

MESSAGE NOTES

VALLEY OF VISION

Part 5: Spiritual Friendship

1 Samuel 18-20

August 18/19, 2018

Pastor Daniel Hahn

We may have numerous casual acquaintances and several good friends in life, but finding someone who is like-souled is a most unusual discovery. And when it happens, both parties sense it. Neither has to convince the other that there is a oneness of spirit. It is like being with someone who lives in your own head — and visa, versa. — Chuck Swindoll

Genuine friends ...

1. will make sacrifices for the good of the other (18:1-4).
2. will courageously defend against an unfair attack (19:4-5).
3. will communicate encouragement when needed the most (20:1-4).

The greatest thing any person can do for another is to confirm the deepest thing in them, to take the time and have the discernment to see what's most deeply there, most fully that person, and then confirm it by recognizing and encouraging it. — Eugene Peterson, Leap Over A Wall

4. will honor commitments even when there are plenty of reasons not to (20:13-15).

Egoland. No, it's not a theme park; it's our homeland, our ecosystem, or what I call the egosystem. We're highly adapted organisms thriving in the egosystem habitat, where the law of the jungle is "What's in it for me?" For example, today's friends are all about networking, and if friends can't advance our career and connect us to sources of power and prestige — if friends can't make the net-work, it's time to net some new friends ... ones that can work to our advantage." — Leonard Sweet, Eleven Indispensable Relationships

5. will be authentic in sharing their thoughts and feelings (20:17, 41).

When your heart is broken, you can bleed all over a friend like this and he will understand. He won't confront you in your misery or share with you three verses, then tell you to straighten up. When a good friend is hurting, let him hurt. If a good friend feels like weeping, let him weep. If a good friend needs to complain, listen. With a real friend, you can be yourself, no matter what that self looks like. — Chuck Swindoll

6. will risk shame, loss, even their lives for the other (20:30-33).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. How would you summarize what we studied at ENCOUNTER on the weekend?
2. Why was David's alliance with Jonathan such an unlikely scenario?
3. What sort of characteristics do you personally look for or value in a friendship?
4. In what ways does community, or spiritual friendship, play an important role in your life?
5. What factors contributed to Saul's anger toward David? What does the character of Saul teach us about the insidious and destructive nature of jealousy?
6. What character quality in Jonathan caused him to support David even if it threatened his own life?
7. What are some of the hindrances to strong supportive friendships in our world today?
8. What effect might this digital era have on friendship — positive or negative?
9. How do you think most people view friendships? Would you say that sacrifice plays a big part in most friendships people have today? Why or why not? What does our culture tend to teach us about the nature of friendship?
10. What part do you think authenticity and a spirit of support play in helping us develop our potentials in Christ?
11. Are there any ways you feel like you could do more to communicate a spirit of both authenticity and support to those you interact with on a regular basis?
12. Are there some practical lessons in this for the way that you relate to others? Are there specific ways you'd like to apply something you've seen in the relationship between Jonathan and David?