

AUGUST FAMILY MONTH

Discipleship Curriculum

MONTH THEME

Building Families That Leave a Godly Legacy

“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it...”

Psalm 127:1

WEEK FOUR

Show Me Your Friends

Friends Day

Primary Scriptures

- 1 Samuel 18:1–4
- Proverbs 13:20
- Proverbs 27:17
- Ecclesiastes 4:9–12
- John 15:13–15
- 1 Corinthians 15:33
- Amos 3:3
- Psalm 1

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

WELCOME

Friends Who Shape Our Future

Welcome to the fourth week of our Family Month journey.

Week One reminded us that God establishes the family. Week Two showed us that God heals the family. Week Three revealed that God enlarges the family through those who confirm rather than compete. This week we discover a companion truth: God also surrounds the family with friends, and one of the greatest gifts He gives us is not merely relatives — but righteous relationships. Through the story of David and Jonathan, we will see that God often places a friend beside us long before He reveals everything He intends to do through us.

This week’s lesson reminds us that friendship is not incidental to discipleship — it is one of God’s primary tools for shaping it.

WEEKLY OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, participants should be able to:

- ✓ Explain the biblical theology of covenant friendship.
- ✓ Trace the pattern of God placing companions alongside His called servants throughout Scripture.
- ✓ Understand how companionship shapes character, for better or worse.
- ✓ Distinguish between friendships that strengthen faith and friendships that quietly weaken it.
- ✓ Identify one practical step toward becoming a faithful friend to someone else.

MEMORY VERSE

“Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”
Proverbs 27:17 (KJV)

FAMILY MONTH THEME STATEMENT

Family is bigger than blood.

God often surrounds our family with friends who help shape our future.

When we choose companionship wisely, we protect not only our own destiny, but the destiny of everyone who walks beside us.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Before beginning this week’s study, spend a few moments reflecting on the following questions. There are no wrong answers — simply answer honestly.

Reflection One

Who is a friend who has “strengthened your hand in God” during a difficult season of your life?

Reflection Two

Which of these best describes the kind of influence you usually allow closest to you?

- ☐ I surround myself with people who point me to Christ
- ☐ I surround myself with people who are simply fun to be around
- ☐ I haven’t thought much about it
- ☐ I know some relationships may be pulling me away from God
- ☐ I’m not sure how to tell
- ☐ Other

Reflection Three

Is there a friendship in your life right now that is costing you more than it is giving you?

Reflection Four

What might change in your family if every relationship were measured against Proverbs 27:17 — “iron sharpeneth iron”?

BIBLE BACKGROUND

David and Jonathan

First Samuel 18 opens just after David has defeated Goliath. He has become Israel's newest hero. Crowds are cheering, songs are being written in his honor, and King Saul is beginning to grow jealous. Right in the middle of all that change, Scripture says "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." Jonathan was Saul's son and next in line for the throne — the very throne David had been anointed to receive instead. From a worldly perspective, Jonathan had every reason to resent David.

Will Jonathan compete with David for the throne, or confirm what God is already doing in him?

That question is not only theirs. It is ours. Before God can surround a family with faithful friendship, He often has to heal how that family responds to someone else's rise.

HISTORICAL INSIGHT

The pattern of God placing a companion alongside His called servants runs throughout Scripture long before David and Jonathan. Moses needed Aaron. Joshua needed Caleb. Elijah needed Elisha. Ruth needed Naomi. Paul needed Barnabas, and later Timothy. Even Jesus, in His humanity, surrounded Himself with the Twelve. Christianity has never been designed as a solo journey.

Jonathan's gift to David in 1 Samuel 18:4 — his robe, his armor, his sword, his bow, and his girdle — was not casual generosity. In the ancient Near East, transferring one's garment and weapons to another person was a formal, public act of covenant loyalty. It announced to everyone watching whose side the prince had chosen. Jonathan, secure in his own identity, publicly signaled his support for God's purpose in David's life — even though it meant stepping aside from his own claim to the throne.

His story is unmistakable: true friendship is willing to let someone else's calling stand equal to — or greater than — one's own, because Kingdom purpose outweighs personal position.

THEOLOGY CORNER

What Is Covenant Friendship?

From a biblical perspective, friendship is more than shared interest. It is a covenant commitment modeled after God's own loyalty to His people.

Throughout Scripture, God consistently models and calls His people toward covenant friendship:

- Jonathan's soul was knit to David's in loyal covenant, not convenience (1 Samuel 18:1, 3).
- Scripture warns that companionship shapes character for better or worse (1 Corinthians 15:33).
- The church is called to sharpen one another, not merely surround one another (Proverbs 27:17).
- Ultimate friendship is defined by laying down one's life for another (John 15:13).

The Bible therefore presents friendship as a Gospel practice, not simply a preference. Because Christ became our Friend, He calls us to become faithful friends to one another.

WORD STUDY

“Knit”

Hebrew: קָשָׁר (qashar)

Meaning of qashar:

- To tie
- To bind
- To knit together
- To join firmly

This same Hebrew word appears elsewhere in Scripture describing a binding so strong it is also used for conspiracy — people joined so tightly in purpose that nothing could easily separate them. A “knit” soul, then, is not a passing feeling. It is an active, binding commitment of loyalty.

The question is not whether God will bring you a Jonathan. The question is whether you are willing to be knit to someone else’s calling.

LIFE APPLICATION

Complete the following sentences:

1. A friend who has strengthened my hand in God is...
2. A friendship in my life that may need more honesty — or more distance — is...
3. One practical way I can become a “Jonathan” to someone this month is...

FAMILY DISCUSSION

Set aside thirty minutes this week. Everyone should answer each question.

4. Besides David and Jonathan, who else in Scripture shows us the power of godly friendship?
5. How does Proverbs 27:17 describe the sometimes-uncomfortable role of a true friend?
6. What is the difference between a friend who flatters you and a friend who sharpens you?
7. Is there a relationship in our family that has quietly become more harmful than helpful?
8. What does it look like practically for someone in our family to “strengthen the hand” of another, the way Jonathan did for David (1 Samuel 23:16)?
9. How can our family become a place where every generation chooses friends who point them toward Christ?

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Show Me Your Friends: Our Family’s Circle

Using a blank sheet of paper:

10. Draw a large circle in the center of the page and write your name inside it.
11. Around the circle, write the names of three to five people who influence you most.
12. Beside each name, write one word describing their influence: Strengthens, Distracts, Sharpens, Discourages, Points to Christ.

13. Draw an arrow from your circle to one name you want to invest in more intentionally this month.
14. Above the circle, write Proverbs 27:17 or Amos 3:3.
15. When the drawing is complete, gather as a family and pray, asking God to surround each person with faithful, godly companionship.

End of Week Four — Sunday Session