

37 October 5th 2013

# TRAINING FOR GUYS

## David and Jonathan

The relationship between David and Jonathan is often used as an example of a gay relationship in the Bible. The following verses from the book of 1 Samuel in particular are quoted to support this:

18:1 *After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself.*

18:3 *And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.*

20:17 *And Jonathan made David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.*

20:41 *...Then they kissed each other and wept together - but David wept the most.*

It would be worth reading the three chapters (18-20) to get the full story, and to see these

verses in their immediate context.

However, the problem is that in order to see a gay relationship there you have to start from a wrong understanding of the words being used. In our culture we have come to equate the word *love*, unless used in a family context, to mean something sexual. It is not usually used with that meaning in the Bible. Most of us know that Greek has several words for love - agape love, filial love and eros love etc. There are different kinds of love. But in the Hebrew Old Testament the word *ahab* (or AHAVA, see panel to right) is used to cover several different types of love, just as our English word does. Ahab/ahava is love with commitment - which could mean several things.

It's used in the 10 commandments - God says He will "show mercy to thousands of those who *ahab* me" (Exodus 20:6). In Genesis 22 God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, the 'son whom you *ahab*'. "You shall *ahab* your neighbour as yourself" (Lev 19:18)

Ahab is about commitment, and David and Jonathan had this commitment-love for each other. It's clear, too, that neither of them were homosexual. We read of Jonathan's son

### Summary so far

We've looked at the Bible's teaching on homosexuality. From this I have concluded that same-sex sexual activity is wrong, but so too has been the way the Church has treated and spoken about people who are homosexual. We are called to love and point to Jesus, not condemn and turn people away.



**ALL SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS TAKEN FROM NIV UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED**

Raya, Ahava, & Dod are three different Hebrew words that mean love. There are, in total, 7 Hebrew words that mean love. The language differentiates between the different types/levels of love, as opposed to the English language, in which love is used to describe one's feelings for ice cream as well as Jesus Christ.

#### **RAYA: Friendship**

It's not all about "she's hot." Hell is hot. Physical attraction will wane. You want to be able to wake up next to your Raya, your friend, everyday, and know that you are loved just the same.

#### **AHAVA: Commitment**

Living together is a test drive. Ahava is not about test drives. It is about a ferocious love. The I'm not going anywhere kind of love. The I know that I'll screw up and you'll still be there for me kind of love. It's NOT I'll be with you for as long as you make me feel good, but once you're dull, etc, I'm out. The Bible describes love as "suffering long..." as opposed to the world that paints love as a picture of tingly, giddy feelings...for "the one." There is no "one"...that exists along with leprechauns, oompa loompas, and unicorns. We're all fixer-uppers. Ahava anchors you down to the one you love.

#### **DOD: Intimacy...**

...When Raya and Ahava are present. When they are not, that is when intimacy can go very wrong. Dod is a source of comfort, connection, and pleasure. Dod is a gift from God.

from:<http://jeanetteeng.com/wordpress/?p=570>

Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9, and David had several wives...and committed adultery because he lusted after Bathsheba.

Another key verse comes from 2 Samuel 1:26 where David laments Jonathan's death with the words "*Your love for me was very wonderful, more wonderful than that of women*". Out of context, that would suggest something to modern ears that was not in David's heart at the time. He and Jonathan had been close friends, his marriage to Saul's daughter had been arranged by the King and came with conditions. But David was saying too that the commitment of friendship and camaraderie could surpass a relationship that was predominately 'just' sexual. Men and women were not equal, women were not supposed to share male confidences. Society was very different to our own.



Modern relationships between men and women will contain much of what David had with Jonathan (**mutual understanding, heart-sharing, common mindset**) as well as what he had with women (**sexual, romantic**). We would say a good marriage should be based perhaps more on the bit in red than the bit in blue. But that wasn't what David would have experienced.

At the same time as modern intersex relationships have developed to encompass all those aspects, in many ways we have lost the ability to have good **mutual understanding, heart-sharing, common mindset** relationships with other men. Our culture increasingly says if you are bonding with another man closely then you must be gay. At least, in my experience, many teenagers have picked up that message.

As Christians it is as important for us to model good same sex intimate relationships as it is to model good intersex marriages. We should not be afraid of them.

God looks for people committed to Him, and committed to His family.

