

Devoted to Authentic Relationships

Lesson 06 in the series: "Devoted"

I. We all need and want authentic relationships.

"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

Proverbs 18:24 (NIV)

II. Jonathan and David modeled what an authentic relationship looks like.

A. Jonathan and David had a shared passion for God.

"Let's go across to the outpost of those pagans,' Jonathan said to his armor bearer. 'Perhaps the LORD will help us, for nothing can hinder the LORD. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!'" 1 Samuel 14:6 (NLT)

"David replied to the Philistine, 'You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Heaven's Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the LORD will conquer you, and... the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel!'"

1 Samuel 17:45-46 (NLT)

Note: Authentic relationships form when we discover others who share our passions, interests, or concerns.

"After David... met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond of love between them, and they became the best of friends." 1 Samuel 18:1 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to building Christ-centered relationships that will last forever.

"This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. We are writing to God's holy people in the city of Colosse, who are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ." Colossians 1:1-2 (NLT)

B. Jonathan and David were devoted to each other even when it wasn't convenient.

"Saul now urged his servants and his son Jonathan to assassinate David. But Jonathan, because of his close friendship with David, told him what his father was planning... The next morning Jonathan spoke with his father about David, saying many good things about him... 'Why should you murder an innocent man like David? There is no reason for it at all!' So Saul listened to Jonathan and vowed, 'As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be killed.'" 1 Samuel 19:1-6 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to building relationships based on commitment, NOT convenience.

"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17 (NIV)

C. Jonathan and David were devoted to each other even when it cost them a lot.

"Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, 'You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!' 'Why should he be put to death? What has he done?' Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him."

1 Samuel 20:30-33 (NIV)

"One day (after he became king) David asked, 'Is anyone in Saul's family still alive—anyone to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?' ... 'Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive...' His name was Mephibosheth; he was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson." 2 Samuel 9:1,3,6 (NLT)

Life Application: We are devoted to building relationships where we put the needs of others first.

"Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had." Philippians 2:2-5 (NLT)

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." John 13:35 (NLT)

Note: "We love each other because he loved us first." 1 John 4:19 (NLT)

Connect Group Questions

1. Share an adventure you had with your best friend from junior high or high school. What made him/her such a good friend?
2. Read Colossians 1:1-2. Why did the early Christians refer to themselves as brothers and sisters? What obstacles can keep Christians from building the same kind of relationships today?
3. Discuss the following traits of the friendship David & Jonathan shared:
 - They shared a zeal for the Lord. (1 Samuel 14:6-15, 17:45-51)
 - They loved each other as they loved themselves. (1 Samuel 18:1-3)
 - They defended each other. (1 Samuel 19:1-5)
 - They pledged loyalty to each other. (1 Samuel 20:3)
 - They kept the promises they made to each other. (2 Samuel 9:1-7)

Which of these traits do you value most in a friendship? Why?

4. Why does Centerpoint use the slogan "It's all about relationships"?
5. Read Philippians 2:2-5 & Galatians 6:1. What would it look like if everyone involved at Centerpoint devoted themselves to being better friends?
6. Go around the room and share some things you appreciate about the people in Connect Group. Then spend some time as a group thanking God for each other and for the friendships you've made. Pray also that God will strengthen and protect your relationships and that He will show you how to genuinely love each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.
7. Read 1 John 4:19. How does it make you feel to know that God loved you long before you loved Him?