



You Need a True Friend

June 10, 2021

1 Samuel 18:1-9

Connect:

- What comes to mind when you consider true friendship? What qualities distinguish one as a true friend? Name someone from your own life who has been a true friend for you?
- Why are true friends so rare? What does it take to discover, cultivate, and maintain deep and abiding friendships in our lives? What do you do to make friendship a priority?

Engage

- Read *1 Samuel 18:1-9*. What do you notice about the language, imagery, and tone of this passage? How does it strike you when you read it?
- The friendship between David and Jonathan is legendary. In the ancient near-east there was no higher level of relational intimacy than two friends willing to lay down their lives for the other. Jesus echoes this in **John 15:12-17**. Read this passage. What connections do you notice between Jesus' covenant with his disciples and Jonathan's covenant with David?
- The Greek philosopher Antisthenes the Cynic said, "There are only two people who can tell you the truth about yourself – an enemy who has lost his temper and a friend who loves you dearly." Discuss!
- Recent research suggests that women will sacrifice achievement for the sake of a relationship, but men will sacrifice a relationship for the sake of an achievement. Does this ring true with your own experience? Do you agree that there are different relational dynamics for men versus women?
- St. Mother Theresa named the poverty of loneliness as an epidemic in our western culture more deadly and disheartening than any disease. "We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love." Which groups from our society are suffering most from this epidemic of loneliness? How might you, or our church, work to overcome loneliness with love?

Next Steps:

- If you have a Jonathan in your life give thanks to God for them in prayer. Find time this week to reach out and let them know how much you appreciate them. If your Jonathan is no longer with you for any reason, find a way to honor the relationship that was. Recall a favorite memory. Share a favorite story. Pull out an old photo and allow your heart to reminisce.

Pray:

- *"Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit. Source of sacred friendship. We give thanks for the gift of love that makes all true friendship possible. Grant us the strength, humility, and grace we need so that friendship might flourish in our lives. Help us create the kind of community where true friendship is not merely possible, but embodied in the life we share. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*