



4Love Series (Week 2)

Living into the Power of Friendship

1 Samuel 18:1-6; John 15:12-17

OPEN

Describe the importance of good, authentic friendships in your life.

Go back in time. How have friends in each season of life been meaningful to you?

DISCUSS

What do you think about this quote by Lewis Smedes:

*"We all want someone who knows us better than anyone else does, and yet accepts us, enjoys us, needs us, holds nothing back from us... [Someone with whom] we talk about things we don't talk about with other people... [and] do things that we don't want to do with anyone else, at least not as much as we want to do them with each other... I'm not talking about a casual friend, or a friendly acquaintance, but a **best friend**... someone who is there for us when we want to be near... [and] who sticks with us even when being our friend costs them something."*

- Do you think these kinds of relationships are growing in number or becoming harder to find today?
- If not growing, what do you see impacting these deeper kinds of friendships today?

Friendship in the Bible

- There are many friendships in the Bible. Read 1 Sam 18:1-6 and John 15:12-17 and answer these questions:
 - Who are the friends?

- Describe the friendship from the text and what you remember from the weekend message.
- What do the friends do for one another?

How many friendships do you have like these (and how Proverbs 18:24 describes deep friendship)?

Are friendships always about being nice to the other? What else do loving friendships (*philia*) bring in addition to “niceness”. Have you ever experienced a good friend challenging you?

Jesus models all four expressions of love to us in his life. As we think about friendship today, how does Jesus model friendship with his disciples and others he encounters in the stories of the Gospels?

Do you feel we love people—even our friends—well today? How could you envision deeper friendships (partners for the journey) helping bring health and good fruit to the lives of others (your friends)?

NEXT STEPS

- Read the story of friendship between David and Jonathan in 1 Sam 18-20.
- Reflect on your *philia* friendships? What do you observe about the friendships in your life (with both yourself and friends in view)?
- Thinking of your friendships today, what would it mean for you to love your friends more intentionally for their sake? Could you invite them to love you more intentionally?