

BUILDING DEEP RELATIONSHIPS



LESSON 4

LESSON TEXT

1 Samuel 18 and 20;
Philippians 2:1-11

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will compare David and Jonathan's relationship with David and Saul's relationship.
- The students will identify at least three characteristics of a true friend.
- The students will each spend time during the week deepening their relationship with another student in the class.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For the teacher:

- self stick blank labels, such as name tags or file folder labels
- markers
- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world
- 2 large sheets of poster board
- extra Bibles

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student
- Page B, 1 copy for each student

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

- Faithful Instruction
 - Teacher Focus
 - Teacher Tips
- Preclass Activity: What Am I?
- Starting Up
 - Welcome and Singing
 - Opening Prayer
 - Victories
 - Good News from the Kingdom

Getting into God's Word

- Story: "A Horse and a Laden Mule"
- Scripture Study
- Activity: Classroom Dramas

Getting It to Others

- Scripture Memory: Philippians 2:4
- Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
- Conclusion

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Philippians 2:4



Preteens



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Think of your best friends in the kingdom. How have you sacrificed for them? What have they taught and given to you? How can your students develop those kinds of relationships with their peers? In this lesson students will learn more about how to develop deep relationships by looking at David and Jonathan's relationship and comparing it with David and Saul's relationship.

TEACHER TIPS

Pray before preparing the lesson. Read and meditate on Philippians 2:1-11 and 1 Samuel 18 and 20. Consider your relationships in the kingdom and your leadership of the preteen class. Ask yourself: Are you doing everything you can to live out the attitude of Christ? As you prepare for this lesson, look for ways to grow in your humility and selflessness as part of your relationships with others. Share your victories with your students, who will eagerly imitate your example.

The Weekly Challenge for this week again requires teaming up your students to work together. Consider the students in your class and pair them up, avoiding "best friend" pairings, and keeping the pairs different from last week's. Again, your goal is to help deepen the friendships between your students. Try to match up students who will balance each other's skills and weaknesses. Boys should be matched with boys, and girls with girls.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

WHAT AM I?

To encourage interaction among the students, they will play a guessing game.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

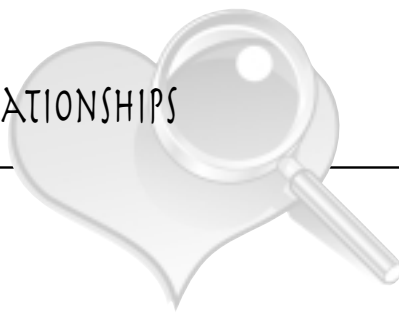
- self-stick blank labels, such as name tags or file folder labels
- markers

PREPARATION

1. On the self-stick labels, write the names of common products regularly used by preteens, such as Candy Bar, Sneakers, Baseball Glove, Fingernail Polish, etc.
2. Write one product on each label.
3. Make as many labels as you have students, plus extras for visitors and those who play twice.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put one of the product labels on each student's back without letting him or her see what it says.
2. Tell the students they have each now been identified as an item preteens use often.
3. The students must figure out what item they are by asking **ONLY** yes or no questions of the other people in the room (e.g. Am I something to eat? Do both boys and girls use me?).
4. Students who guess what they are before class begins may be given another product label.



STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

Call all the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them, and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER

Who would like to say a prayer to start our time together? Let a few students lead the prayer. Encourage the students to mention missing students, special church activities, illnesses, etc. Remind the students to be especially thankful for the great friendships they have in the church, and for the ways they are growing because of those friendships.

VICTORIES

Take time to have the students share about the challenge they were given at the end of last week's class. *Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? What did you learn about yourself during the week? What did you learn about your partner? How did your character change because of the help of your teammate? What is an important thing you learned from your friend? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Who would like to share something they learned?*

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

INSTRUCTIONS

Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom." Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide, and the victories of our brothers and sisters on other continents can inspire us and spur us on.





STORY

"A HORSE AND A LADEN MULE"

You will read to the students one of Aesop's fables, which shows the wisdom and importance of helping each other carry our loads.

MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

PREPARATION

Practice reading aloud the story "A Horse and a Laden Mule" (Reproducible Page A) so that you will be able to present it effectively to the students.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Tell the students: *Today I am going to read you a story written in the 6th century B.C. by a man from Greece called Aesop. It's called "A Horse and a Laden Mule." Who can tell me what the word "laden" means? ("weighed down with a load")*
2. Read the story to the students, using different voices for the horse and the mule. **DO NOT READ THE MORAL YET.**
3. Afterward, discuss the story briefly, using these questions:
 - *Why didn't the horse help the mule?* (He was lazy and selfish.)
 - *How would the story have ended if the horse had helped the mule?* (Both would have carried a light load, and the trip would not have been difficult for either of them.)
 - *What do you think the meaning of this story is?* (Read the moral after the students give their answers.)
 - *What does this story teach us about friendship?* (True friends help meet each other's needs.)
4. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page A ("A Horse and a Laden Mule") to take home.

SCRIPTURE STUDY

In 1 Samuel 18 and 20 we read about David and Jonathan's friendship, a great example for us as disciples to follow. The students will identify the aspects of their relationship that we should imitate. Then in 1 Samuel 18:5-9, 10-11 and 12-16 we read about David and Saul's relationship. The students will identify aspects of that relationship that we should not imitate.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 2 large sheets of poster board
- markers
- extra Bibles

PREPARATION

1. Using a black marker, draw the simple outline of a person's body on a sheet of poster board and label it "A BEST FRIEND."
2. Cut the second sheet of poster board in half.
3. Label one half "JONATHAN" and the other half "SAUL."

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Display the "BEST FRIEND" poster.
2. Ask students: *How would you describe a best friend? What qualities would he or she have?*
3. Invite students to come up and use a marker to write down the qualities of a perfect friend inside or outside the outline of the person on the poster. Encourage them to be specific, such as "a great listener," rather than writing general descriptions, such as "nice" or "friendly."

Tell the students: *Today we are going to learn about what God says it takes to be a great friend. We will look at the life of David and two friends he had: Jonathan and Saul.* Ask the students to share what they already know about these three men. Fill in the gaps with the following:

DAVID: second and greatest king of Israel; killed Goliath as a teenager; a shepherd, musician, poet (wrote 73 psalms), great general, ancestor of Jesus; "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14); sinned deeply in later years but repented



SAUL: first king of Israel; began his reign humble and devoted to God; later disobeyed God and was rejected by him; became controlled by jealousy, hatred, superstition; tried to kill David; death was by suicide

JONATHAN: a prince, eldest son of Saul; great soldier; loyal, affectionate and unselfish; saved David's life; honored and respected his father, even when Saul was fighting against David; was killed in battle

Have two students volunteer to be Jonathan and Saul and to stand in front of the class. Give one of them the "JONATHAN" poster and the other one, the "SAUL" poster. Instruct them to hold the posters in front of them so that the class can see them.

Select another three volunteers to read 1 Samuel 18:5-9, 10-11 and 12-16. Again, after the first section of verses is read, ask the students: *How would you describe this relationship?* After the second section: *How did Saul feel about David?* After the third section: *Why did Saul try to kill David?* Have students write their answers on the "SAUL" poster.

Select three volunteers to take turns reading 1 Samuel 18:1-4, 19:1-7 and 20:16-17. Have the class follow along in their Bibles. After each scripture section is read, ask the students to share what those verses reveal about the type of relationship David had with Jonathan. Ask questions such as: *What words would you use to describe their relationship? How did Jonathan feel about David? If Jonathan was a prince and David was just a shepherd boy, how could they be friends? Why did Jonathan give David his clothes and weapons?* Have students in the class write their answers on the "JONATHAN" poster. Be sure the students see Jonathan's lack of jealousy toward David.

Hold up the "BEST FRIEND" poster, and ask the students to compare its listed qualities with the qualities on the "JONATHAN" and "SAUL" posters. Discuss why God wants our friendships to be like that of Jonathan and David. Also, discuss why problems like the ones Saul had (jealousy, competitiveness, lack of faith) destroy a relationship. Encourage the students to share from their own lives about relationships they have that are like David's relationships with Jonathan and with Saul.

ACTIVITY

CLASSROOM DRAMAS

The students will act out classroom scenarios (both in school and at church) to help them learn the difference in the way a "Jonathan" would respond and the way a "Saul" would respond.

