

## 1 Samuel 20 – Getting Behind God’s Work Is More Important Than Me

September 18, 2022

*Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came and said before Jonathan, “What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin before your father, that he seeks my life?” 1 Samuel 20:1 (ESV)*

*And he said to him, “Far from it! You shall not die. Behold, my father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me. And why should my father hide this from me? It is not so.” 1 Samuel 20:2 (ESV)*

*But David vowed again, saying, “Your father knows well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he thinks, ‘Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.’ But truly, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death.” 1 Samuel 20:3 (ESV)*

*Then Jonathan said to David, “Whatever you say, I will do for you.” 1 Samuel 20:4 (ESV)*

*David said to Jonathan, “Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit at table with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field till the third day at evening. If your father misses me at all, then say, ‘David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the clan.’ If he says, ‘Good!’ it will be well with your servant, but if he is angry, then know that harm is determined by him. 1 Samuel 20:5–7 (ESV)*

*Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day.  
Psalm 81:3 (ESV)*

*Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of the LORD with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself, for why should you bring me to your father?” 1 Samuel 20:8 (ESV)*

**Deal Kindly** — Hesed, it means loyal love. It is the kind of love we should find from our spouse. It is the kind of love Jesus offers to all of us.

*And Jonathan said, “Far be it from you! If I knew that it was determined by my father that harm should come to you, would I not tell you?” 1 Samuel 20:9 (ESV)*

*Then David said to Jonathan, “Who will tell me if your father answers you roughly?” And Jonathan said to David, “Come, let us go out into the field.” So they both went out into the field. And Jonathan said to David, “The LORD, the God of Israel, be witness! When I have sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or the third day,*

behold, if he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send and disclose it to you? But should it please my father to do you harm, the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also if I do not disclose it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. May the LORD be with you, as he has been with my father. 1 Samuel 20:10–13 (ESV)

God often works through people that let go of their ego and their time to get behind what God is doing instead of focusing on what is best for them.

If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the Lord, that I may not die; and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.” 1 Samuel 20:14–15 (ESV)

And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the LORD take vengeance on David’s enemies.” And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul. 1 Samuel 20:16–17 (ESV)

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.” 1 Samuel 23:17 (ESV)

But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Saul’s son Jonathan, because of the oath of the LORD that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 2 Samuel 21:7 (ESV)

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. 1 Samuel 20:18–22 (ESV)

And as for the matter of which you and I have spoken, behold, the LORD is between you and me forever.” 1 Samuel 20:23 (ESV)

...so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,... Philippians 2:10 (ESV)

So David hid himself in the field. And when the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food. The king sat on his seat, as at other times, on the seat by the wall. Jonathan sat opposite, and Abner sat by Saul’s side, but David’s place was empty. Yet Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought, “Something has happened to him. He is not clean; surely he is not clean.” 1 Samuel 20:24–26 (ESV)

But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David’s place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, “Why has not the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?” Jonathan answered Saul, “David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem. He said, ‘Let me go, for our clan holds a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your eyes, let

me get away and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table." 1 Samuel 20:27–29 (ESV)

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? 1 Samuel 20:30 (ESV)

For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established... 1 Samuel 20:31 (ESV)

...Therefore send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die." 1 Samuel 20:31 (ESV)

Then Jonathan answered Saul his father, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" 1 Samuel 20:32 (ESV)

But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. 1 Samuel 20:33 (ESV)

I am sure that when Saul hardened his heart against God and refused to repent he never envisioned his sin leading him to attempt multiple murders, even attempting to murder his own son. We must not deceive ourselves into thinking sinful choices don't have consequences.

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Hebrews 3:13 (ESV)

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. 1 Samuel 20:34 (ESV)

In the morning Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and with him a little boy. 1 Samuel 20:35 (ESV)

And he said to his boy, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the boy came to the place of the arrow that Jonathan had shot, Jonathan called after the boy and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" 1 Samuel 20:36–37 (ESV)

And Jonathan called after the boy, "Hurry! Be quick! Do not stay!" So Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and came to his master. 1 Samuel 20:38 (ESV)

But the boy knew nothing. Only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city." And as soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap and fell on his face to the ground and bowed three times. And they kissed one another and wept with one another, David weeping the most. 1 Samuel 20:39–41 (ESV)

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel?..." 1 Samuel 10:1 (ESV)

Then Jonathan said to David, "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.' " And he rose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city. 1 Samuel 20:42 (ESV)

## Applications

- Jonathan is an example of someone who chose faithfulness to his future king, even when it alienated him from his family or almost cost him his life. Are we living for today for the day we will stand before king Jesus in the future or just the demands we face in life day? Jesus may have been thinking about Jonathan when he said...  
*"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:26 (ESV)*
- Jonathan is an example of what it looks like to keep a covenant when it hurts, not just live for what is convenient. Examples of men and women who keep their covenants instead of living for what is convenient at the moment are in short supply in the marriage and business world. As Christians, we are called to model what it means to keep our covenant promises to others as Jesus keeps his new covenant promise to us.
- Jonathan reminds us that God often accomplishes his work in this world through people who sacrifice their time and their ego to get behind what God is doing. **If I want God to accomplish his work in this world through my life, it begins by sacrificing my time and ego to get behind what God is doing.**

## Life Group Questions

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- What is one thing you didn't understand from the message? What from the message stuck out as important for your life?
- Sometimes we think of our relationship with God as an amazing friendship. How does God's covenant with us go far beyond friendship?
- If you are a Christian, you are a member of God's new covenant people. Read Mark 14:24. How much did it cost Jesus to enter into covenant with you? How does that change the way you think about God's love for you, faithfulness to you, and the safety you can find in him when you go to Jesus in your time of need or failure?
- Jonathan and David's commitment to each other were not normal. They should have been rivals, but they were friends. David would not kill Jonathan but promised to protect him and his family when he came to power. How do David and Jonathan's commitment to each other in spite of so much cultural opposition change the way you view friendship in the modern world?
- It has been said, "Life is not about achieving your goals but about keeping your promises." Do you agree with that statement? When do our promises and goals coincide?
- Read Psalm 15. In this Psalm, David describes the kind of life that pleases God. According to verse 4, how important is it for a godly man or woman to keep their promises, especially when it is hard? What else can you learn about how to live a life pleasing to God from this Psalm?