**Series Road Map**

**Series Overview:** In this series, Supporting Cast, we are looking at the lesser known yet vitally important characters in the Bible. We believe that every single person has a specific role to play in the story of God and it is only when we all follow God’s call that He can accomplish His work in the world.

**Week Overview:** This week focuses on the story of Jonathan and David. Though his father was after David’s life, Jonathan went to great lengths to protect, care for and sacrifice for his friend David.

***Outline:***

**Grab the Room (Intro):**

* Story about when you believed something you saw on social media or TV.

**Tension (what’s the struggle):**

* Sometimes we let the world affect the kind of friend that we are or the friendships we pursue. But what would it look like to truly be a good friend?

**Text:** 1 Samuel 18: 1-5; 1 Samuel 19: 1-7; 1 Samuel 20: 30-33

**THP**: Be a good friend.

**Supporting Points:**

A good friend:

1. Looks Inward
2. Is Loyal
3. Sacrifices

**Application (call to action)**: Is your heart submitted to Jesus and which of these three qualities do you need to be better at? How can you be a better friend to those in your life?

Some of my greatest memories in life have been with my friends. There’s something about being with our friends that causes us to do crazy things, push our comfort zones or sometimes just simply make bad choices….innocent or not.

\*tell a funny story about a friendship you’ve had and an experience in that friendship\*

When I was a senior in highschool, I had an awesome and large friend group of both guys and girls. So naturally, there was a lot of pranking between the guys and the girls...In fact a full on prank war began our senior year between genders. It all started one night when me and about 6 or so of my girl friends were hanging out. Ironically, our guy friends all happened to be separately hanging out that night too. Naturally we thought “well of course we should prank them” One of the things our guy friends would jokingly say to us at school lunch was “Can you make me a sandwich?” So we were inspired and thought “Oh we’ll make you a sandwich...but on your car…” We then set out to the store and bought packages of lunch meat, cheese, bread and mustard. Maybe you can see where this is going...we then drove to where the guys were hanging out and proceeded to stick said lunch meat, cheese, bread and mustard all over a particular friend’s car. We then finished it off with writing “Make me a sandwich” on the back window of the car. We ran away laughing thinking we were hilarious and had pulled off an amazing prank. The reality was that it truly was visually hilarious but the repercussions weren’t...Little did we know that lunch meat and cheese can actually start to take paint off of cars when left on long enough. Long story short, it ended up costing us more than just the cost of sandwich ingredients...

Friends are an incredible gift in life but like my story shows they can also influence us to do some pretty crazy things and get into some unfortunate circumstances. Being someone’s friend is a privilege and comes with a lot of influence that we have in someone else’s life. Friendships are an area where we spend a lot of time but also where things have become increasingly difficult. How we choose our friends, what we say about our friends, and what we do for our friends has slowly been shaped by what culture is pushing. Physical appearance, gossip and focus on self have all become increasingly popular due to social media platforms and influencers and the comparison that brings. But what would it look like for you to change that? To look inward at others and not out? To not gossip and believe the best? And ultimately to sacrifice for your friends? We’re going to dive into the word today to get some help on what it looks like to truly be a good friend.

This leads to our THP for today’s message: **Be a good friend.**

Simple right? Not! I know you’re probably like uhhh okay I got that covered. Everyone knows they need to be a good friend and also thinks they are a good friend. But I want to challenge you to consider that maybe you’re not as good of a friend as you think you are…or at the very least maybe you can become a better friend. Do you know what that truly means to love your friends well and be a GOOD friend? A good friend is made up of a lot of things but I want us to look at just a few of those things today by looking at the life of a man named Jonathan.

Jonathan was a great friend. In fact, I wish I could have Jonathan as one of my friends today. And he wasn’t just a good friend to anyone, but he was David’s best friend. Yes, David, the future King of Israel and the one who defeated the famous Goliath. But when Jonathan met David someone else was on the throne. Jonathan’s dad, Saul, was the acting first King of Israel. Saul hired David on to be his armor-bearer and play music for him on his command. There was that famous day when David became more than an armor bearer, he offered himself up to be the one to take on the giant Philistine, Goliath. Now we all know the story of David and Goliath, and like I mentioned it’s one of David’s greatest claims to fame and one of the most famous stories in the bible. But I want to look at the verses directly after this story. Saul was shocked at what he has just seen take place and wants to know more about this David guy, so he asks David to explain who he is. Let’s jump into 1 Samuel 18:1-4 to see what takes place after this conversation:

“As soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father’s house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.”

