



Episode 6-9: Expectations in Friendships

Resources:

Resources/books

[Friendship Diagram - Gail McGinty](#)

[One Another Verse List](#)

[Getting to the Heart of Friendships - Amy Baker](#)

[Church Membership - Jonathan Leeman](#)

[Rediscover Church - Collin Hansen and Jonathan Leeman](#)

[Relationships: A Mess Worth Making - Paul Tripp](#)

Websites

[Restoration Men's Ministry](#)

Transcript:

Jocelyn: I don't just need to feel better. I need the truth. And ultimately that will make me better.

Janet: I just want to make it as totally simple as possible for ladies to see that the Bible is really applicable to their everyday life.

Jocelyn: When they understand theology, the application flows out of it quickly with joy.

Janet: It is a journey, but even the journey itself is joyful when I'm doing it, holding the hand of my savior and trusting him all along the way. This is the joyful journey podcast, a podcast to inspire and equip women to passionately pursue beautiful biblical truth on their journey as women of God. When you choose truth, you're choosing joy.

Janet: Okay. Welcome back listeners. This is Janet here once again with my friend Leah.

Leah: Hello.

Janet: And Leah is gonna be helping us to discuss a topic that honestly every single one of us should be able to relate to. What are our expectations in friendships. So we're gonna share some of the common struggles that come from having expectations in friendships, and then let's dive into the more beautiful biblical purposes Scripture gives us for our friendships.

Leah: And I really hope that this discussion helps us see why it's natural for us to desire and maintain friendships. While also giving us hope in a topic that's often not easy for some of us to talk about. Because truthfully, if you've ever had a friend or been a friend to someone, you know both how wonderful and how painful a friendship can be.



Janet: Well, and there's something that feels. It almost embarrassing to admit you have expectations in friendships. It's like, I shouldn't be that way, but we do have them. You know. There is something so special to have someone you can laugh with, someone you can be, we want to say completely open with. Someone you can share likes and hobbies with. I can remember in our marriage early on, I was on some social media and somebody was talking about her and her BFF and going to the store. And I remember saying to Brent, I don't have anybody that I would just say, Hey, do you wanna just run to the mall with me? Like for no reason. Like if we don't have, I had a lot of people that were very, very kind to me, but I don't have that. And I still remember him looking at me going, really? And I'm like, well, I know I have you. And I'm like, oh my word Janet. How pathetic is that? But we long for those things. But those same relationships can bring us joy. They can be elusive and make us feel bad if we don't have 'em. And they can bring us a lot of hurt and pain.

Leah: Yeah. And while it's true that a lot of times it's sinful words and actions that commonly cause that kind of hurt in friendships, the expectations that we put on friendships hurt us too.

Janet: Yep. Yep.

Leah: You know, those expectations can cause us to believe we are lacking something that we deserve or are owed by our friends when those expectations aren't met. Now as believers, we all know or should know, that ultimately in Christ we lack nothing.

Janet: Yeah,

Leah: but it doesn't always feel that way.

Janet: Not at all.

Leah: I've always found Psalm 23 verse one, very convicting. It says, the Lord is my shepherd. I lack nothing. Or maybe you're used to hearing it this way, the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.

Janet: But I love it the way you read it the first time. 'cause we go, I shall not want. That means I won't even want things. I won't desire things. But no, I will lack nothing.

Leah: Right. And honestly, no matter what version I read it in, I'm still faced with that fact that this verse is often so not true about myself.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Even though I know the Lord's my shepherd, my provider, my caretaker, my savior, I still find myself feeling that I'm lacking something.



Janet: Yes,

Leah: I do still want.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And more often than not, the things I believe are missing or lacking in my life are often having to do with relationships.

Janet: And you know, not trying to go to another subject. But it's so dovetails with the session we did on dealing with unfulfilled longings. Like there is a desire we have for closeness and intimacy that until I'm with the savior who made me, there will be a longing there. Now the scriptures say, I have no lack. I lack nothing. I need, I have that with the Lord. I'm just not in his presence yet.

