

Love that Intercedes

Alondra was laughing with her brother Brendon, his wife, and other relatives when she noticed her brother Dewayne standing in the doorway of the hotel room.

It was Friday night, and the Robinson family had begun their reunion weekend festivities with a meet and greet in the hotel lounge area.

Only a year ago Alondra had learned about having an elder brother named Dewayne. After the death of his mother, Dewayne had come to Indianapolis looking for his birth father. One look at Dewayne, and there was no denying his parentage or his family resemblance,

Alondra touched Brendon and leaned close to him: “You see that man in the doorway? That’s our brother.”

“You mean that’s your brother,” Brendon said.

Brendon, because of bad blood with their father, did not take to the news of an elder brother well.

“He can’t help it that Dad got his mother pregnant. Or that his mother left and raised him in another state,” Alondra had said. “Dewayne is so anxious to meet you. Why don’t you give him a chance?”

“Don’t be that way, Brendon,” Alondra said, touching her brother’s arm again. “Want me to go with you and introduce you?”

Alondra left it alone after Brendon scowled at her.

Later that evening, she heard the laughter of her brother Dewayne. She turned and saw him in the corner talking with Brendon.

1. *On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the highest, what is your risk tolerance?*

2. *Fill in the blank: Loving others as God loves is risky because _____.*

3. *Why is it important to take risks for love?*

Warning David about Saul

1 Samuel 19:1-3, KJV

1 And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

2 But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.

1 Samuel 19:1-3, NIV

¹Saul told his son Jonathan and all the attendants to kill David. But Jonathan had taken a great liking to David ²and warned him, "My father Saul is looking for a chance to kill you. Be on your guard tomorrow morning; go into hiding and stay there. ³I will go out and stand with my father in the field where you are. I'll speak to him about you and will tell you what I find out."

Saul harbored a murderous hatred toward David, which was fueled by the fact that David received more praise for a military victory against the Philistines than the king did (1 Sam. 18:5-11). Anger is the heart condition that leads to all manner of evil acts against another, including murder.

On the other hand, Jonathan loved David, which was the reason for his desire to warn his friend. It would not be a stretch to conclude that Jonathan's friendship with David was an extension of his love for his country and his love for God. Prior to meeting David, Jonathan had already distinguished himself in battle in the name of the Lord against the Philistines (1 Sam. 13:3; 14:1-14). Therefore, it is little wonder that when David stood up for the God of Israel and defeated Goliath on the battlefield, "Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself" (18:1b). Unlike his father, Jonathan displayed the kind of love and friendship that God's people are to have for one another.

Such was the love that Jonathan had for David, which is why when Saul spoke of killing David, Jonathan took

immediate action to warn his friend. The first step that the king's son took to protect David was to seek him out and meet with him. With a death sentence hanging over his friend's head, Jonathan was taking a risk in meeting with David. But their friendship overrode any sense of fear there may have been. Jonathan would not have known how long it might take for someone else to find David and try to carry out the king's edict, so he hastened to get to his friend first.

Upon meeting with David, Jonathan immediately told his friend of the danger he faced because of the king's edict. Though the anguish in Jonathan's heart must have been immense, he did not hesitate to tell his friend everything. Then he urged David to be very careful and to hide himself. The final part of Jonathan's plan to help his friend was to go to the king and intercede on David's behalf. The king's son purposed in his heart to do everything he could for his friend and then let him know what he found out from Saul. And David was to wait to hear word one way or the other.

Like Jonathan, Christians today should warn all people of the death sentence of sin hanging over their heads. But the good news is that God has provided the way of eternal life though our Lord Jesus Christ (see Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

4. *What was Saul's edict against David?*

5. *How did Jonathan respond when he heard his father's edict?*

6. *What warning do God's people have for the world today?*

Reminding Saul about David

1 Samuel 19:4-5, KJV

4 And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against

1 Samuel 19:4-5, NIV

⁴Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and

KJV

thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good:

5 For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

NIV

what he has done has benefited you greatly. ⁵He took his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine. The LORD won a great victory for all Israel, and you saw it and were glad. Why then would you do wrong to an innocent man like David by killing him for no reason?"

Having warned David about the danger he faced and taking steps to protect him temporarily, Jonathan then set out to keep his promise by speaking to the king about his friend. Jonathan made a three-fold argument to persuade the king to revoke the death sentence against David.

First, Jonathan told his father that David was innocent of any wrongdoing. The most basic defense against injustice is proving a person's innocence. Since they were close friends, Jonathan had firsthand knowledge of David's heart for the king and kingdom.

