

The Three Friends Every Life Needs (2)

The Joy Of the Lord Is Your Strength!

Hardly anything beats a "radiant face"

I want people to experience the *significance of Jesus* and the *joy of His people*!

Prayer:

INTRO:

1. Good morning friends!
2. There's an old idea about friendship:
3. **A friend doubles your joy and cuts your sorrow in half.**
4. When something great happens, you want somebody to share it with.
5. And when life falls apart, you need somebody to help carry it.
6. And yet, we live in a strange moment.
7. ***We have never been more connected, and yet so many people have never felt more alone.***
8. We've got followers, contacts, group texts.
9. We know what people are doing, where they're going, what their kids are doing.
10. But here's the question: **Who really knows you?**
11. Who could you call at 2:00 in the morning?
12. Who can celebrate your success without competing with it?
13. Who will come looking for you when you disappear?
14. And who has enough access to your life to tell you when you're wrong?
15. Those aren't followers.
16. **Those are friends.**
17. As we look at David, we see David the shepherd, giant killer, fugitive, warrior, and king.
18. But there's another part of David's story we can't miss:
19. **God surrounded David with true friends.**
20. I've said before - show me your friends, and I'll show you your future.
21. Well - Show me David's friends, and I'll show you one of the ways God helped David survive.
22. David didn't become David by himself.
23. And neither will you.
24. Today I want to show you **three friends every life needs.**
 - a. A **Samuel** who sees you.
 - b. A **Jonathan** who stands with you.
 - c. And a **Nathan** who tells you the truth.

1. SAMUEL — THE FRIEND WHO SEES WHAT GOD SEES

1. Go back to 1 Samuel 16.
2. God sends Samuel to Jesse's house because one of Jesse's sons will be the next king.
3. Jesse brings out seven sons.

4. One after another, God says: **Not him.**
5. Finally Samuel asks: "Are these all the sons you have?"
6. Jesse basically says: "Well...there is one more."
7. He's out watching the sheep.
8. Think about it.
9. David wasn't rejected after the interview.
- 10. David wasn't invited to the interview.**
11. And that's when God tells Samuel: "People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."
12. Jesse saw a shepherd.
- 13. God saw a king.**
14. Samuel walks over to this teenage shepherd, pours oil over his head, and essentially says:
- 15. "God has put something in you that nobody else sees yet."**
16. That's a Samuel.
17. A Samuel sees the King in the shepherd before anyone else does.
18. Everybody else sees what you are.
19. A Samuel sees **what God is forming you to become.**
20. And years later, when Saul is trying to kill David, 1 Samuel 19:18 says: "David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel at Ramah..."
21. Where does David run when his calling is under attack?
- 22. Back to the person who first recognized it.**
23. Sometimes you need somebody who remembers what God said about you when you've forgotten.
24. A Samuel is usually someone farther down the road - a mentor, pastor, spiritual father or mother.
25. So find somebody whose marriage, leadership, parenting, or walk with Jesus you respect.
26. And ask: "**Can I learn from you?**"
27. But some of you aren't David anymore. **You're Samuel.**
28. So who is the overlooked eighth son in your world?
29. Who needs somebody to say: "**I see something in you.**"
- 30.
31. You need somebody ahead of you who **sees you.**
32. And you need somebody beside you who is **headed in the same direction.**

2. JONATHAN — THE FRIEND WHO STANDS WITH YOU

1. 1 Samuel 18 begins immediately after David kills Goliath.
2. Scripture says: "The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David."
3. Why?
4. I think part of the answer is that **Jonathan recognized something in David that he recognized in himself.**
5. Go back to 1 Samuel 14.
6. Long before Goliath, Jonathan has his own moment of courageous faith.
7. Israel is terrified of the Philistines.