Leah: Right.

Janet: So I feel that. So I think we may not know where it's coming from, but I do think a lot, if not all of us can relate to that. So now the question is what do we do? How do we work to combat that? And what are some of those common expectations that we just have?

Leah: Yeah. And you know, based on personal experience with friends in our lives, most of us are gonna walk into friendships with specific ideas of what we want from that relationship.

Janet: And we don't even always consciously admit it to ourselves. Which is the danger. One of the dangers.

Leah: Yeah. We have expectations of what a friendship should look or feel like. And too often we're disappointed by our friends because those expectations aren't met. And like you said, most of us probably don't actually voice those expectations.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: But based on what we believe a friend should be like, they will develop.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: And maybe not immediately, but as time passes in, the relationship, expectations will form in your mind and in your heart. So for example, you might expect a friend to be trustworthy, want to spend time together, like the things you like or be your cheerleader. And for those we consider best friends, we might have even more unspoken expectations. They need to be willing to drop anything to help you.

Janet: Yes,



Leah: be ready to talk whenever you need it. Be quick to step in and take your side in a conflict or be there to always build you up and never put you down.

Janet: Oh, that the first list that you said, I'm like well, yeah. And the second one is like, ouch. We don't want to admit To any of those things. I do remember when our kids were little, we really discouraged the idea of a best friend. Trying to encourage them to enjoy all the friendships God provides. But, it seems to be true, especially of girls. We want that security of a best friend. That's my anchor. I wanna know that I've got that person. And boy, that can really lead to a lot of difficulty. And sometimes it even means I'll stay in the wrong kind of friendships, Because those are my people. And we're there for each other no matter what. and for me, I would definitely now call my husband my best friend. And because of that, I can put those expectations on him. Almost to be like a god-like refuge for me. Always knows what to say. Always ready to hear when I'm struggling, maybe I know I need to go to Jesus, but before Jesus, I go to him. And that's, that's a weight, that's too much even for a married couple in a covenant.

Leah: Let alone a best friend.

Janet: Just a friend. Yeah. So if I think about my expectations, someone I can actually trust, whatever. And you know, am I even that? Someone who will love me no matter what they see in me. And that's just the beginning of what I think I expect in friendships.

Leah: And I like those examples because they're so relatable. Those expectations are so commonly sneaking into my mind too. Whether it be for my husband or the friends that I have in my life.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And you know, while some of those expectations are not wrong things to be hoping for in a friendship.

Janet: Yes. You want people to be trustworthy.

Leah: Right. We commonly though, turn those expectations into needs or demands. And of course, again, we probably don't say or think exactly like this, but it's helpful to think about, I demand you to be a trustworthy friend.

Janet: Ooh.

Leah: I need you to like the things I like. I demand that you drop everything to help me, or I need you to take my side. But just because we don't say or think those thoughts explicitly, that doesn't prevent us from operating as if what we want is vital to the friendship.



Janet: and it's so important because if, we're gonna act out of it, it's good for us to know that that's what's behind it. I remember in our marriage early on, we were, believe it or not, having a disagreement about something. I don't remember at all what it was about. It was way too many years ago, but I do remember this just because it's like, I can't even believe. It came out my mouth, but it's, exactly where I was. Well actually it didn't come out my mouth. I wrote it down because I thought, I'm gonna write down what I'm thinking. And then when you saw it, you're like, that's ridiculous. But here was my thinking that I was acting out of in our relationship and didn't even know it. When he doesn't agree with me, he doesn't really love me. Well, what a ridiculous thing because do I always agree with him, but I love him, but that's how, what I was acting out of. And so it was incredibly painful and hurtful and devastating for him to disagree with me. Because it was a rejection of me. But when I saw it for what it was, now I have an opportunity to go. Is that even true? So it's just very common that we talk about all those kinds of relationships as something we need, or I don't need anybody one way or the other. I need a best friend. I need my friend time, or I don't need any friends.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: But whatever. We're still catching it in term of need.

