be used to his own advantage; 7rather, he made himself nothing by



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taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

The gospel is the good news that we are saved thru friendship with God!  
Jesus alone restores that friendship thru His sacrificial love on the cross.