

MARCH DEVOTIONAL IDEAS FOR SENIOR ADULTS

“Friendship”

Materials: Song books or song sheets for the group songs, accompanist for the singing and a Bible.

Ahead of time: Arrive early enough to greet the seniors as they arrive in the devotional area. You may even choose to go to residents' rooms or apartments, knock on the doors and invite them to the devotional time. Make the effort to create a happy, friendly atmosphere in the room.

Devotional Time

- Begin with leading the group in singing two familiar hymns, such as “Leaning On The Everlasting Arms” and “Amazing Grace”.
- Pray, asking God’s blessing on this devotional time and thanking God for the seniors adults who are present. (Hold your Bible open to I Samuel, Chapter 23.)
- “FRIEND” is an important word for every one of us. As we grow older, FRIENDSHIP becomes even more important to us.

A Bible story about friendships

- The book of 1 Samuel tells a story of
 - A selfish friendship that became cold and bitter, and
 - An unselfish friendship that was loving and lasting.

David kills the giant, becomes a hero and the king’s friend.

- You remember the story of David, the young man who bravely faced the enemy, the giant Goliath. By using his slingshot to hurl a smooth stone at the Giant, David killed Goliath. David became a hero! and was taken to King Saul who was the King of Israel. King Saul was impressed and friendly. He made David a part of the palace court and then later, made him an officer over a thousand of King Saul’s soldiers. Because of David’s kind heart, he was loved by the court and by the soldiers and by the King’s son, Jonathan.

The king’s friendship changed.

- David and his men were successful in battle. When they returned, David and his men were greeted by the adoring crowds that shouted David’s name. The King was a selfish, jealous, and cruel man. His friendship with David changed. Saul realized that his soldiers and the people loved David. He was afraid that the people would revolt and try to make David the King. King Saul determined that would not happen! He would have David killed! David’s intentions were never to undermine Saul or to hurt him in any way.

Jonathan proved his friendship.

- More than once, Jonathan helped David get away from the King and his men who were trying to kill David. David had no plans to fight with the king and his army. But now, David and his men were in trouble again. They were doing their best to get away from

the king and his army, who were searching for them and would kill them all.

Jonathan went to his friend.

- 1 Samuel 23:16a - "Jonathan now went to find David; he met him at Horesh." Jonathan knew that it was dangerous, but he went to find his friend. He knew that his presence would give David comfort and hope. He knew that his presence would help David know that he trusted him, and he knew that David had not wronged his wicked, jealous father. Jonathan knew that his presence would be a comfort to David. He knew that his coming to find David would give him comfort in knowing that Jonathan believed in him and would help him. Jonathan knew that his presence would, once again, prove his friendship, his loyalty, and his support for David.

Jonathan encouraged his friend.

- 1 Samuel 23: 16b - Jonathan "encouraged him (David) in his faith in God." Jonathan reminded David of his faith in God's love and care. He reminded David that his faith would sustain him. They surely must have prayed together and asked for God's guidance. He reminded David that God keeps his promises.

Jonathan reassured his friend.

- 1 Samuel 23:17 - "Don't be afraid. My father will never find you! You are going to be the King of Israel and I will be next to you, as my father is well awarded." Jonathan assured David that he should not be afraid because God could be trusted to protect him from the murderous King. He reassured David that the king would never find him. He reassured David that God would keep the promise He made when David was just a boy. God sent Samuel to anoint young David as the future King of Israel. Jonathan reassured David that, though his father knew about God's anointing David, he could do nothing to stop God's plan. He reassured David that, when David became King, he would be stand by his friend. Finally, Jonathan reassured David that God was in charge and could be trusted.

Jonathan and David renewed their covenant of eternal friendship.

- Before Jonathan left, he and David renewed their promise that they would always be friends. Jonathan and David knew that true friendship lasts, lasts through the good time and the bad times.

HOW DOES THIS STORY RELATE TO YOU AND ME?

- All of us NEED good friends.
- Can you think of times when you or someone else has needed a friend? (Give opportunity for seniors to share. If they don't share right away, be ready to share a time when you or a friend needed a friend and a good friend helped.
- All of us can BE good friends.
- Like Jonathan, we can prove our friendships by:
 - Our presence, often just being there to show we care.
 - Realizing that, sometimes, just being there without talking is comforting.
 - Encouragement, listening and reminding that God loves and cares about us.
 - Assuring that God knows and understands us and will help us.
 - Praying for and with him/her.
 - Reminding that God keeps his promises.

- Reassuring that you can and will stand by your friends.
- A little ditty that we probably learned from childhood is, "Friendship, friendship, just a perfect blendship. When all others have been forgot, ours will NOT!"
- Close with prayer, thanking God for His Word, the Bible, and for friends.
- **Rather than craft time after this devotional, ask the seniors to, now and later today, tell at least three people (or even more than three) that you are glad they are your friend, or that you want to be friends.**