Leah: A demand, an expectation that we can't live without.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And while God did create us to be in community and to be in relationship with others, nowhere in scripture does God mandate for us to have friends or best friends.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Which I thought was kind of shocking when I first started studying this in the Bible. So when we start thinking about friendships as something we need. And then start believing the expectations we have for those friends, our needs. We dangerously walk the line of making demands of God that he does not promise, and then we're living as if Psalm 23 1 is not true because our eyes are not on our good Shepherd. But rather on the greener grass that we believe is on the next hill over accompanied by a best friend who will do everything we want.

Janet: Yes, yes. And so as believers, we just have to keep reminding ourselves that God has promised to give us everything we do need but not everything I demand or expect. I need a refuge. I do. I need a place of safety. I was designed to need that, but not ultimately in my friendships. My husband and I have been memorizing Psalm 34 and verse seven says, the angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Christ himself, encamps around those who fear him and rescues. That is a safe refuge. I do need that and I have it. And it reminds me that's where I need to go,



not my earthly friendships. And many of them are shadows of this. And it's a beautiful thing when it's a shadow of that. But they are always imperfect, just like I am in my friendships.

Leah: Yeah. That is such a beautiful reminder of who we are supposed to go to for our needs.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: First and only Jesus. He alone is our refuge and our strength. Because he is our God and Savior. He always knows exactly what we need and he promises to provide that. One of my favorite Bible passages that discusses our wants and worries is Matthew chapter six, and here Jesus lovingly encourages those who follow him to not worry about what we perceive as lacking. Comparing us to the flowers of the field and the birds of the air. So Janet, would you mind reading, verses 31 through 33 from Matthew six?

Janet: Oh, absolutely. So do not worry saying What shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear? For the Pagans run after all these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But you seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Leah: Yeah. So if God promises to take care of our needs, we can look at his faithfulness throughout history and choose to trust that he will, even all of our relational needs.

Janet: Whatever is a true need. I love knowing that because what I know about Jesus and his heart I can know this if it would be good for my soul to have this desire like this certain friendship that's a good desire. He will provide it. I don't have to make it happen, and I don't have to be bitter and clamor. I can know if he's not provided it right now, there's something better he's doing, which is frequently what he's doing inside my soul.

Leah: Amen. Yeah. He knows exactly what is best. and it is so hopeful, and helpful to think about that. And one really helpful resource to evaluate whether your view of friendship aligns with what God says about meeting our needs is a diagram that my friend Gail McGinty, who's been a guest on the show before. Has created for counseling, and this diagram compares the world's view of friendship to God's view of friendship.

Janet: Oh, excellent.

Leah: And what I love is that it walks through our expectations. The reality or truth that we're believing, and then the result of those two different views of friendship. So we'll include this diagram in our show notes.

Janet: Yes.



Leah: And it also has a page of scripture references that Gail used to help create that diagram, which I love. And the world's view of friendship on that diagram says that the expectation is: my friend will meet all my needs. She exists for me. The reality or truth that comes from that expectation is my friend will fail or be unable to meet my needs.

Janet: Wow.

Leah: And then the result of viewing friendship that way is I may become demanding or manipulative. I may harbor hurt, anger, bitterness toward my friend. I may sin against my friend in word or deed, and I may abandon the friendship. I may turn my hurt, anger and bitterness inward. But in God's view of friendship, she gives two expectations. First, Jesus Christ will meet all my needs. And second, God has given me to my friend to love and serve. God meets my needs, my fullness overflows to bless my friend.

Janet: I love that.

Leah: I know. And it's so great to see that the reality or truth that comes from that expectation is my friend is unable to meet all my needs just as I'm unable to meet all her needs. And I think that's beautiful. 'cause it's very helpful. Takes a weight off my shoulder.

Janet: I was gonna say, I feel like I can just take a deep breath. Yes. Okay.

