

# Jonathan and His Armour-Bearer.

by Andrew Bonar

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*God prefers working in pairs, recognizing human feeling and providing a means of mutual encouragement and faith.*

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 14:6, Ecclesiastes 4:9

**Topics:** "Companionship in Ministry", "The Power of Unity"

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## Description

Andrew Bonar emphasizes the significance of companionship in ministry through the story of Jonathan and his unnamed Armour-bearer. He highlights that God often works through pairs, illustrating this with biblical examples, and suggests that working together not only strengthens faith but also fosters a sense of community and support. Bonar notes that the presence of another can enhance one's courage and effectiveness in spiritual endeavors, as seen in the victories achieved by Jonathan and his Armour-bearer. He encourages believers to recognize the importance of collaboration in their faith journeys, as it combats pride and promotes brotherly love.

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## Transcript

1 Samuel 14

I would like to have known the name of the Armour-bearer, but we are not told his name. There are a great many cases of useful persons whose names are hid. Sometimes God puts honour upon them before the church; sometimes He says, 'never mind, you are remembered before the Lord.' We shall hear the Armour-bearer's name read out at the Great Day.

God seems to like to work by two. Run over in your own mind instances of this: Moses and Aaron, Saul and Jonathan, Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Timothy, Paul and Silas, etc. The seventy were sent forth two and two. It shows how well God knows, and how well God recognises our human feeling. Somehow no one likes to work quite alone. (Almost the only exception to this that I have known was William Burns.) There is a great deal even in seeing the countenance of another. We might almost say that Christ Himself felt this. John, leaning on His bosom, seems to show His yearning for close companionship. To him Christ could whisper as he lay in His bosom. I think it is almost unnatural for one to wish to stand alone.

Then one helps another. Jonathan must have believed that the Armour-bearer's faith was as strong as his own, or he would not have asked him to go with him. How his faith would strengthen Jonathan's! It is no

fault in a labourer to wish for sympathy, indeed it is a great means of grace. I do not think that the man who works alone has the promise of so much blessing as two working together. Moses' Song says, 'How should one chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight?' That is the divine measure. And God gave us this not only in a song but in a history. Samson took the jaw-bone and with it slew a thousand of the Philistines. Jonathan and his Armour-bearer first took the garrison, and then discomfited and put to flight the whole host, ten thousand at least! God has not written that without intending His Church in our day to learn from it. So, we say, one believer taking hold of God's name may do mightily, but two taking hold will do ten times more. Did not Christ say, 'If two of you shall agree as touching anything,' etc. I think we may safely say that that is one of the chief reasons why Christ sends His disciples two and two.

If human feeling requires this, and divine promise falls in with it, human frailty also requires it. It helps to give a blow to our selfishness. We need not think to isolate ourselves, though if He has isolated us that is another thing. If you found God using yourself alone, in spite of great grace there would be great danger of pride springing up in your heart. There are few conversions brought about by the instrumentality of one only. There are generally several links in the chain. The sower and the reaper go together. Peter in dealing with the lame man says, not 'Look on me,' but 'Look on us.' John was there, and John was helping perhaps with his prayers as much as Peter in his more active work. It promotes brotherly love and does a great deal to prevent spiritual pride.

So it is with a minister and his people. The minister is blessed, and he finds out that a band of his people have been specially praying.

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