8. Jonathan looks at his armor-bearer and says: "Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by many or by few."
9. In other words: **If God is in this, the odds don't matter.**
10. A few chapters later, Jonathan watches David walk toward Goliath with that same kind of faith.
11. I wonder if Jonathan thought: **"This guy gets it."**
 - a. He believes what I believe.
 - b. He wants what I want.
 - c. He's headed where I'm headed.
12. **Some of the deepest friendships are formed not just because you like the same things, but because you're pursuing the same things.**
13. It's great to have friends who enjoy the same hobbies.
14. But eventually you need friends who don't just **like** what you like.
15. You need friends who **want** what you want.
16. "I want to know Jesus." **"So do I."**
17. "I want a great marriage." **"So do I."**
18. "I want to raise kids who love God." **"So do I."**
19. "I want my life to matter for the Kingdom." **"So do I. Let's go."**
20. Because friendship doesn't just give you companionship.
21. *Friendship gives you direction.*
22. Show me your closest friends and, over enough time, I'll show you where you're probably headed.
23. So ask yourself: Are my closest friends headed where I want my life to go?
- 24.
25. But there's also a warning in this story.
26. Because after David kills Goliath, **two people watch David succeed.**
 - a. Jonathan watches David succeed.
 - b. Saul watches David succeed.
27. Same David.
28. Same victory.
29. Two completely different responses.
 - a. Jonathan moves toward David.
 - b. Saul becomes jealous of David.
30. *Jealously will turn someone you should be celebrating into someone you're competing with.*
31. And here's what's fascinating: Jonathan actually had every reason to feel threatened.
 - a. He was the prince.
 - b. David was going to inherit the throne Jonathan might have expected to receive.
32. But Jonathan doesn't compete with David.
33. Why?
34. Because Jonathan isn't ultimately committed to **his kingdom.**
35. He's committed to **God's kingdom.**
36. **A real friend doesn't have to dim your light to feel better about theirs...**
37. Jealousy is especially dangerous with people whose lives look like ours.
 - a. Someone our age.

- b. Someone in our profession.
 - c. Another parent.
 - d. Another leader.
 - e. They get the promotion.
 - f. Their business succeeds.
 - g. Their kid gets the opportunity.
38. And suddenly their blessing feels like evidence that we've been overlooked.
39. Be careful.
40. **Comparison turns friendship into competitors, and jealously turns their blessing into your burden.**
41. Saul looked at David and thought: **"If he rises, I diminish."**
42. Jonathan looked at David and thought: **"If God is in this, I'm with him."**
43. One of the greatest tests of friendship isn't only: **Will they cry when you lose?**
44. It's: **Can they cheer when you win?**
45. And can you do the same?
46. Your friend's blessing is not evidence of God's neglect of you.
47. So when your friend wins - **Don't become Saul. Be Jonathan.**
48. And Jonathan proves that friendship later.
49. David ends up hiding from Saul in the wilderness.
50. 1 Samuel 23:16 says: **"Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God."**
51. **A Jonathan doesn't just meet you in the palace - He finds you in the wilderness.**
52. And notice what Jonathan does.
53. He doesn't just encourage David.
54. He helps David **find strength in God.**
55. That's the kind of friend you need.
56. Not just somebody you have fun with.
57. **Somebody who makes you want to follow Jesus more.**
58. Someone who doesn't merely say: "You've got this."
59. But: **"God's got you - and I'm going to help you remember that."**
60. You need somebody ahead of you who sees you.
61. Somebody beside you who's pursuing God with you.
62. And you need one more.

3. NATHAN — THE FRIEND WHO TELLS YOU THE TRUTH

- 1. Nathan enters David's life in a completely different season.
- 2. David isn't an overlooked shepherd anymore.
- 3. **He's king.**
- 4. And that's exactly when David needs Nathan.
- 5. **The higher you rise, the fewer people will tell you the truth.**
- 6. David and Bathsheba - we will talk about this in a few weeks.
- 7. David messes up terribly - disastrous sin.

8. David tries to cover it up.
9. Eventually he arranges for someone to be killed.
10. And people knew.
11. Orders were given.
12. Messages were carried.
13. There's a palace full of people around David... *and nobody confronts the king.*
- 14. Until Nathan walks in.**
15. Nathan tells David the story of a rich man who steals a poor man's only lamb.
16. David is furious.
17. And Nathan looks at the most powerful man in Israel and says: **"You are the man."**
18. Guys - That's a TRUE friend.
- 19. Somebody who loves you too much to let you destroy yourself.**
20. Proverbs 27:6 says: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."
21. Some wounds hurt because somebody wants to injure you.
22. Other wounds hurt because somebody wants to **heal you.**
- 23. Flatterers protect your feelings. A Nathan protects your future.**
24. And what separates Nathan from a critic is his goal.
- 25. Nathan wants restoration.**
26. When David finally says: "I have sinned against the LORD."
27. Nathan responds: "The LORD has taken away your sin."
28. This is called - truth and grace.
 - a. Truth without grace crushes.
 - b. Grace without truth enables.
- 29. A godly friend carries both.**
30. David needed somebody who loved him enough to make him uncomfortable.
 - a. So do you.
31. Some of us need to DEPUTIZES people around us:
 - a. "If you see something in my marriage, tell me."
 - b. "If my ego gets out of control, tell me."
 - c. "If I'm becoming somebody you don't recognize, come get me."
- 32. A Nathan is usually invited before they're needed.**
 - a. And don't confuse a Nathan with a critic.
 - b. Nathan isn't trying to humiliate David.
33. He's trying to restore him.
34. A Nathan doesn't say: **"I caught you."**
35. A Nathan says: **"I love you too much to lose you."**