Leah: Yes. And the result of living and believing those truths is because my needs are fully met in Christ. I'm free to forgive, love and believe the best about my friend regardless of her failures or shortcomings.

Janet: I love that. I'm so glad you're including that in the show notes. 'cause that would be a good evaluative tool for all of us. And we all need to grow. But we don't always realize when we've moved from, I want to love my friend to. After all I've done for them, I deserve this from my friend. And that chart can really help us think through that.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: As we think on that important gospel truth, Jesus meets all our needs, then we have to start thinking about some other questions like, are you trusting God's provision even for your relationships? as I said earlier am I trusting the Lord's heart that if that relationship is good for me he will provide it. Are there friendships that have you worried or angry because you've set up specific expectations that aren't being met? Are you fearing what might happen if you lose a friend?

Leah: And I'm sure many of us might struggle to answer those questions honestly.

Janet: Yeah.



Leah: And you know, another helpful resource to think through those questions and to evaluate your own heart's view of friendships is Amy Baker's book, *Getting to the Heart of Friendships*.

Janet: Excellent book.

Leah: We can put a link to that in our notes too. And in that book, Amy describes seven common heart orientations toward friendships, and then she spends time going through each of those orientations by looking at the heart's desire, the acceptable cost to get that desire, the biggest nightmare or fear for someone with that desire, what that orientation looks like in action. And I love that she goes through examples of what a day would look like for a friend who's oriented in that way. And then she also explains what others experience in those kinds of relationships.

Janet: I think that's really helpful because there's hope. You know, it would be terrible to go, oh my word, that's me and I'm stuck here. I don't have to be stuck, but I will stay stuck if I can't see it. So I love even the fact that one of them is what is the biggest nightmare or fear? Because I think even if you can't see yourself everywhere else, you know what you fear. And if you're looking at that going, oh. Then maybe I fear that because this is my orientation. So yeah, I highly recommend that book. The reality is we operate out of our hearts, all of us, and when I learn my own temptations and I learn my own heart disposition, I have the opportunity to be more intentional in my friendships. I'm not gonna say, well, that's just how I am. I'm gonna know, okay, here's why I'm doing that. What do I do? I now know something better from God and his word. I might not feel it. I might not be experiencing all of it because quite frankly, I'm not in His presence, right? But I know it, and now I can learn and choose to engage in friendships, out of love for the God who's met all those desires, and now out of love for others instead of out of need.

Leah: Yeah. And thank you so much for sharing that, Janet, because it's just so freeing when we start believing that we don't have to just be the way that we are. God promises to change us, to make us look more like his son.

Janet: I mean, that's the whole point of the gospel is there's something that needs to change. And it can.

Leah: Amen. And Amy's book is just a great starting place to think about what you're desiring and what you believe you need out of your friends. If this is an area you're really struggling with. Or just for all of us, because we're all struggling and we're all friends. You know, too often we're disappointed when friends don't meet our perceived needs. They don't show up, they don't do what we want. They break my trust. They choose others over me. They might end up making fun of us. Fighting with us. And while relational hurt is real, and betrayal and loss are painful, we must guard against viewing the expectations we have for friends as needs, or they start controlling how we feel, what we think, how we respond, how we treat others. When



disappointment and friendship start ruling our hearts and minds, we start living as if we don't believe that God's kingdom and his righteousness are what's most important.

Janet: That's so good. So, okay, after we start by evaluating here is what's going on in my heart, here's what I'm desiring. What can we then do to protect against that and to deal with all those wrong expectations?

Leah: Yeah. And you know, on top of the truth, we've already shared about God's care and provision in our lives. Understanding what the Bible says is the purpose for friendships can work as a guard in our hearts too.

Janet: Well, and obviously to be clear, there isn't just one straightforward definition how to be a friend. In scripture, here's the one thing you do. honestly, we all wish it was. Just tell me what to do. But there are plenty of truths and commands that are, can at least guide us into what does it look like to be godly friends with each other.

