

PUTTING OTHERS FIRST: THE EXAMPLE OF JONATHAN

Review: Last week, we talked about considering others before yourself.

Intro: We want to examine the friendship of Jonathan with David and see how Jonathan was a living example of putting others first.

I. Background information on Jonathan

- A. Jonathan is the son of King Saul. He should be the heir to be the next king.
- B. Jonathan has a strong faith in God. (I Samuel 14:6)
 - 1. The Israelite army is in battle with the Philistines. Jonathan's father, King Saul, is paralyzed by fear and is afraid to act & command his army. (I Samuel 13:7b)
 - 2. Jonathan trusts God and attacks the Philistines with just his armor bearer, and he kills 20 men (I Samuel 14:14). As a result, fear falls on the Philistines, and God brings the Israelite army a great victory.
- C. Because of King Saul's disobedience to God, King Saul loses the kingship, and David, a common shepherd boy, is anointed to be the next king of Israel. (I Samuel 16:1-13)
- D. King Saul was jealous of David and his victories in battle. (18:9)
King Saul was afraid of David because God was with him. (18:12)
King Saul wanted to kill David. (18:25)
King Saul hated David. (18:29)

II. The selfless acts of Jonathan

- A. Jonathan was the rightful heir of the throne, and yet David was anointed as king.
- B. Jonathan was part of the royal family, and yet David is getting all the attention of the people.
- C. All through high school, Scott was the most popular guy in school. He was a good student and a good athlete, and everyone in school wanted to spend time with him. That was until his junior year. That year, a new family had moved into town, and when Scott started school that year, he kept hearing about Craig. Craig was good looking, extremely athletic, and everyone instantly loved him. As a result, Scott's popularity began to decline. Even some of his closer friends started to hang with Craig. Craig was a better athlete than Scott, and instead of being excited that they would now be a state contender, he was upset. He cared more about himself than he did anything else.
- D. How do you think you would have felt if you were Jonathan?
- E. How did Jonathan act toward David?
 - 1. Instead of seeing David as a rival, he saw him as a friend. (18:1,3)
 - 2. Instead of seeing his riches & his status as something to hold tightly to, Jonathan saw them as something to give away to bless others.
 - a. In I Samuel 18:4, Jonathan gave David his kingly robe & tunic which would signify his kingly position.

- b. He took off his sword, his bow & his belt which would have signified his status as a warrior.
- 3. When King Saul, Jonathan's dad, attacked David out of jealousy, Jonathan stood up for David and spoke well of him. (19:4)
- 4. Jonathan protected David and spared his life. (20:42)
- F. Why do you think Jonathan didn't respond like Scott or King Saul? (I Samuel 23:15-18)
 - 1. Jonathan trusted in God and found his strength from God. (23:16)

Where do you find your strength?

 - a. Do you find it in your accomplishments?
 - b. Do you find it in what people say about you?
 - c. That works until someone comes along like David – with greater accomplishments. (18:7) "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten of thousands."

-with greater praise from people

And there will always be someone greater!
 - 2. Jonathan didn't look at building up his kingdom but in building up God's Kingdom. He said to David, "You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you." (23:17)

How can Jonathan say that to David?

 - a. He didn't find his identity in his position.
 - b. He was okay being second because his focus wasn't on his kingdom but God's kingdom.
 - c. John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Christ, and as a result, he had lots of people following after him.

But when Jesus showed up, they stopped following John and started to follow Jesus. John didn't get all upset about that; instead, he said, "He (Jesus) must become greater, I must become less." (John 3:30)
 - d. Even Jesus said, "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many."

III. Application

- A. How do you respond when you don't get what you want?
- B. How do you respond when you feel like you are being treated unjustly?
- C. Whose kingdom are you living for?

If you are living for God's kingdom, you will put others first.

Remember Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. "If it's possible, let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless not My will but Thy will be done."
- D. When people see how you treat others, do they see that you're living for God's kingdom or your own kingdom?

IV. Conclusion

What does it mean to put others first?

What do we learn by Jonathan's example?

A. He cared about others more than he cared about himself. (1 Samuel 18:1)

Not:

1. I call the front seat in the car.
2. No, you can't watch that TV show; I'm watching my show.
3. I don't care what you think; my way is best.
4. I'm not playing on that team because I don't want to lose.
5. Mom, she wore my shirt and didn't ask.

B. Jonathan saw his possessions as a way to bless others.

C. Jonathan was willing to serve David. He protected him.

Tell story of Don Springstead caring for his wife for years who had MS. (feed, clothe, bathe, care)

D. Jonathan encouraged in relationship with God.