



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 9

Key Takeaways:

1. **True friendship requires alignment of souls**—shared values, principles, and faith in God create the foundation for covenant relationships
2. **Covenant loyalty is costly**—it requires sacrificing personal ambition, protecting others even at personal risk, and remaining faithful across generations
3. **Hesed love is active, not passive**—it expresses itself through concrete actions: protection, truthfulness, intercession, and mercy
4. **God honors those who honor His choices**—Jonathan submitted to God's selection of David rather than fighting for his own position
5. **Covenant commitments extend beyond ourselves**—our faithfulness (or unfaithfulness) affects future generations

Discussion Questions:

Icebreaker Question

1. What is one friendship in your life that has required sacrifice or cost you something? What made that friendship worth it?

Understanding the Text

1. What does it mean that "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David"? How does this go deeper than ordinary friendship?
2. Pastor Allen explained that hesed is "steadfast covenant love expressed in loyal action." How is this different from how we typically think of love in our culture today?
3. What was the significance of Jonathan giving David his robe, garments, sword, bow, and belt? What was he communicating through these actions?

Going Deeper

1. Jonathan recognized that David would be king instead of him. How do you think he came to this conclusion? What does his response tell us about his character?
2. Pastor Allen stated that Jonathan "loved David more than his own ambition." What ambitions or positions might God be asking you to surrender for His purposes?
3. How did Jonathan demonstrate covenant loyalty even when it cost him personally? What specific actions showed his faithfulness to the covenant?
4. Compare Jonathan's response to David with Saul's response. What made the difference in how they each saw David?

Personal Application

1. What does hesed loyalty look like in our relationships today? How can we show "steadfast covenant love expressed in loyal action" to:
 - i. Our spouse?
 - ii. Our friends?
 - iii. Our church family?
 - iv. Our children and future generations?
2. Pastor Allen compared Jonathan and David's covenant to the marriage covenant. How does understanding hesed change the way you view marriage commitments?
3. David later honored the covenant by showing kindness to Mephibosheth. How can we honor commitments and show loyalty to people even after the original person we made the commitment to is gone?

Challenge Questions

1. Jonathan had to choose between his father's approval and God's will. When have you faced a similar choice between family loyalty and obedience to God? How did you handle it?
2. The covenant was made "before the Lord", with God as witness and guarantor. How does inviting God into our commitments change the nature of those commitments?

Practical Application Exercise:

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Examine Your Commitments

- List the covenants/commitments you've made (marriage, friendships, church membership, etc.)
- Ask yourself: Am I showing hesed loyalty in these relationships?
- Identify one specific action you can take to demonstrate loyal covenant love

Option 2: Practice Sacrificial Friendship

- Identify a friend who needs protection, encouragement, or intercession
- Like Jonathan, be willing to risk something (time, reputation, comfort) to help them
- Take concrete action this week to demonstrate covenant loyalty

Option 3: Honor Past Commitments

- Think of a promise or commitment you made that you haven't fully kept
- Consider if there's a "Mephibosheth" in your life—someone connected to a past relationship who needs your hesed
- Take steps to honor that commitment, even if circumstances have changed

Option 4: Submit Personal Ambition to God's Will

- Identify an area where your personal ambition might be competing with God's purposes
- Like Jonathan, practice saying, "Not my will, but Yours be done."
- Share this with a trusted friend who can hold you accountable

Reflection Exercise

Take 5-10 minutes of silence for personal reflection:

- Where is God calling me to show chesed loyalty?
- What ambitions or positions might I need to surrender?
- How can I align my soul more closely with God's purposes?

- What covenant commitments have I been neglecting?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank you for your Word and for the example of Jonathan and David.