Leah: Right. And I also wanna make clear about today's conversation regarding friendships that we're speaking mostly about Christian friends not unbelieving friends. Some of these principles and truths obviously still apply, but when we consider the purposes of friendship, we have to first understand why God created us to be relational. And that starts by thinking beyond just that word friendship and more into the larger scope of biblical community and its purpose.

Janet: You know, I think just right there when you said that, I'm thinking that should at least. Okay, give me pause if the majority of my friendships are unbelievers because how can I, you're gonna explain to us the purposes of biblical relationships and friendships. I can't really live out a lot of that with an unbeliever doesn't mean I don't love unbelievers. Doesn't mean I don't have relationships and friendships with them. But if I'm looking at this, and that's primarily. That may be something I have to consider.

Leah: Yeah, and I don't know if you remember this, but probably my first year in Lafayette, so probably nine or 10 years ago, I remember coming to you to talk to you about some issue at work. We weren't even,

Janet: I don't remember this.

Leah: We weren't even close. I don't know why I reached out to you.

Janet: That's funny.

Leah: And I was telling you about what my friends, my coworkers, were encouraging me to do in a situation. And you said something very similar of if they're not believers. Why are you valuing their opinion about this matter in a certain way? And that really changed me. Wow. And I know that was about 10 years ago, but when I think about studying community and friendship,



that is a key truth of who are the closest people in my life. Are they brothers and sisters in Christ? And so I just think it's funny because it was,

Janet: that's funny. I don't remember that.

Leah: It was in your living room upstairs. And you know, through God's word, we learned that biblical community is really based on being a part of the body of Christ. A member of the family of God. So it has everything to do with our shared standing before God, and it was created by God for his purposes. And that kind of community should look and function very differently from the communities or friendships that we see in the world around us. Because the purpose is not to build you up, but to build up his kingdom.

Janet: Which is the opposite of what you're gonna hear anywhere else. I mean, think about even our own kids. We want them to have friends. Why? I want them to be liked. Why? Oh, because I'm so concerned about how they'll use that for God's kingdom. No, typically, 'cause I just want them to be happy. I want them to feel like they belong. And that's not wrong. I don't think I'm supposed to want my kids to be miserable. I don't think I wanna make sure that they know they're left out. But God's word gives us something bigger and better. And I think even if we would all say, oh yeah, I agree with that. Even how you parent. How do I deal with my relationships? If I'm living for something even better, it becomes how can I help my child be a friend to someone? And in that they get to show that other person the beauty of the heart of God. I mean, that's way different than anything you're gonna hear.

Leah: Yeah. It's extremely different and you know, Jeremiah and I in fostering right now. Our relationships with the body of Christ is one of the biggest things we want the girls to see while they're in our home.

Janet: Oh, I love that.

Leah: Is how those friendships, that community work so much different. And what it's really based on, you know, because you're not gonna find that on tv. You're not gonna find that in the world. Yeah, in school, in the world. But we have to be purposeful to train our hearts and minds to think about community and relationships God's way, because it goes against our sin nature. And two great resources that, I recommend for studying the importance of biblical community are Church Membership by Jonathan Lehman and Rediscover Church by Colin Hansen and Jonathan Lehman. These books have been really beneficial for me in teaching the importance of biblical community in the counseling setting, and we can link to both of those as well. And you know, when I keep saying biblical community. I really do mean so much more than just attending church or even deciding to become a member of one. Which I believe is extremely important for us to do. But one way I like to define biblical community, especially with those I'm counseling, is living for the glory of God with one another.



Janet: I love that. Which is still making it about God. We are with one another, but it's not finding someone where I belong.

Leah: Right.

Janet: Though we, desire that. And that's what I said those longings are there. They're not wrong, but living for the glory of God with one another. I love that.

Leah: Yeah. And developing our understanding of that can really help us change our lives to become more and more like our savior in the way He viewed relationships. So let's look at some of the biblical truths that teach us what these purposes for relationships and therefore friendships are, and how we can live life for God's glory in community with other people. So Janet, let's start with Proverbs 27 17 if you could read that for us.