Jonathan was a Prince in Israel. David was a shepherd boy who had been brought to the palace and was growing as a military leader. Jonathan recognised God's hand on David and committed himself to David, recognising that the Kingdom would one day be David's - not Jonathan's. It wasn't just a commitment-love, it was very much a self-sacrificing love too. Are there other men you know who may well go further than you will, who will rise above you. Are you competitively seeking to outdo them, or sacrificially working with them to help them become what God wants for them? *Jonathan* is an amazing example of a man who saw God's purposes for someone else, and did all he could to bless and encourage that person, despite the fact that that meant he would lose out himself. That is the sort of love we see recorded in 1 Samuel 18-20.

*"I know I shouldn't be sleeping with my girlfriend, but God knows I just can't help it, He loves me anyway". There is a little truth there mixed with a huge misunderstanding that amounts to a lie.*

The comment above, made last time, has confused some people. Let's see if I can explain it better.

I *wasn't* saying that God can't forgive sin, even when it's something you repeat and can't seem to stop (they used to call these *besetting sins*). But the thrust of last week's message was that it is about *God*, not about *you*.

There is an implication in the quoted bit above which says that, because knows you 'just can't help it', He will *overlook* your sin. No, He will never do that.

Infact, God **cannot** overlook sin. Ever. If He could there would have been no need for regular sacrifices in the Jerusalem Temple and,



ultimately, no need for Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross.

Rather, God has *paid the price* for your sin. We need to deal with our sin in the light of that fact, not ignoring it.

God may well know how you are made, He may well love you anyway (He does), but that cannot ever be an excuse that lets us just carry on with our sin.

*Even if* at the moment we find we cannot overcome it, even if we think we are stuck and will go on and on doing it, we still need to come to Him and be honest that we have failed Him.

"Lord, I have done this again. I am sorry. Help me to overcome it. It is wrong. It falls short of Your standard for me. It has wounded You. Thankyou for your sacrifice for me. Thankyou that You have forgiven me. Help me to walk towards You and away from this."

God wants us to be approaching Him. Thinking that God will overlook something we have done means we cannot be approaching Him. We will get no closer until we are honest that it is sin and we are wrong.

God might know how you are made -who you are - but do you know Who He

is?

A parallel, for me, is the weakness I have for chocolate and cakes. (I'm not saying this is or is not a sin, it's a parallel to explain the point)

Now, I want to lose some flab around my middle. But if I go to Starbucks or Costa just for a coffee and stand in the queue looking at the cakes I will always end up buying one. I know I shouldn't. But it's no good at the end saying "shouldn't have eaten that, but my body knows my weakness, it will lose the pounds anyway". No! I have failed to approach my target of flabloss. I won't get any closer if I don't overcome my weakness. I can't overlook it because my spare inches will keep reminding me.

If I want to get closer to Jesus I can't pretend that the sin I keep doing doesn't matter, that He knows what I am like and will overlook it.

The path to victory starts with honest acknowledgement that we are not in a good place, and to prayerfully seek God's guidance as to how to move on.

14stone 7lbs, and falling. Or was that failing?

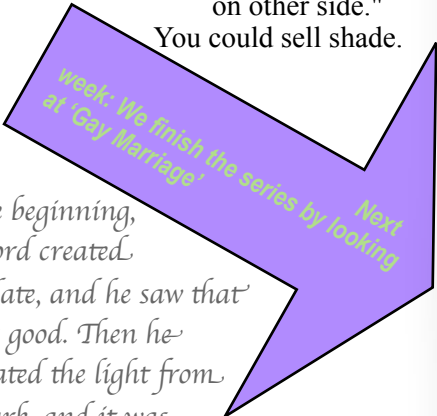
**Bible Study Series**  
We continue our series on  
**Ephesians ch 4:17-32**  
We need to renew our minds as the truth is in  
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Read the passage, and go to  
[www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts](http://www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts) to join in.

### My Page or Yours

In physics we discovered  
The Theory of Relativity is  
like Strudel...  
The size of your waist is  
relative to how much Strudel  
you eat.



YOU KNOW IT'S TIME TO DIET WHEN...  
You are diagnosed with the flesh-eating virus, and the doctor gives you 22 more years to live.  
You put mayonnaise on an aspirin.  
Your driver's licence says, "Picture continued on other side."  
You could sell shade.



In the beginning, the Lord created chocolate, and he saw that it was good. Then he separated the light from the dark, and it was better.

I heard a rumour that Cadbury is bringing out an oriental chocolate bar. Could be a Chinese Wispa  
- Rob Auton - Winner of the Funniest Joke at Fringe Festival 2013

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