Second, not only was David guiltless of any wrongdoing against the king or kingdom, but everything he had done was for Saul's great benefit. Not only was there no evidence of David's guilt, but there was also plenty of evidence to the contrary.

And third, Jonathan gave a specific example of the truth of what he told his father, namely David's victorious battle against Goliath. Jonathan knew that his father was quite aware of what David had done for the king and kingdom that day, and every day since that time. He reminded Saul of that glorious battle to help him see the truth of David's innocence. Having pleaded very effectively on behalf of his friend, Jonathan then paused and awaited Saul's decision.

7. *What were the first two points Jonathan made in his intercession for David?*

8. *What example did Jonathan use to underscore his arguments to Saul?*

9. *Why is it important to be reminded of the good things that others have done for us, and especially of what the Lord has done for us?*

Reconciling David and Saul

1 Samuel 19:6-7, KJV

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain.

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.

1 Samuel 19:6-7, NIV

⁶Saul listened to Jonathan and took this oath: "As surely as the Lord lives, David will not be put to death."

⁷So Jonathan called David and told him the whole conversation. He brought him to Saul, and David was with Saul as before.

Jonathan knew that everything David did for Saul was worthy only of praise and reward. So out of love for his friend, Jonathan took the risk and asked his father to reconsider. Saul responded by swearing an oath that David would not be executed. This pattern repeated itself several times in the lives of Saul and David. The king would seek to kill David, only to be reminded of David's faithfulness. Saul would then temporarily repent and relent from trying to kill David. Each time the repentance did not last for long.

As in Jonathan's case, we may have the opportunity to intercede for someone else, and it might be somewhat risky to do so. But out of love for us, God reconciled the world to Himself; therefore, out of love for Him, we are to be ambassadors for Christ, warning others of the need to be reconciled to Him.

10. *What was Saul's response to Jonathan's intercession for David?*

11. *Then what did Jonathan do?*

12. *How can we show this kind of love today?*

A Risk Motivated by Love

Faith brings the confidence needed to take risks—risks motivated by love. “The confidence I had to donate my kidney came from my faith in God,” said Andrew, the big brother who gave his youngest sister, Anna, the gift of life by giving his kidney. “I knew I could do something to save her life, and that I would be the one to donate a kidney to her,” the faithful big brother continued, “I felt like it was my duty as her oldest brother to do so. And when my mind was made up, I didn’t look back.”

Andrew is the oldest of the four Copley children and Anna is the youngest. They have a close relationship and understand the power of love. Their relationship is even closer now bonded by a kidney.

When Anna was a baby, her parents knew she would eventually need a kidney donor, but they didn’t know exactly when. The transplant took place years later when Anna turned 15. “As parents, we are continually blown away by what our oldest son did for his little sister,” said their mother Rebecca. She continues, “Andrew told us from the time she was diagnosed with chronic kidney failure, that he was the one who would give her a kidney when she needed it.”

“It’s a really big thing to say, that you’re going to give up a kidney,” said Anna. “He’s an amazing big brother. He gave me my life back.” Anna eventually began to do the things she enjoyed in life like playing music in her school’s band. She’s grateful. Some of the risk Andrew took by donating a kidney included perhaps developing hypertension, a hernia, possible kidney failure that could lead to a need for dialysis, and finally death. These are all serious risks done in the name of love.

13. *How are faith, love, and taking risks intertwined?*

14. *What risks would you take for someone you love?*

15. *What risk would you take for someone you didn’t know?*

Take the Risk

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” Whether it is our friends or someone we barely know, when we see people who need help, we can show Jesus to them by being there for them and doing whatever we can for them. It may be uncomfortable, and it may not be popular, but taking the risk to show God’s love is worth it.

► *Think of a person you know who needs to see God’s love in action but doing so is a risk for you. Write their name here and pray about how you can love them this week.*

KEY VERSE

And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good. —1 Samuel 19:4, KJV

Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, “Let not the king do wrong to his servant David; he has not wronged you, and what he has done has benefited you greatly.” —1 Samuel 19:4, NIV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK’S LESSON

October 5 through October 11

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

Mon. Psalm 103:1-14—The Lord Is Merciful and Gracious.

Tues. Matthew 5:38-42—Responding to Unwanted Demands.

Wed. Leviticus 25:35-39—Handling Family Difficulties.

Thurs. Psalm 128—Home Life of the Faithful.

Fri. Luke 23:32-36—Forgiving the Ignorant.

Sat. Matthew 5:1-12—Blessed and Rewarded.

Sun. Luke 6:27-36—Love and Forgive Your Enemies.