Janet: Absolutely. As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

Leah: So according to this verse, one biblical purpose of friends is to sharpen one another as iron sharpens iron. And if you're like me, you may not be able to picture what that looks like at all. So it helps me instead to think about my husband recently, bought tools to help sharpen dull knives. And so seeing him do that helps me really understand that when you use something else that's really, really hard, like another knife or a stone to sharpen a dull, useless knife, it becomes more effective again.

Janet: Yeah. But it probably didn't feel great.

Leah: Right? Didn't feel great. It was hard work.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: And some other words that come to mind as synonyms for that word sharpens in Proverbs 27:17 are restore, enhance, renew, refine, improve, repair. Aren't those amazing words to describe what friendships are meant for?

Janet: Oh my word it, yes. And as you're saying those words, part of me is like my soul thinks, oh, that's, I want that. And then I also think all of those words sound like work. And none of those words were affirm, agree, hate the same people. I always say, do we wanna eat Oreos and drink milk and bad mouth your enemies together? Like, is that what we're gonna do? It's not, tell them they're right. It's more about loving others enough to help them look more like Christ.

Leah: Yeah, exactly. And you know, whether you've had countless friends in your life or just a few, those relationships usually start by bonding over some common interest. Or life circumstance. And as believers though, our friendships should be truly based on the common bond we have in Christ. We're not just friends, but brothers and sisters to one another. Therefore



friendships with other Christians should look a lot different than how our world likes to portray friends. You know, the one, another commands found in the New Testament, they give us a detailed instruction about the purpose of Christ-centered relationships, which would definitely encompass friendships. So Janet, could you read just a few of those commands and we will link to a resource set. That has a list of the passages that go with that.

Janet: Yeah. I'll just read the actual list without the references, just 'cause it's easier to hear. Don't grumble with, complain against or slander one another. Don't envy one another. Be kind, forgive and bear with one another. Seek good for one another. And don't repay evil for evil, confess sins to one another, love one another. Submit to one another and be humble. Do not judge one another or be stumbling blocks to others. Carry one another's burdens. Speak truthfully to one another, build up one another toward love and good deeds. Pray for one another. Be hospitable to one another.

Leah: And you know, when I think about those truths, I don't just hear commands. I really do hear purposes too. Because those one, another commandments describe in detail what it means to sharpen one another. Jesus' own life an example of friendship demonstrates these one another purposes. I love thinking about how he did all of those commands that you just read perfectly. He walked alongside his friends, spoke truth to them, encouraged them, challenged them, and met their needs before his own. He demonstrated patience, forgiveness, and grace towards his friends. He didn't abandon them even when they hurt him. He prayed for his friends. He loved them until the very end. And what a beautiful picture of those one, another purposes and what hope we have since our savior who walked before us is walking with us now so that we can emulate these purposes in our friendships, even if it's not perfectly.

Janet: Right. And I love that that example of Jesus, tells us so many things. He was living out those purposes. And it reminds me. First and foremost, Jesus has to be my best friend. Jesus is the lover of my soul. Jesus is my spouse. And Jesus is my best friend. It isn't wrong that I desire a kind of friend who will never let me down, and I have one. He will never let us down. He's never gonna have a bad day. He's never wrong in how he attempts to love us. Sometimes friends mean the very best. But they're not God and what they think is helpful isn't. That's never true of him. Now that is a safe place.

Leah: Yeah. And we cannot forget that. Earthly friendships will ultimately disappoint us. If we are not first and foremost, prioritizing our best friend, our relationship with Jesus. So when that relationship is taking priority, it changes the way we view our other friends.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: You know, understanding the biblical purposes for friends helps us see what friends are not meant to be as well. They're not meant just to be there, to have your back, to only build you up or just for pleasure and entertainment. That's the way of the world.



Janet: Yes.

