



small groups

Discussion Guide



BE Faithfully Present In Friendships

1 Sam. 18:1-4

Ice Breaker

(5 minutes)

Discuss

- Who was your best friend in high school? What did you like most about that person?
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Lesson Review

(45 minutes)

Betsy shared a story about her Crossfit community and how they cheer one another on. Often, the difference between that kind of community and our Christian community is not in how well we support one another but in what we attempt. "Crossfit Tim" was trying to do something very hard. But in our small groups, we don't let others see us attempting hard things. The difference is not in the amount of support but in the size of our ambition.

Discuss

- What hard things do you feel called to do?
- How can your community support you in that?

Betsy said that Jonathan loved his friend in three ways:

1. Jonathan Cared For David

Read 1 Sam. 18:1-4

In “upgrading” his shabby, shepherd-boy clothing, Jonathan was giving David honor. He was covering his weakness. He was helping equip him to do hard things.

Discuss

- Who are you equipping for service in the kingdom of God? Who’s equipping you?

2. Jonathan Was Candid With David

This is the most difficult of Betsy’s three points. We don’t want to be candid with one another because we’re afraid of hurting one another’s feelings.

Read 1 Sam. 19:1-2 and Prov. 27:6

Betsy said, "When wounds are needed and all you give is sweetness, you are positioning yourself as an enemy." She mentioned three times when it’s appropriate for us to “wound” our friends:

- When they’re engaged in destructive behavior
- When their soul is shrinking
- When they’re retreating from authentic community

Discuss

- Do any of these apply to you or someone in your group? Speak candidly about it.

3. Jonathan Committed To David

Betsy said, "All life-giving relationships are born of self giving love." In the example from 1 Samuel, Jonathan surrendered his status as prince to David.

Discuss

- Who in your life has surrendered status to be your friend?

Four times in their relationship, Jonathan made a verbal or symbolic commitment to David.

Read 1 Sam. 18:3, 20:16-17, 20:42, and 23:15-18

Application

(10 minutes)

Make a commitment

This might seem scary or even awkward, but commitment is foundational to growing the healthy relationships in your small group. Your level of connection and commitment will vary for each relationship in your life, but for all of the relationships in your small group, it would be appropriate to make the commitment below. Read the agreement on the next page out loud in your group. Then ask everyone to sign. If someone isn't comfortable signing, don't force them. Talk about their reasons without shaming them. As the group leader, think about what to do with the signatures you gather.

Our Small Group Commitment

We commit not to drift out of community with this group. We commit to meeting together regularly and sharing our hearts. If we ever decide to move away from this community – by joining another church, or another small group, or any other place of connection – we will do so prayerfully and purposefully, and will show respect to those we leave. We will not simply stop showing up. We will not retreat from the hard work of loving one another in obedience to Jesus' command.

Bonus Reading

Before David showed his famous courage, Jonathan did. Read about the courageous acts of both men in the verses below.

- **Jonathan fights when others won't: 1 Samuel 13:5-8 and 14:1-23**
- **David faces a giant: 1 Samuel 17**