Okay so we can see that Jonathan was in the room when David comes before Saul. When David had finished speaking, Jonathan felt an immediate connection to David. Have you ever just clicked with someone that fast? You hear someone talking about how much they love something you love and you think to yourself “dude, we’re gonna be besties whether they like it or not” but externally you try to play it cool…..Well Jonathan doesn’t play it cool. He instantly makes a commitment to David. And then proceeds to take off the very clothes on his body and give them to David. Seems odd right? We usually skip these steps when we want to make a friend…

So what brings Jonathan to do this? He is looking INWARD not OUTWARD. This brings us to the first quality of a good friend:

* 1. **A good friend looks INWARD**

Jonathan and David could actually not be more different when looking from the outside. David is the youngest son of a normal shepherd man. Jonathan is the firstborn son of the King of Israel, which also makes him next in line for the throne. Jonathan heard David give an explanation of his heart and saw his commitment to the Lord. He knew that he and David had the same heart, a heart devoted to the Lord. Jonathan could have felt threatened by David’s success in defeating Goliath but instead he loved David, because of what they had in common. This was bigger than any external difference. Because Jonathan was so surrendered to the Lord’s will he saw that David was to be the next king of Israel, and not him. So, he removes his robe and armor and gives them to David as a way to show David that he was content with David taking the throne and that he wanted to honor the Lord’s choice. This is HUGE. We surely don’t remember Jonathan as a main character in the bible but he plays such an important supporting role in David’s story.

If David and Jonathan couldn’t agree on the question of “who will be the next king?” then they never could have had such a close friendship. Their relationship would have been built on competition, envy, resentment, and pride. But, they loved each other more than the issue of who would take the throne because they loved the Lord more than the throne of Israel.

What is holding you back from pursuing close friendship with someone? Maybe you’re focused too much on how you’re different than how you are alike. Is there someone in your life group who you’ve kept an arms length away because “you’re just too different?” Or maybe you’ve let envy keep you from being close friends with someone. You’re intimidated by their success, physical appearance, or personality and you’ve let it build up resentment in your heart towards that person. But what would it look like to look inward at our friends? To let the most important bond be that of your love for the Lord, To recognize where you’re the same over any other external condition or circumstance. It can be hard to connect with someone who seems so different than you on the outside. Maybe you have different interests like sports, video games, dance, etc. Start there and ask about why they love that passion in their life so much. You may start to find out that you have more in common than you think even if it’s just the motivation for why you choose to do certain things with your time!

Let’s jump back into this passage, David’s name starts to become great in Israel because of his great victory against Goliath. As David becomes more popular, Saul’s anger and envy grows towards him. In Saul’s eyes, David became his enemy and he set out a plan to kill him. But Jonathan’s love and devotion to David remains steady. Let’s see what happens next in 1 Samuel,

“And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul’s son, delighted much in David. And Jonathan told David, “Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be on your guard in the morning. Stay in a secret place and hide yourself. And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you. And if I learn anything I will tell you. And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, “Let not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have brought good to you. For he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine, and Lord worked a great salvation for all of Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?”

Saul and ALL his household were surely trying to find any offense against David to kill him. They were criticizing his every move, gossiping and spreading lies. It would be so hard for Jonathan not to fall into that gossip if everyone around him was participating. BUT, “Jonathan, delighted much in David” and did not let anything said against David change his opinion. He did more than just not engage in their conversations or plans to kill David but he also helped David in the process. He wasn’t just content in not participating but he also knew he needed to take action. This leads to the second quality of a good friend:

* 1. **A good friend is LOYAL**

Jonathan chose to believe and remain firm in what HE knew to be true about David. Not what his own father or any of the servants tried to pin against him. He knew that David was pursuing the Lord and that his intentions were good and pure. Are you quick to hear things about your friends and believe them? Do you take the time to remember who they are instead of jump to conclusions? Are you easily swayed by the conversation that’s happening around you?

It is way easier to participate in what everyone around you is doing instead of bringing up a different opinion or standing up for your friend. We often don’t think about the damage that is being done to our friend when we are standing in a circle with a group of people talking behind their back. Obviously it isn’t as extreme as plotting a plan to kill them but sometimes the more subtle the conversation, the more dangerous it could be. It can start with comments like “Can you believe Sarah said that?” to quickly progress to bashing their character and putting down who they are. Remember that as a follower of Christ we are called to love those around us, and that means both in front of and behind their back. It is extremely loving to refuse to participate in gossip and believe the best about your friend. It also looks like taking action and speaking out on your friend’s behalf when they are being gossiped about, just like Jonathan did when speaking to Saul. It can be scary, but one of the most caring things you can do for a friend is to speak up in their defense.

 Loyalty looks like investigating before assuming. Investigate your thoughts, investigate the truth, and remember your friend is not defined by the things someone may say about them but instead who they are at heart. Then if you consider someone your friend and you hear rumors about something they did or said, the first thing you should do is go to that friend and talk to them about it. One of two things are going to happen, either it was just a rumor, now it’s cleared up, you didn’t participate in gossip, and you believed the best in your friend. Or it’s true, you still didn’t participate in gossip and now you can lovingly call your friend to a higher standard. Either way you are being a good friend at that moment.

