June 21, 2026

Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
The writer of Proverbs understood that friendship has two encouraging components: True friends give valuable advice, even if it's not easy to give or take

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Dear God, search my heart regarding my friends. Please help me provide Christ-centered counsel to them and receive godly wisdom from them

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity
(Prov 17:17 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Nov 10, 2022)

Series: The Testimony of Faithful Witnesses

UNIT 1: Faithful Witnesses Model God's Fidelity

NEXT WEEK

Amos, the Courageous Prophet
(Amos 1:1; 2:11-12; 3:7-8; 7:10-15)

Jonathan and David, Resolute Friends
1 Sam 18:1-4; 20:16-17,32-34,42; 2 Sam 1:25-27; 21:7

Lesson Background and Introduction

The books of 1 & 2 Samuel introduce three key figures: Samuel, Saul, and David. The boy Samuel grew up to be an important transitional figure, taking Israel from the era of judges to the time of Israel's united monarchy. He first anointed Saul, then David as king (1 Samuel 10:1; 16:13). Kings at this time (eleventh century BC) were seen especially as military protectors, able to lead their subjects in battle (example: 8:11-12). Before Saul's disastrous rule ended, God prepared David to take over as leader in Saul's place. The secret anointing of David and plan to make him king created a potential conflict with Saul and his household, especially with Saul's firstborn son and heir, Jonathan. Jonathan had the most to lose and could have easily rejected God's choice of king. Jonathan is first mentioned in 1 Samuel 13-14, where he proves to be an impressive captain of fighting men. In one exploit, Jonathan and his armor-bearer manage to single-handedly defeat about twenty Philistines, turning the tide in favor of the Israelites (1 Samuel 14:1-14). Jonathan speaks like a virtuous leader, one who knows "nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few" (14:6; compare 17:45). But God's choice of David, "a man after [God's] own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14), interrupts the dynastic rule and demonstrates that God is in charge. Both then and in the future, the rise and fall of rulers and empires is subject to God's control (see Daniel 7:27).

Friendship like that between David and Jonathan doesn't just happen, it must be cultivated. The world has a way of predisposing people toward self-gain and narcissism, leaving us disinclined to connect with one another, much less show the kind of loyalty that Jonathan shows at his own expense. But the church can become a place where people are willing to serve one another sacrificially. It begins with individuals who look beyond their own needs. Simple acts of friendship and loyalty can make a difference: inviting someone to coffee, checking in with a friend, sharing a meal, and keeping confidences are just a few examples. These simple actions can open the door to a deeper relationship wherein both people recognize the dignity of the other and serve one another under Christ. This is not a foolproof strategy; some will not reciprocate. But Christians are called to hospitality (Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 5:10; Hebrews 13:2; 3 John 8; see lesson 13), even generosity and love for enemies (Proverbs 25:21; Matthew 5:43-44). If kindness goes unreciprocated, it remains kindness well-spent.

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Unexpected Friend (1 Sam 18:1-4)

Friendship that is close (1-2)

Friendship with God first (James 2:23)
Friendship that comforts during grief (Gen 38:12)
Friendship that loves at all times (Prov 17:17)
Friendship that never forsakes (Prov 27:10)
Friendship that provides earnest counsel (Prov 27:9)
Friendship that provides strength (Eccl 4:9-12)

Made with love (3)

Love because it is the only thing that counts in the Kingdom of God (Gal 5:6)
Love because love comes from a pure heart and good conscience (1 Tim 1:5)
Love because it prompts all to do good works (Heb 10:24)
Love because love is commanded (Heb 13:1)
Love because it means that we love God (1 John 4:21)
Love because love compels us to edify others (John 21:15-18)

Friendship pledging protection (4)

Protection that only God can provide (Ps 18:2)
Protection in the form of refuge in God (Ps 46:1-3)
Protection from calamity (Prov 14:32)
Protection in the form of deliverance (2 Cor 1:10)

Unwavering Alliance (1 Sam 20:16-17, 32-34, 42)

An alliance through a covenant vow (16-17)

A vow that must be kept (Eccl 5:4)
A vow that must never be slow about fulfilling (Deut 23:21)
A vow that must be kept even when it hurts (Ps 15:2-4)
A vow that must not be hastily or rashly made (Prov 20:25)

An alliance knowing about anger of others (32-34)

Anger from a hot-tempered man (Prov 22:24-25)
Anger that makes one a fool (Eccl 7:9)
Anger from a wicked heart (Eccl 9:3)
Anger against an innocent man (Luke 23:22)

An alliance that seeks peace (42)

Peace through trust in God (Rom 15:13)
Peace through the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22)
Peace that transcends all understanding (Phil 4:7)
Peace that comes through faith (Rom 5:1-2)

Unbroken Promise (2 Sam 1:26-27; 21:7)

A promise that ends grief (26-27)

There is a promise from God that those who mourn will be comforted (Matt 5:4)
Christians are commanded to share in the grief of others (Rom 12:15)
Share other's grief by reminding the griever that grief is only temporary (John 16:22)

A promise that provided for descendants (7)

Provision of kindness (Josh 2:12-14)
Provision of safety (Josh 9:18)
Provision of friendship (Prov 27:10)