



SEPTEMBER THEME

LUNCHROOM
Make Space at the Table

BIBLE STORY

John 13:34; 1 Samuel 20 (18-19)
Holding Out for the Arrows | Love
One Another

BOTTOM LINE

Friends love one another

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times. They are
there to help when trouble comes."
Proverbs 17:17, NIV

LIFE APP

Friendship | Using your words and
actions to show others you care

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to
be treated, and with God's help...
I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **FRIENDSHIP** and God's character, as shown through God's big story.

This WEEK: Key Question—What makes someone a good friend? At this phase in their life, kids are starting to experience the ups and downs of friendship. That's why we start with a foundational question to help them wrestle with what God says about having strong friendships with others. If they can recognize the qualities God desires for friendship, they'll not only choose friends who exhibit those, but hopefully will put them into practice for themselves.

We start the month with something Jesus said in **John 13:34**, "I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you" (NIV). Along with that, we'll take a look at one of the most famous friendships in the entire Bible: David and Jonathan. These guys went through a lot together. From making a promise to help each other to escaping the dangers of Jonathan's own father, King Saul, they showed us exactly what it meant for friends to love each other.

Bottom Line: Friends love one another. Loving our friends often means putting aside what we want to give our friends what they need. We pray that kids will learn how they can show love to their friends in everyday situations at home and school.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to prepare their hearts to dig deeper into what it means to be a better, more Christ-like friend. Pray that kids would walk away from today ready to love their friends in more tangible ways and that God would give them the courage to do it.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask kids if they have ever given away anything they owned to a friend or to someone else.
- **[Make It Personal]** (Tell kids about something that you have given away to a friend. It could be something you bought as a gift, or it could be something you owned and



really liked, but you gave to a friend to help them out.)

•• FOOD FIGHT

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Colored paper, tape

What You Do:

- Tape a line down the center of your small group table to divide your area into two sides.
- Divide the group into two teams and assign each team to one side of the line.
- Explain that each team has to stay on its own side throughout the game.
- Crumple the paper into balls and place them along the line.
- Explain that you will have a “food fight” with the paper balls. The goal is to be the team with the least amount of paper on your side of the line at the end of each round.
- Let the kids imagine what kind of food each color is before you begin; the grosser the better!
- Let each team nominate a “cafeteria person” who will try to dive and block the other team’s throws, saving their own team members from getting hit with the food.
- Each round should last about 30-45 seconds; let the groups play as many rounds as you have time for.
- After each round, do a general estimate of which team has the least amount of paper on their side, and select a different kid to be the “cafeteria person.”

What You Say: “In this game, one person tried to save the rest of you from getting hit with food in the food fight. **[Transition] In Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we are going to learn/we learned about someone who stepped out to do what he could to try to save someone else.”**

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• NOT SO SECRET MESSAGE [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Bible, paper, pens

What You Do:

- Read John 13:34 to the group.
- Remind your few that in our Bible story, Jonathan sent a message to David and showed love to David by helping him.
- Ask kids to choose a friend and write out a message promising to help that friend with something.
- They can choose any friend they want to help, and they can choose any task to help their friend with.
- Some suggestions: help with homework, help with chores, help by taking their lunch tray to the trash for them, help by giving them a gift, or help them specifically with something they’re going through or struggling with.



What You Say: “It’s great to have feelings of love for our friends, but acting on those feelings—especially helping a friend with something they need—brings us even closer as friends. Loving a friend means you DO something for that friend. **[Make It Personal]** *(Talk about a time you and a friend were brought closer together by one of you doing something for the other.)* **[Bottom Line]** Friends love one another, so make sure you do that thing you wrote down!”

●● **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Bibles, index cards, pens

What You Do:

- Divide your group into three teams
- Encourage each group to look up today’s Bible Story in 1 Samuel.
—Team 1 should read 1 Samuel 18.
—Team 2 should read 1 Samuel 19.
—Team 3 should read 1 Samuel 20.
- Challenge them to guess and then count how many times in their chapter it says, “Jonathan loved David as himself.”
- Ask:
—Why do you think the author of this book of the Bible repeats this phrase so often?
—Have you ever felt this way about someone, or does anyone feel that way about you? How do you know?
- Challenge them to prove it—write down what they say or do to prove that they feel this way about someone or that someone feels this way about them.
—Ask students to be ready to share what they write down.
—Tell them that they don’t have to get too deep or too personal if they don’t want to.
- Take turns filling in the phrase “_____ loves/d _____ as him/herself because he/she ...”
- Sort the index cards into 3 piles (*Words, Actions, or Both*) after everyone has shared. (*Tip: they can help sort to make it go more quickly.*)
- Ask: what makes someone a good friend? Remind students that it takes words AND actions to be a good friend!

●● **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

A note about discussion questions: these questions are not meant to be asked sequentially nor are they meant for every kid to answer or every group to answer. Rather, they are provided for you as the Small Group Leader to use to jumpstart some deeper discussion. Keep in mind that kids this age still need time to think and process, sometimes before they themselves even know what they think! It’s okay to have silence right after a question is asked. Or your few might need you to answer the question yourself to give them something to frame their answers in. We also hope that you use what you know about your few. Ask the specific questions you think they need to answer. If there’s something you know they’re struggling with or need to work on, ask the questions that pertain to those things and start a conversation about them!

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do: Ask some of the following questions...

- Do you think the number of friends you have matters?
- Would you rather have one or just a few close friends or a big group of friends?
- Can someone become a good friend quickly or does it take time?
- What have you given up or done to show a friend—through words and actions—that you are there for him or her?
- Are there times in life when friendships change? How does that make you feel?
- What advice about friends would you give someone a year younger than you?