Give us wisdom to recognize Your choices and purposes, even when they differ from our plans. Grant us the courage to show covenant loyalty, especially when it costs us something. Make us faithful to keep our commitments across time and generations. Shape our hearts to love others as we love ourselves, seeking their good above our own ambition. Holy Spirit, empower us to live this out in our families, friendships, and church.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: The Soul Knit Together

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; Proverbs 17:17; Philippians 2:3-4

Devotional: Jonathan and David's friendship reveals the beauty of souls aligned in God's purposes. The Hebrew word "kashar" describes how their souls were knit together, not merely tied, but aligned parallel to each other, sharing the same passions, principles, and faith in God. True Christian friendship goes beyond surface connection; it requires spiritual alignment where both parties pursue God's will above their own desires.

Reflection: Examine your closest relationships. Are they characterized by mutual pursuit of God's purposes, or merely common interests? Pray for friendships that strengthen your faith and align your heart with God's will

Application: Reach out to a fellow believer this week and intentionally discuss how you can encourage each other's spiritual growth. Practice loving them as yourself through a specific act of selfless service.

Day 2: Covenant Loyalty That Costs

Reading: 1 Samuel 20:12-17; Ruth 1:16-17; John 15:13

Devotional: Jonathan's covenant with David demonstrates hesed—steadfast covenant love expressed through loyal action. This wasn't sentimental friendship; it was binding loyalty that cost Jonathan the throne. He recognized God's choice of David and surrendered his own ambition rather than resisting God's will. Jonathan loved David enough to give up what many would kill to keep.

Reflection: What has your faith cost you? Are you willing to surrender personal ambition when it conflicts with God's purposes? Consider areas where you might be holding onto rights or positions that God is asking you to release.

Application: Identify one area where God may be calling you to sacrificial obedience. Take a concrete step this week to surrender that ambition, relationship, or possession to honor God's will over your own desires.

Day 3: Witness Before the Lord

Reading: 1 Samuel 20:42; 1 Samuel 23:16-18; Matthew 18:19-20

Devotional: David and Jonathan's covenant wasn't merely between two friends; it was made "before the Lord," with Yahweh as witness and guarantor. This transformed their commitment from human promise to sacred obligation. When we make commitments in God's presence, we acknowledge His authority and invite His participation in keeping our word. Their covenant was renewed even when circumstances changed, showing that godly commitments endure beyond temporary emotions or convenience.

Reflection: How seriously do you take commitments made before God? Consider your marriage vows, church membership, or promises to fellow believers. Are you keeping covenant even when it's difficult?

Application: Review commitments you've made before God. If you've broken any, confess and seek restoration. Renew one specific commitment this week with intentional action that demonstrates your faithfulness.

Day 4: Generational Faithfulness

Reading: 2 Samuel 9:1-13; Psalm 100:5; Lamentations 3:22-23

Devotional: Jonathan's covenant extended beyond his lifetime to include their descendants. Years later, King David sought out Mephibosheth, Jonathan's crippled son, not from generosity, but from covenant obligation. David's hesed toward Jonathan's family demonstrates that God's people keep their word across generations. This mirrors God's own faithfulness; His mercies are new every morning, and His covenant love extends to a thousand generations of those who love Him.

Reflection: What spiritual legacy are you leaving for the next generation? Are you teaching others about covenant faithfulness through your example? Consider how your commitments today will impact those who come after you.

Application: Identify someone from a previous generation's "family," perhaps the children of a mentor, pastor, or friend, and show them practical kindness this week in honor of

that relationship.

Day 5: Choosing God's Will Over Personal Ambition

Reading: 1 Samuel 23:16-18; Luke 22:42; Philippians 2:5-8

Devotional: Jonathan's greatest act of faith was telling David, "You will be king, and I will be next to you." He chose to serve God's anointed rather than compete for position. This mirrors Christ, who emptied Himself and took the form of a servant. Jonathan saw David not as a rival but as God's legitimate choice, and he aligned himself accordingly. True spiritual maturity recognizes God's choices and submits to them, even when they displace our own plans.

Reflection: Where are you resisting God's choices because they threaten your position or plans? Are you competing with someone God has chosen, or supporting them? Ask God to reveal any areas of spiritual rivalry in your heart.

Application: Identify one person God has elevated or chosen in your sphere of influence. This week, intentionally support and encourage them rather than competing. Pray for grace to celebrate God's work in their life as Jonathan celebrated David.