

GOD THE GOOD SHEPHERD

UNIT ONE: God's Heroes

Lesson 9: Jonathan: A True Friend**CONTENT:**

1. After David killed Goliath, King Saul's son Jonathan made a promise to David that he would always be his friend. He gave him his own robe and weapons.
2. Saul heard the people praising David more than himself and became jealous. He tried to kill David with his spear as David was playing on his harp for him, but David escaped.
3. King Saul talked to his servants and to Jonathan about killing David. Jonathan warned David, and then spoke up for his friend. He was able to make peace between the two.
4. Jesus was the best friend ever. He told us to love one another just as he loved us. He also said that those who make peace are like their Father God.
5. A true friend loves and shares with the other. He is happy when the other does well and is not jealous. A good friend warns the other of danger, even correcting him if he is doing wrong. He tries to make peace. [CCC1823, 1829, 2538, 2553, 2305.]
6. St. John the Apostle is the patron saint of friends. He was a faithful friend to Jesus. He was near Jesus at the Last Supper, and when he was dying on the cross. He looked after Mother Mary after Jesus died. We can ask him to help us be good friends.

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home. Give the extra medal to your friend and share the stories of Jonathan and St. John with him/her.

REFERENCES: 1Samuel 18:1-11, 19:1-7. Matthew 5:9; John 15:12.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts; a 'rakhi'; fevicol, scissors, PER STUDENT: 'medal' pictures (attached), 2 silver-covered circles of card-paper, big enough to make a border around the pictures, safety-pins .

I. STARTER:

[Show a 'rakhi' to the students and ask:]

- Do you know what this is? Who ties it on whom? What does it mean? *[Bring out:]*
In India, a rakhi is tied by a sister on her brother's wrist. By tying it she is saying, "I am your sister. I will pray for you." The brother accepts the rakhi and says, "I will always protect you!" He gives his sister a gift. Raksha-bandhan means 'knot of protection'.
On Friendship Day we also tie 'friendship bands' on other to show that we will be friends always.

II. DEVELOPMENT:

- After David killed Goliath, something like the rakhi custom took place. Saul had a son called Jonathan. When Prince Jonathan saw how brave and good David was, he wanted to be his friend and brother always. (When you love someone, you like to share your things with them, don't you?)
Jonathan went to David and said, "I will be your friend forever!" Then he took off his princely robe and belt and gave them to David. He also gave him his sword and bow.
Then the whole army, King Saul and Prince Jonathan marched back to home. As the people heard them returning they all ran out of their homes onto the road and began to cheer and shout for them.
The women took tambourines and triangles and danced and sang for the brave soldiers who had saved them from the enemy.
At first King Saul was happy. But suddenly he heard the words of the song that the women were singing: *[Try singing it to the students]*

‘Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten-thousands!’
‘Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten-thousands!’

Saul’s smile turned into a frown. A bad feeling entered his heart. “Why should they praise David more than me? He’s just a young boy, and I’m their king!” The whole night jealous and angry thoughts filled his mind. By morning he started shouting like a mad-man.

The family called David. “Play your beautiful music for him and calm him down!” they said. So David sat down and played on his harp for King Saul. But it was no use.

As Saul looked at David a wicked idea came to him. “If I throw my spear at him, I can pin him to the wall and that will be the end of him!” He picked up his spear and threw it with all his might at the boy. But David realised he was in danger. He dodged the spear and it got stuck in the wall.

Although David had escaped Saul’s spear, he was not safe, because the king couldn’t stop hating him. One day, he called all his servants and his son Jonathan and said, “Come, let us think of a good way to kill David!”

What do you think Jonathan did?... He kept quiet, and then as soon as the meeting was over, he ran to look for his friend. “You must leave the palace and hide out in the fields! My father is plotting to kill you.”

When David was safely hidden, he waited till his father was alone and then he tried to talk to him, though he was afraid of his father.

“Father, David has only done good to you. Because of him Goliath is dead and we were able to defeat the enemy. Why should you sin by killing an innocent person?” (Innocent means someone who has done no wrong.)

As Saul listened to his son, he realised that he was speaking what was right. He said, “You are right! I promise that I will not kill David!”

Jonathan ran and called David out of his hiding place. “It’s okay! You are safe! The king has promised not to kill you!” And so David was able to come back to the palace and there was peace between him and the king.

*[Divide the class into 3 groups (or more depending on the numbers) The groups plan and enact:
1. The story of Jonathan’s promise. 2. King Saul’s jealousy at the women’s song and his attack.
3. Jonathan’s attempt to make peace.]*

NEXT CLASS:

[Recapitulate the story and fill in the missing words in the top half of the handout:]

1. DAVID’S FRIEND: Jonathan promised David that he would always be his friend. He gave him his own robe and belt, sword and bow. Jonathan warned David about King Saul’s plan. Then he spoke up for his friend and made peace between them.
 2. DAVID’S ENEMY: King Saul heard the people praising David and he became jealous. While David was playing his harp to calm him down, Saul threw his spear at him and tried to kill him, but David escaped.
- Would you like to be like Jonathan, or Saul? Let’s think about how each of them behaved and find out how to be a true friend, and how we should not behave.

[Let the students suggest actions and attitudes of a true friend. Write them on the board while they write them in the space provided:]

AS A TRUE FRIEND I WILL...

- Be happy when my friend is praised.
(I will not be jealous like Saul but be happy like Jonathan. Jonathan was ready to let David be king instead of him.)
- Show my love by sharing with him.
- Warn my friend when he is in danger.
(Sometimes you may have to warn your friend if he is doing something wrong.)
- Speak up for my friend.
(If I hear others speaking bad things about my friend, I shouldn't join in, but instead I speak something good about him.)
- Make peace between my friends.
(Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.")

- Jesus had a good friend who stood near him when he was in trouble. All the other apostles were too frightened to come near the cross when Jesus was dying, but this one stood close by. Do you know who that was? [Saint John]
- John was a young man compared to the others, but he loved Jesus very much. At the Last Supper he was sitting close to Jesus and at the cross he was there with Mother Mary. Jesus asked him to look after his mother and he did. He is called the 'Saint of Friends'. You can ask him to help you to be a good friend.

III. REFLECTION/DRAMA:

- Jesus was the best friend of all. He left heaven to come and be close to us and show us the way to heaven. He took our punishment and died for us so that our sins could be forgiven. Before that he said, "Love one another as I have loved you." Are you ready to be a good friend like Jesus, and John and Jonathan? Let's ask St. John to help us.

Dear Saint John/
Please pray for me/ to be a good friend to everyone./
Help me to love them/ and share what I have with them./
Help me to speak up for them/ and be with them when they are in trouble./
If they are doing wrong,/ help me to warn them lovingly./
Amen.

IV. ACTIVITY

[Distribute to each child: 2 pictures of St. John, 2 circles of silver card-paper, 2 safety pins. The students cut out the pictures and paste them onto the silver circles. On the reverse side they write the words: SAINT JOHN PRAY FOR ME TO BE A GOOD FRIEND. They pin the 'medals' on.]

Home assignment:

- x Read handout at home. x Give the extra medal to your friend and share the stories of Jonathan and St. John with him/her.