

## COVENANTAL FRIENDSHIPS

\_\_\_\_\_ can be a cause of premature death; increases your risk of heart disease, cancer, depression, diabetes, and suicide; and is “associated with a reduction in lifespan similar to that of smoking 15 cigarettes a day.”

In Genesis, we see that humanity is made in the image of God.

Who is God? Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We were made \_\_\_\_\_ a relationship, and \_\_\_\_\_ a relationship.

**Tim Keller:** Ultimate reality is a community of persons who know and love each other. That is what the universe, God, history, and life is all about. If you favor money, power, and accomplishment over human relationships, you will dash yourself on the rocks of reality... We believe the world was made by a God who is a community of persons who have loved each other for all eternity. We were made for mutually self-giving, other-directed love. Self-centeredness destroys the fabric of what God has made.

We are more connected than ever before, but we are lonelier than ever before.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of friendships cannot replace the depth of friendships.

God has given us the antidote for loneliness: it's called friendship.

Unfortunately, as men, we're not the best at deep, passionate, intimate friendships with other men.

Compare your friendships to your wife's friendships.

We tend to gravitate towards friends in similar life stages, with similar hobbies or interests.

There seems to be a societal stigma around men who have intimate relationships with other men.

But in David and Jonathan, we see the Biblical blueprint for a healthy, strong friendship between men.

**1 Samuel 18:1-5:** As soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

## David and Jonathan share a Covenantal Friendship, as opposed to a Contractual Relationship

A \_\_\_\_\_ is an agreement between two parties that establishes parameters and conditions for a relationship.

It often involves an “if/then statement.”

In a \_\_\_\_\_, both parties agree to hold up their ends, regardless of whether the other party keeps their part of the agreement.

It’s sacrificial, selfless, and enduring.

We should have this kind of relationship with our spouse, but also with other men.

### Three Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. Do I have a friend like that?
2. Am I a friend like that?
3. How can I change my story and change my friendships to be more Covenantal?

## THREE QUALITIES OF A COVENANTAL FRIENDSHIP

### 1. A COVENANTAL FRIENDSHIP IS \_\_\_\_\_.

David and Jonathan were primarily interested in the well-being of the other person. Jonathan is the son of King Saul and would logically be in line to become the next king.

But Jonathan’s covenant with David supersedes his kingly ambitions.

Saul wants to kill David, but Jonathan isn’t convinced. So, they develop a plan.

**1 Samuel 20:18-22:** Then Jonathan said to him, “Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty. On the third day go down quickly to the place where you hid yourself when the matter was in hand and remain beside the stone heap. And I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a mark. And behold, I will send the boy, saying, “Go, find the arrows.” If I say to the boy, “Look, the arrows are on this side of you, take them,” then you are to come, for, as the Lord lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger. But if I say to the youth, “Look, the arrows are beyond you,” then go, for the Lord has sent you away.

Sure enough, Saul becomes angry at David’s absence, proving to Jonathan that he has ill intent.

**1 Samuel 20:30-34:** Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, “You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die.” Then Jonathan answered Saul his father, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So, Jonathan knew that his

father was determined to put David to death. And Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David because his father had disgraced him.

In shooting the arrow, Jonathan has a decision: shoot the \_\_\_\_\_ and potentially become king or shoot past it and honor his covenant by protecting David. Jonathan chooses to be selfless.

## 2. A COVENANTAL FRIENDSHIP \_\_\_\_\_.

**Aristotle:** Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit. Your closest friend is the one who has always been the first to call.

**Proverbs 17:17:** A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

David is forced to live a life on the run, hiding from King Saul.

But Jonathan endures, seeking David out, and reminding him of their covenant.

**1 Samuel 23:15-18:** David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh. And Jonathan, Saul's son, rose and went to David at Horesh and strengthened his hand in God. And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Saul my father also knows this." And the two of them made a covenant before the Lord. David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

More tension, difficulty, and endurance in our friendships means they will go the distance (like a bow and arrow)

\_\_\_\_\_ is necessary in any good friendship.

If you haven't fought with a friend, you don't have a friend.

## 3. A COVENANTAL FRIENDSHIP IS CENTERED ON \_\_\_\_\_.

We tend to have two selves: one inside of church, and one outside of church.

Your faith, your belief in God, and the work He is doing in your life is meant to permeate into every sector of your existence: your family, your work, your hobbies, and your friendships.

**1 Samuel 20:42:** Go in peace, because we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, "The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever."

Jonathan helps David to have a Godly perspective on his situation.

You need friends like that.

Jesus has given us the New Covenant, not the New Contract.

Covenantal Friendships preach and reflect the \_\_\_\_\_.