Leah: Instead, godsend and friendships are part of God's progressive sanctification in our lives to make us more into the image of his son. Friendships, call for sacrifice as we seek to humble ourselves, love others, and serve their needs before our own. And of course, good friends often do have our backs. And they do often build us up and have fun with us, but that's just not all they're meant for. And we have to remember that if we want to keep growing and how to be a godly friend, we have to believe God's purposes for those friendships.

Janet: Yeah. Yeah. Jesus is our example then for how we can grow in being a friend and we'll find that much more satisfying than trying to make others be that for us.

Leah: Yeah. And while it is so encouraging to me in my heart to see Jesus as perfect example, I know some people might be discouraged and say, but I'm not Jesus.

Janet: Yes. Yes.

Leah: So I think it's important during the last part of our time to look at some other biblical examples of those who were not Jesus and how they chose and were able to live out the one another purposes in friendships. So first I wanna reflect on the friendship between David and Jonathan in the Old Testament. And you can find their detailed story in the book of First Samuel, but I just wanna highlight a few passages about how God used this friendship in the life of King David. So Janet, could you read First Samuel 18, one through four?

Janet: Absolutely. After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the King's son. There was an immediate bond between them for Jonathan loved David. From that day on, Saul kept David with him and wouldn't let him return home. And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David because he loved him as he loved himself. Jonathan sealed the pact by taking off his robe and giving it to David together with his tunic, sword, bow and belt.

Leah: These verses describe how David and Jonathan met. And how they loved each other as friends. So Jonathan made a pact with David giving up some of his own special possessions to show how he cared about David's needs and wellbeing.

Janet: And I love, I believe at that point, well, I know that God had already told Saul somebody would be replacing him. And I just think, Jonathan seems to know it's gonna be David. He gives up all the things that would say, I will be the next king.

Leah: Yeah. He humbly serves

Janet: and gives them to David.



Leah: Yeah. He humbly serves David Amazing. Even when it meant going against his father, the king. So not even just accepting what's gonna happen, but going against his father. When David found out that King Saul was gonna conspire to kill him, Jonathan promised to warn his friend if the king decided to act out on his anger. So the following passage highlights that friend's commitment to one another, even in the middle of that life-threatening scenario. So could you read, First Samuel 20:6-17 and then 20 verses 41 through 42.

Janet: So Jonathan made a solemn pact with David saying, may the Lord destroy all your enemies. And Jonathan made David reaffirm his vow of friendship again for Jonathan. Loved David as he loved himself. Both of them were in tears as they embraced each other and said goodbye, especially David. At last, Jonathan said to David, go in peace for we have sworn loyalty to each other in the Lord's name. The Lord is the witness of a bond between us and our children forever. Then David left and Jonathan returned to the town.

Leah: And don't you just love how it's in the Lord's name? You know that that's what they were making their time.

Janet: Yes. It was still based on the glory of the Lord. And I love that because he was doing what was right. He was honoring his father, but when his father was doing evil he didn't just say, I'm of Saul. He did what was right.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: And honorable for his friend.

Leah: And Jonathan had all the reasons in the world to not,

Janet: I know.

Leah: I really would encourage our listeners, you know, to go back and read that entire story in First Samuel 20. But I really hope that these verses help paint that picture of how Jonathan lived out the one another commands toward David in those verses. You know, again, like you said, he knew the Lord had anointed David to be king instead of Saul, and ultimately instead of Jonathan, his heir.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: But Jonathan didn't grow envious or bitter. He held steadfast to his commitment to love and serve David as his friend based on what God had said was good. and in humility and trust in God's plan, Jonathan put David's needs before his own.

Janet: And many people might be going, man, I wish I had a Jonathan in my life. Like I don't have anybody who loves me like that. But we can all strive to view others the way he viewed



David. I can strive to say, what does it look like to be a Jonathan? And even that, I can only do that with God's help and looking to the ultimate example of a friend I already have in Jesus. Jesus laid down his life for his friends. And many of them didn't appreciate it or thank him for it. I can grow to love like that, knowing Jesus went first and did that for me and now with his help, I get to try to do that for others.