The last part of Jonathan and David’s friendship I want to look at is a moment where Jonathan takes a huge risk to sacrifice for and protect his friend. Which leads to the last quality of a good friend:

* 1. **A good friend SACRIFICES**

Jonathan ends up warning David that Saul is out to kill him and David flees. It becomes clear that Saul is pursuing David hard and is going to do anything he can to kill him. In a moment of fear David comes to Jonathan and asks where he went wrong and why Saul is doing this? Jonathan starts to recognize that for the sake of his friend’s life he may need to send David away forever knowing he would not see him again. Jonathan comes up with a plan for David to hide in a field and Jonathan will find out if Saul is still plotting to kill him. Then he will shoot arrows out into the field to tell David that he is safe or needs to run away. The next couple nights at dinner Saul realizes David is nowhere to be seen and starts to get angry, he questions Jonathan on where David is at and Jonathan covers for him. Let’s look at the text to see what happens next:

“Then Saul’s anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, “You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother’s nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die. Then Jonathan answered Saul his father, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death.”

Jonathan is making a huge sacrifice for David in this moment. He is potentially putting aside any future relationship with his father in order to do what is right in protecting his friend. He even comes to the point of risking his own life to protect David because he trusted in the Lord’s plan for David’s future.

How we sacrifice for our friends may obviously look different than how Jonathan did this. Sacrifice in your friendships may look like putting aside your status, popularity, or image to do what is right. To protect your friend when they are the center of gossip, to believe the best in your friend when no one else is. It may look like forgiveness. Forgiveness is putting your pride aside to show grace and mercy to someone else. It can be really hard and it can take sacrificing your own pride to simply say “I forgive you” when they’ve wronged you. It can also look like simply putting your friend’s needs above your own and setting aside your desires for their best interest. Sacrificing your time and energy to simply be there for your friend when they’re in need.

Jonathan’s heart was so submitted to the Lord that it bound him to David’s heart in a special way. He was truly a good friend. We all know and remember David as a main character in the bible. But how different would David’s story be if it wasn’t for Jonathan? What if Jonathan didn’t listen to what God was putting on his heart? What if he would have refused to give up his spot in line for the throne? This all took a LOT of humility on Jonathan’s part. He looked inward, was loyal and sacrificed for the sake of his friend because he had submitted his pride and his heart to the Lord. The first question you need to ask yourself is “Is your heart submitted to the Lord?” It’s hard to embody these qualities if our heart isn’t in the right place. So start there and then ask yourself, “Which of these three areas do I need to be better at?” It could be one of these things or it could be all three. Do you need to be better at looking inward and past the physical differences? Do you need to stop gossiping and go first to your friend when you hear something about them? Or do you need to put aside your pride to truly love your friend sacrificially? Today is the day to step up and love those around us like Jonathan did. Pick one of these things, and pick a friend that you need to love better in one of these ways and put it to action this week. **Be a good friend.**

**Kylee: I love this script!! It is super tangible and relevant to a wide range of students and their experiences. I also think you did a great job of pulling super relevant chunks of text to show exactly where Jonathan showed great friendship. Here are a few suggestions just to sharpen some ideas…**

* **For the beginning story I would encourage you to type out a story that you had in mind so student pastors can see where your train of thought is. Also, I wonder if a story about a time when you were a good/bad friend or a story of a friend you’ve had for a long time would tie to the overall theme of the message better.**
* **Under the loyalty section, I think you set it up well to talk about not joining in to gossip but also calling out gossip and stopping it when you see it. If you expand a little in that direction I think that point will hit home even more.**
* **I would tie in the idea of Jonathan being a “supporting cast member” one or two more times either throughout or at the end just to tie back to the series.**

**Scott: THP might be a little too elementary? I like the simplicity but think it could be developed a little.**

**Tying in the series idea to the teaching would make it feel a little more in line with the rest.**

**Jonathan was a supporting cast in David’s story. What would have happened if he didn’t play his part? What if he refused to take a backseat to David? What if he tried to insert his own pride into God’s plan? That had to take a TON of humility! That thought might help land the plane and prep students for the action step**

**Kent: Such a good script. I really like all that you have here. I am a fan is the simple THP.**

**Type out your opening story so that again helps everyone with direction.**

**I would love another personal story about friendship… bad or good to help illustrate one of your subpoints. I think it would help bring some of those points to life.**

**Tie in the series title… supporting cast**

**Is there an action step that we can help students key in on?? what would one thing that students could do because of this message to help be a better friend??**

**Harrison: I agree with others saying writing out the introduction story is helpful. Doing this also helps give people an idea of how to make smooth transitions.**

**Adding a little bit about people wearing undergarments would let the audience know Johnathan Did not strip nude**

**Adding in a short story example unter the three main points where you did that or someone did that for you would make it feel more personal.**

**In the look inward section, a little bit of teaching people how to connect with those people who are super different would be beneficial. The sports bros dont always know how to interact with a band kid and the band kid doesnt know how to interact with a gamer kid.**

**Restating the THP a few more times throughout would help people remember it. I would try to add at least 4 more.**

**Aaron: Court had me read over this before she turned it in, so I have already given my feedback:)**

**Ryan: Courtney, great job on making this accessible. Not simple or dumbed down, but accessible. Sometimes in our language with writing sermons, we don’t make our ideas as accessible as they should be. One thing to build on would be a life group or community is king connection. Like, this could be what friendship within the life group context can look like.**