PREPARATION

- Using whatever is available in your room, set up a pretend classroom (i.e. a few chairs in rows for desks, a small table or several chairs for the teacher's desk, books, globe, etc.)
- Prepare several real-life classroom scenarios using the examples given below, or make up your own.
 - A popular classmate has just been honored as the top student of the school. How would a "Jonathan" react to the student? (be happy and congratulate him) How would a "Saul" react? (be jealous and put the guy down)*
 - The class is going to have a very difficult math test tomorrow. One student is afraid he might fail it. How does a "Jonathan" respond to him? (offers to help him, encourages him) How does a Saul respond? (secretly hopes that he will fail, makes fun of him)*
 - A certain student has lots of friends and always knows the memory verse in the church's pre-teen class. How does a "Jonathan" interact with this person? (humble, eager to become closer friends, wants to learn how she makes closer friends and learns the memory verse so well) How does a "Saul" interact? (suspicious, critical, secretly hopes she messes up, doesn't want to learn from her)*

INSTRUCTIONS

- Present a real-life scenario in a classroom setting.
- Ask the students to act out how a "Jonathan" would react, and then to act out how a "Saul" would react.
- After each scenario, ask the students to verbalize how each would respond.



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
 Philippians 2:4

MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have the students open their Bibles to Philippians 2:4 and read it aloud as a group.
2. Explain that being aware of and meeting other people's needs is one of the best ways of being a great friend, just as Jonathan was for David.
3. Have the students stand up and repeat the memory verse together in each of the following ways:
 - in a normal voice while running in place
 - in a slow motion voice while running in slow motion
 - shouting while doing jumping jacks
 - in a rap rhythm while dancing
4. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page B (Memory Verse) to take home.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you explain to them the challenge for the week.

The challenge this week is for your students to bring their relationship with one other student in the class to a deeper level.

Tell the students that they will again work on their relationship-building skills. Instruct the students that, with their new partners, they need to make a plan for getting together at least once during the following week in order to spend fun time together building their relationship. Suggestions include:

- sleep over at another student's house; in the morning, make breakfast together for the host family
- help one another with household chores, then have a special snack together
- do homework together and then play sports or video games
- hang out at one or the other's house and just talk
- work on a homework project at the library together
- share your faith at a school or sports event

For students who are unable to get with another student during the week due to distance issues or illness, offer these alternatives:

- enjoy a phone chat with another student
- write an encouraging note to another student and mail it
- see if two preteen families can arrive at the next church service a half hour early so that the preteens can fellowship or have a quiet time together at the church building

Let the students know who their partners will be for the week. Encourage the students that, if they are able, they may do more than one activity together.

CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Make a plan and get together at least once this week with your partner to spend fun time together and to build your friendship.

BUILDING DEEP RELATIONSHIPS



LESSON 4
(SUPPLEMENT)

LESSON TEXT

1 John 3:16-18

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will compare David and Jonathan's relationship with David and Saul's relationship.
- The students will identify at least three characteristics of a true friend.
- The students will each spend time during the week deepening their relationship with another student in the class.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- large ball of yarn or string
- extra Bibles

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for each student
- Page D, 1 copy for each student

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction
 Teacher Focus
 Teacher Tips
 Preclass Activity: Bible Nature Hunt
 Starting Up
 Welcome and Singing
 Opening Prayer and Review
 Great News Sharing

Getting into God's Word

Scripture Study
 Activity: Friendship Web

Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: Philippians 2:4
 Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
 Conclusion

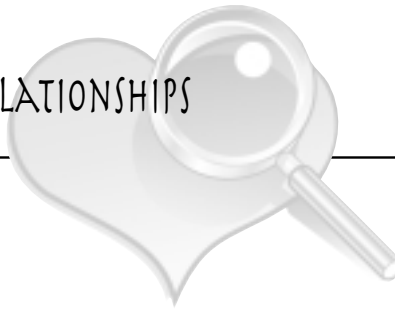
SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Philippians 2:4



Preteens



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Think of your best friends in the kingdom. How have they sacrificed themselves for you? How have you sacrificed for them? How can your students develop those kinds of relationships with their peers? The focus of this lesson is to make the students aware of the practical ways of “laying down your life” every day for others.

