

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 10TH, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

QUESTIONS (1 SAMUEL 20:1-11)

WHAT?

David is still running from Saul's jealous rage. He finds Jonathan and asks: "What have I done?". His questions are unanswerable because his innocence is already clear. Jonathan's first reaction is denial because he believes his father tells him everything.

- **We shouldn't be so quick to dismiss the enemy before we know the details.**

A CLEARER PERSPECTIVE

As the target of Saul's spear, David has a keener insight into the situation. He believes Saul wouldn't tell Jonathan because Jonathan may take David's side. Saul has denied God and deceived his son. Jonathan still believes that his father may repent and do the right thing.

- **We shouldn't be so quick to accuse before we know the details.**

THE TEST

Despite his beliefs, Jonathan is willing to find the truth (by telling a lie). David would skip the New Moon feast at the king's table, and the king's reaction to his absence would reveal the truth.

- **This was David's plan, not God's. The truth would have exposed Saul's heart as clearly as the deception devised by David and Jonathan.**

WHO?

David must know what to do next if the night goes as planned. Jonathan commits to tell David, even if his father has evil intentions.

- **Sometimes, the most challenging thing we will do is to admit that we or others have sinned. As believers, we should not hide sin. We should confess it and seek the forgiveness and healing that God will give.**

COVENANT (1 SAMUEL 20:12-24A)

JONATHAN'S PROMISE

This passage is Jonathan's monologue of commitment to finding the truth and protecting David. Even if the truth would lead to his death, he will find a way to tell David.

- **In a culture that uses deception to sell, control, and abuse, are we willing to share the truth that has set us free to give, serve, and protect?**

JONATHAN'S REQUEST

Jonathan knows that the Lord was with David and God's Spirit had left his father. He humbly asks that David remember his family and show kindness to them.

- **Jonathan may already know that his father will soon face judgment, but still holds out hope for his family. Have we given up? Are we still praying?**

JONATHAN'S HEART

As much as he loved his own family and was willing to give his life for them, Jonathan loved David. He trusted King David would spare his family when he came to power.

- **It may seem that David and Jonathan's relationship is unusual. Why? What has happened to our hearts that we do not have this authentic relationship with other believers?**

JONATHAN'S PLAN

Jonathan shares a simple plan to communicate Saul's intentions. Arrows too far: RUN AWAY! Arrows too close: COME HOME!

- **Most importantly, Jonathan knows that God will be a witness to his sincerity and commitment to their friendship.**

FAMILY (1 SAMUEL 20:24B-34)

SUPPER TIME

Saul is ready for supper with his bodyguard beside him and Jonathan across the table, but David's seat is empty. By the second day of the feast, Saul asks why "Jesse's son" is missing.

- **By not calling him David or even his son-in-law, Saul has revealed his disrespect and contempt for David.**

THE STORY

Jonathan attempts to tell the story that David had suggested, and he adds a few extra words to make it more reasonable to his father.

- **It doesn't matter how much we "dress up" a lie; it's still a lie. Saul sees through this one. Who are we trying to deceive? God? Ourselves? Satan?**

SAUL BECAME ANGRY

It wasn't the lie that made Saul angry; it was the truth. He knew that Jonathan was protecting David. Saul's rage led him to reject Jonathan, deny that he was his son, and demand the death of David.

- **Continually rejecting God will result in rejecting what is good and truthful, and true motives will eventually be revealed.**

"JONATHAN ANSWERED HIS FATHER"

Jonathan was hearing what he had hoped wasn't true, so he tried again to counter his father's statement. Then, he became the target of Saul's rage. He had the proof that he needed, and it broke his heart.

- **Too often, people rejoice when someone's sin is exposed. Wisdom with compassion should be our response.**

ARROWS (1 SAMUEL 20:35-42) IN THE MORNING

Jonathan had spent the night knowing what must be done. David had spent the night waiting for the verdict. Jonathan shot the arrow and told the boy, "Hurry up and don't stop!" It was as much for David to hear as it was for the boy. As he sends the boy away, David comes back into the picture.

FELL TO THE GROUND

This would not be the final goodbye for these two men of God, but the reality that David would be a fugitive and Jonathan would be the son of David's pursuer was overwhelming. Jonathan had defied his father. David would be on the run. It was not the life they had hoped for. David was leaving a wife, a king, and a true friend.

ONE LAST WORD

Life was changing and would become more challenging for each of them. One thing they knew: the Lord had heard their words and saw their hearts.

- **Life will have many twists and turns. Knowing that we have desired to follow Christ will strengthen our faith and give us courage for the next chapter.**

LISTEN

- Everyone has a story to tell.
- **Before we jump in or walk away, we must be ready to listen.**
- **Any action before discernment can lead to false judgment. Anything we say or do must come from a pure motive. Are we speaking the truth in love?**

AUTHENTIC LOVE

- Truth and Love are not mutually exclusive.
- **Yes, sometimes the truth hurts. We don't tell the truth to injure; we tell the truth to reveal a path to repentance and healing.**
- **We must be willing to be held accountable and to lovingly hold each other accountable.**

CHAPTERS

- Each step we take, alone or together, leads us to the next step and the next chapter.
- **Some of our life chapters are easy, and some seem overwhelming.**
- **How we see our story unfold will depend on whom we follow. Have we found the truth, strength, and courage to continue? We will if we follow Christ into our next chapter.**