More time spent with fewer people leads to greater lasting impact for the Kingdom of God.

BSU Christian Challenge
New Mexico State University
Study Series

Disciplemaking Covenant: Jonathan and The Armor Bearer
1 Samuel 14:1-15

1. Background study
   - Saul is king
   - Jonathan is his son
     - David and Jonathan have not yet become close friends
   - The Philistines are archenemies of Israel; there are seasonal skirmishes, most of which the Philistines seem to win.
   - The Philistines have apparently dominated Israel recently because they have not allowed Israel to have any blacksmiths (13:19). This has prevented Israel from making weapons. It has also caused Israel to be dependent on Philistia to even have their plowshares sharpened.
   - As this story begins, the Philistines have the Israelites backed into a corner again.
     - 13:15 says that Saul has about 600 men with him, Jonathan included.
     - 13:22 says that no one has a sword or spear except Saul and Jonathan.
     - Apparently the standard strategy of war in those days was in effect. The Philistines backed the Israelites into the caves and now they are waiting for them to get hungry or thirsty enough to come out and give up or make a futile attempt to overcome the enemy.
   - The role of an armor bearer is an important part of this story. Apparently, the role of an armor bearer was varied:
     - He was a servant to the soldier to which he was assigned, perhaps something close to what a squire was to a knight.
     - According to 1 Samuel 17:41, the armor bearer preceded the soldier in battle – presumably to carry a body length shield to protect both himself and the soldier from enemy attacks. He would respond to the soldier’s commands and go wherever he was told. This would also allow the soldier to have both hands free for battle.
   - This passage is a narrative passage. It simply records history. Our challenge is to unveil the principles that apply to our lives today.

2. Character profile – Jonathan
   - Write down your observations of Jonathan’s actions and character traits from this passage (1 Sam 14:1-15).
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3. Character profile – Armor Bearer
   - Write down your observations of the armor bearer’s actions and character traits from this passage.

4. What kind of relationship did Jonathan have with his armor bearer?

5. What did the armor bearer think of Jonathan?

6. Is there anything extraordinary about Jonathan’s leadership in verses 11-13? See 17:41. (clue: where’s the armor bearer?)

7. Character profile – Discipler
   - Write down the characteristics that Jonathan exemplifies that would be valuable to you as a discipler.

8. Character profile – Disciple
   - Write down the characteristics that the armor bearer exemplifies that you would look for in a prospective disciple.
9. The commitment of an honest disciple: “Do all that you have in mind. Go ahead; I am with you heart and soul.”
   - Do you have that kind of a commitment to someone? __________________________
   - Are you willing to make that kind of commitment? __________________________

10. How would you state the commitment of an honest discipler?____________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
   - Do you have that kind of a commitment to someone? __________________________
   - Are you willing to make that kind of commitment? __________________________

   MEMORIZE 1 Samuel 14:7

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