



EXPERIENCE GOD

SERMON DISCUSSION LEADER'S GUIDE

Community | Keith Simon | November 23, 2025

Experiments Review

- How did it go? What was challenging?
- What did you learn? About yourself and about God?
- What would you like to incorporate into your life going forward?

Sermon Discussion

1. Marc Andreessen, in his book *The Techno-Optimist Manifesto*, says this: "We believe there is no material problem—whether created by nature or technology—that cannot be solved with more technology." And yet, God's solution to loneliness in Genesis 2 was not AI chatbots, but face-to-face friendship. Why is it easier to try to fix our lives—and our loneliness—independently, rather than admitting we need real, God-designed relationships?

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4, 20:1-23, 23:15-18

2. Despite the unlikely circumstances surrounding their friendship, David and Jonathan made a covenant together—a binding commitment of loyalty, protection, and steadfast love. What can this covenant teach us about the kind of friendship God calls us to?
3. Do you think Jonathan ever felt that his friendship with David was one-sided, or that he was giving more than he was receiving? How can intentional, covenant-style friendships help us navigate seasons where friendship feels difficult or disappointing?



4. Keith shared how Andrea Fuentes, a synchronized swimming coach, immediately jumped in to save her friend Anita Alvarez because she knew something wasn't right. He asked, *"When you're 'under water' in life, who knows you well enough to look out for you? Who's going to jump into the crisis? And who are we looking out for? Because we also need to be and become this type of friend."*

What keeps you both from letting others in to help when you're under water, and from being the friend to jump into someone else's crisis?

5. Proverbs 17:17 tells us: "A friend loves at all times" but 27:6 says, "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses." We need both friends that will accept us ("as is") and correct us. Share about a friendship where you've experienced both acceptance and correction.
6. Lastly, we need friends who will encourage us. And as with David and Jonathan, this doesn't happen by accident, but requires intentionality and prioritization of our time, energy, and even money. Is it harder for you to *need* that type of friend or to *be* that type of friend? What's a practical step you could take this week to both "be and become" a friend where you are mutually known, accepted, corrected, and encouraged?



Sharing and Prayer

End your time together by praying for your group to be the kind of place where people feel known, accepted, corrected, and encouraged. Have each member choose one or more of the following prayers to say aloud: (Give 3-5 seconds of silence following each prayer)

Lord, make our group a place where we can be fully known and fully accepted.

Lord, help us to demonstrate a covenantal kind of commitment to one another.

Father, give us the humility to be corrected- and to give each other permission to correct.

Help us to be loyal to one another and to protect each other, even when it costs.

Spirit, make us attuned to the ways others need encouragement right now.

When friendships feel difficult, fill us with your steadfast love, and help us to persevere.

Lord, we confess that we want community without having to do the hard work. Forgive us.

God, show us where we've closed ourselves off. Help us to see what we cannot see.

Lord, these kinds of friendships are impossible without you. We need you.

God, bring to mind an area where I need others. Empower me to ask for help.

Spirit, if there's anyone I've held at arm's distance for the wrong reasons, convict me.

Lord, bring to mind someone who is under water. How do you want me to help?

(Leader): Lord, make our group a place where we can be known by you, accepted by you, corrected by you, and encouraged by you... through each other.

(All): Amen.



What to practice for next time...

Week of Nov. 30 Fasting

Week of Dec. 07 Enchantment

To access a digital copy of the experiments, use this QR code.