TEACHER TIPS

Pray before preparing this lesson. Meditate on 1 John 3:16-18. Thank God that you have the opportunity to lay down your life for the children in God’s Kingdom, to be a part of helping to prepare them to become Christians one day.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

BIBLE NATURE HUNT

The students will increase their Bible skills by searching for twenty-five different elements or objects of nature in the twelve scriptures given.

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

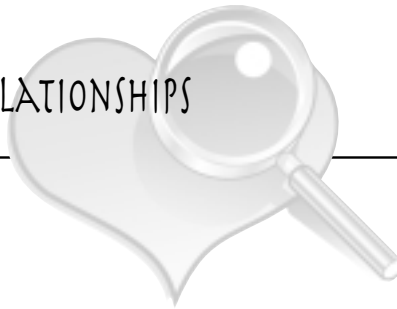
Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for each student
- Page D, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute copies of Reproducible Page C (Bible Nature Hunt), pen or pencil, and a Bible (if needed) to the students as they arrive.
2. The students may work alone or in pairs to locate the scriptures listed on the sheet.
3. When it is time to start class, give each student a copy of Reproducible Page D (Bible Nature Hunt Answer Key) so that they can check their answers.





STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

Call all the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them, and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

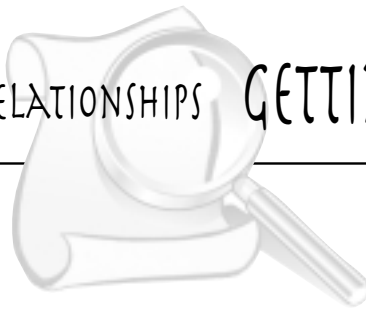
OPENING PRAYER AND REVIEW

- Open with one of the students praying for each student to be growing in their relationships, both in the church and at school.
- Have one student recite the memory verse: Philippians 2:4.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson (Core Lesson).

GREAT NEWS SHARING

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, a person they have personally shared with during the week, etc. Remind the students to be brief so that as many as possible can share.





SCRIPTURE STUDY

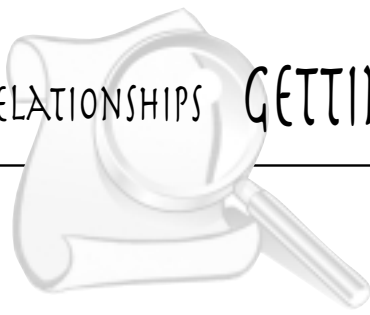
Today we are going to talk about how we can lay down our lives for each other.

Have the students open their Bibles to 1 John 3:16-18, and have one student volunteer to read the passage.

- *What does it mean to "lay down your life" for another person?*
- *What examples have you seen around you recently of people "laying down their lives" for others?*
- *How did Jesus lay down his life for people?*
- *How have you laid down your life for another person during this past week?*
- *Why does God want us to have relationships built on "actions and truth" and not just on "words"?*
- *Why do sacrifice, giving, encouragement, etc. help make a relationship stronger?*

Be sure the students understand and discuss the day-to-day aspects of "laying down one's life." It involves not just dying physically to save another person's life, but also dying to self every day in order to help others (i.e. serving when it's inconvenient, being encouraging even when you've had a hard day, submitting to other people, going out of your way to meet people's needs, etc.) Remind the students that we need to lay down our lives for all those around us—friends, family, teachers, coaches, etc. If we are willing to do this, God will bless us incredibly in these relationships.





ACTIVITY

FRIENDSHIP WEB

The students will create a friendship web which symbolizes the relationships they are building with each other.

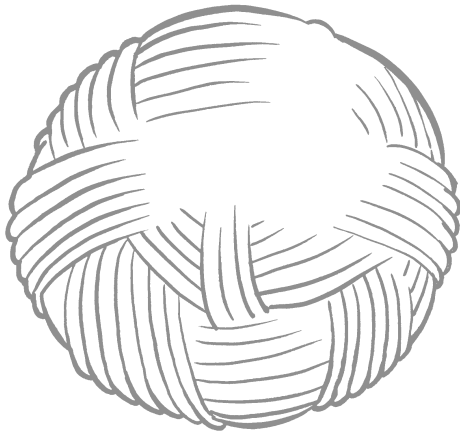
MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- large ball of yarn or string
- extra Bibles