WHO ARE YOUR THREE?

1. David needed a **Samuel** who saw what God was doing in him.
2. A **Jonathan** who was headed in the same direction and stood with him.
3. A **Nathan** who told him the truth.

4. So ask yourself:
5. **Who is my Samuel?**
 - a. Who's ahead of me and sees what God is developing in me?
6. **Who is my Jonathan?**
 - a. Who's beside me, headed in the same direction, helping me find strength in God?
7. **Who is my Nathan?**
 - a. Who has permission to tell me the truth?
8. Maybe you've got three names.
9. Maybe two.
10. Maybe one.
11. Maybe there's a blank.
12. Don't be ashamed of the blank - turn the blank into a prayer!
- 13.
14. But then reverse the question:
 - a. **Whose Samuel am I?**
 - b. **Whose Jonathan am I?**
 - c. **Whose Nathan am I?**
15. Everybody wants great friends.
16. ***Jesus calls us to become great friends.***

THE FRIEND WHO IS ALL THREE

1. And ultimately, each of these friendships points beyond itself.
2. Because generations later, from David's family line came another King.

JESUS IS THE TRUE SAMUEL — HE SEES YOU.

1. Jesus tells Nathanael: "Before Philip called you... I saw you."
2. Before anybody recognized you, **Jesus saw you.**
 - a. People see your past.
 - b. Jesus sees what grace can make you.

JESUS IS THE TRUE JONATHAN — HE CAME FOR YOU.

1. Jonathan went looking for David in the wilderness.
2. **Jesus came looking for us.**
3. Jonathan gave David his royal robe.
4. Jesus, the true King, emptied Himself, took our place, and clothes us in His righteousness.
5. Jesus said: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."
6. And then He did it.

JESUS IS THE TRUE NATHAN — HE TELLS YOU THE TRUTH.

1. Jesus loves you enough to confront your sin.
2. But He doesn't stand at a distance throwing stones.
3. **He walks toward sinners with scars in His hands.**
4. The same Jesus who says: "Go and sin no more"
5. also says: "Neither do I condemn you."
6. Truth and grace.

7. Perfectly.

8.

We started with the idea that a friend **halves our sorrow and doubles our joy.**

1. Jesus does even more.

2. Isaiah says: "Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering."

3. He didn't halve your sorrow.

4. He carried it.

5. And then Jesus says: "I no longer call you servants... I have called you friends."

6. The religious leaders called Jesus **"a friend of sinners."**

7. They meant it as an insult.

8. But that's some of the best news in the Bible.

9. Because we're sinners.

10. And the Friend of sinners came looking for us.

11. So find your Samuel.

12. Build friendships with your Jonathans.

13. Give a Nathan permission to tell you the truth.

14. And become those kinds of friends for somebody else.

15. But don't miss this: Before you can have a Samuel, a Jonathan, or a Nathan, **you need the friend of sinners.**

16. And He has already come looking for you.

17. You were never meant to become who God made you to be alone.

18. And because of Jesus - **you don't have to.**

THE GOSPEL: Jesus Christ is the ultimate hope for every person. Though we are all sinful and our sin separates us from God, God made a way for us to be in right relationship with him again. That way is Jesus. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for our sins. God promises that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ will be saved. This is the good news of the Bible.

COMMUNION: 1 Corinthians 11

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, ^[b] "This is my body, which is ^[c] for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

"May the Lord bless you and protect you;
may the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
may the Lord look with favor on you ^[b]
and give you peace."