Leah: Yeah. And you know, we may not be perfect in our relationships. Right, only Jesus was.

Janet: That's right.

Leah: But we can still seek the help of God's Spirit by going to his word and applying it to our own lives and friendships. Yeah, it can start with us.

Janet: That's right.

Leah: And by studying the one another commands and purposes, we can grow to be more like our savior and how we relate to those who we call friends in this life. And there's one other example of what Godly friends and what that looks like from the Bible I wanted to talk about today. The example of Paul's friends, the Church of Philippi. Those believers loved and served Paul, and they expected nothing in return. They repeatedly went out of their way to care for his actual human needs, like food, clothing, shelter. No matter what he could do for them. So listen to how Paul describes their love towards him. Janet, can you read Philippians four, verse 10 and 14 through 19?

Janet: I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. Yet, it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only. For even when I was in Thessalonika, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. Not that I desire your gifts. What I desire is that more be credited to your account. I've received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied now that I've received from Epaphroditus, the gifts you sent. Oh, they're a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Leah: I just love how Paul talks about his friends here because it's really clear from these verses that throughout Paul's ministry, these friends in the church of Philippi supplied his needs.

Janet: Yes,

Leah: they really cared for him. It seems like many of those times he wasn't even with them in person. They just simply heard about his needs and the ministry he was doing, and they found a way to aid him in doing so. And you know, they didn't have social media, to find out quickly



what was going on or how to get it to him. But yet they worked hard to serve those needs. And rather than expecting Paul to repay them or to do anything for them, they just chose to love him sacrificially. And what's Paul's reaction? He didn't feel guilty or that he owed them anything. He simply wanted to praise God for using their gifts of service while praying for God to provide for them too.

Janet: I love that and I love that you mentioned he didn't feel guilty. 'cause so often it's like, oh, it's hard for me to receive and then when I do receive, I need to make it a point to give. Well, there's nothing wrong with giving, but I'm not giving to payback. Instead, what a humble example of viewing friendships as a way to serve and he understood the joy it would be to them to love him in that way. Like that's what's good for their soul. I wonder how often do we view friendships as a way for us to practice selflessly giving and serving?

Leah: I know I struggle to do that in my life probably every day. But you know, just because it's hard to change my view of friendship in the nitty gritty of daily life doesn't mean I shouldn't seek to grow in obedience in that area.

Janet: Yeah. And you can.

Leah: Yeah, and I can, because when I remember the one another commands that we talked about, the real purpose of being a friend. I notice that they're all commands, that we as readers are called to obey. And God went and ask us to do something that he would not enable us to do. So we don't have the option of waiting around for others to treat us in those ways first. We are called to love, give and serve, to put others before ourselves. And instead of putting expectations on our friends based on what we think we should get out of a relationship, we have to train our hearts and minds to want to view our friendships as ways to give to and serve others. And we only do this by seeking God, trusting him, and loving more, seeking his kingdom and his righteousness. And growing in our relationship with God will give us the desire and ability to live out the one another commands as the expectations for ourselves in our friendships. So the more that we seek Him in His ways, the more we can truly say that the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.

Janet: Yes. That's so true. And I think about another Psalm 34, 8 taste and see that the Lord is good. So when I'm meditating on these one another's, my flesh is not there yet. My emotions are not there yet, but I act in love toward others. I taste and see his way is better. There's more joy in coming home from a Sunday service saying, who did I love? Instead of how many people said hi to me. Like, 'cause that's what I was designed for. Relationships are beautiful because God created us to be relational. And they're messy because we're sinful and we can just praise God for the gifts that they are as we're talking. I think about one other resource that I would wanna leave our listeners with. Paul Tripp wrote a book called Relationships a Mess Worth Making, another one that just fits right in with what we've been talking about as well. So this has been really



helpful to me and hopefully it will also be helpful to our listeners. Thank you, Leah, for leading us in this.

Leah: Yeah. I'm so thankful I could share because God is our best friend. And He helps us to be better friends.

Janet: Amen.

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