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have the students sit in a circle on the floor.
2. The web is formed as follows: The teacher holds the end of a ball of string and rolls the ball to someone else in the circle.
3. The teacher gives a compliment to the student. The compliment must be specific (e.g. *I appreciate the way you listen to others during class.*) rather than general (e.g. *You're nice.*).
4. The student who received the compliment then holds onto the string, rolls the ball to another student and gives that person a compliment.
5. Keep rolling the ball and giving compliments until all students have had at least one turn.
6. Point out to the students how the web is intertwined. Each person is directly or indirectly "tied" to every other person in the class. Each line of the web crosses many times, and this makes the bonds very strong—exactly the way the friendships in your class need to be.





SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
Philippians 2:4

INSTRUCTIONS

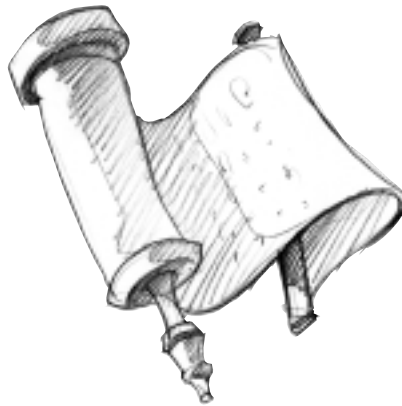
1. Review the scripture memory verse that was given in the previous lesson.
2. Practice the verse together as a group, encouraging the students to have the verse completely memorized by the next class.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you remind them of the challenge for the week. The students are again working on their relationship-building skills. With their new partners this week, they are to get together at least once during the week in order to spend fun time building their friendship.

CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Make a plan and get together at least once this week with your partner to spend fun time together and to build your friendship.

A HORSE AND A LADEN MULE

a fable by Aesop

A horse and a mule were traveling together on a long journey with their master. The horse's back was empty while the mule carried many, many bundles on his back. Stumbling under his heavy load, the poor mule cried out to his proud companion, "Please, good Sir, I beg of you to help me carry my burdens; otherwise, I fear that I may die!" But the horse was unmoved by this desperate plea and refused to share the load.

Soon the little mule was completely worn out and, stumbling pathetically, finally fell. No matter how valiantly he struggled, he could not get to his feet. Seeing this, their master lifted the many packages from the mule and flung them across the back of the horse, who immediately began to groan and wail in self-pity. "Woe is me!" he cried. "What suffering have I brought upon myself! I would not share a lighter load, and look at what has become of me: I must now carry everything alone."

MORAL

The strong should help the weak, so that the lives of both shall be made easier.



SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Each of you should look not only
to your own interests, but also
to the interests of others.

PHILIPPIANS 2:4

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Make a plan and get together at least once this
week with your partner to spend fun time together
and to build your friendship.

BIBLE NATURE HUNT

Twenty-five different things found in nature are mentioned in the verses listed below. See if you can find all of them! Some verses will have more than one item.

Mark 5:21 _____

Genesis 22:14 _____

Revelation 10:1 _____

Acts 27:40 _____

Matthew 2:7 _____

Psalms 105:41 _____

Jeremiah 2:27 _____

1 Samuel 17:3 _____

Job 40:9 _____

Matthew 13:40 _____

Zechariah 9:3 _____

Genesis 7:12 _____

BIBLE NATURE HUNT

Twenty-five different things found in nature are mentioned in the verses listed below. See if you can find all of them! Some verses will have more than one item.

Mark 5:21 _____ **lake** _____

Genesis 22:14 _____ **mountain** _____

Revelation 10:1 _____ **cloud, rainbow, sun** _____

Acts 27:40 _____ **sea, wind, beach** _____

Matthew 2:7 _____ **star** _____

Psalms 105:41 _____ **rock, water, river, desert** _____

Jeremiah 2:27 _____ **wood, stone** _____

1 Samuel 17:3 _____ **hill, valley** _____

Job 40:9 _____ **thunder** _____

Matthew 13:40 _____ **weeds** _____

Zechariah 9:3 _____ **silver, dust, gold, dirt** _____

Genesis 7:12 _____ **rain, earth** _____