



SEPTEMBER THEME

LUNCHROOM
Make Space at the Table

BIBLE STORY

Romans 15:7; Acts 9:26-28
(Acts 9:1-25, 26:12-18)

Take on Thee | Accept One Another

BOTTOM LINE

Friends accept one another

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times. He is 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 does it mean to accept a friend? Even kids will tell you that some people are easier to get along with than others. But just because we get along with some people better than others, doesn't mean we ignore them or treat them poorly. We'll help kids figure out how they can be friendly and accept others in a way that honors God.

In **Romans 15:7**, Paul writes, "Christ has accepted you. So accept one another in order to bring praise to God" (NIV). We see this played out perfectly through Paul and Barnabas. Paul had a terrible reputation, one that was well deserved. But after his encounter with Jesus, Paul changed. Barnabas believed that about Paul, accepted him, and stood up for him as he introduced Paul to the rest of the apostles.

Bottom Line: Friends accept one another. We pray that kids start to realize that regardless of how people dress, what they own, or are able to do, we are called to accept them and show them how much God loves them with our friendship.

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. Pray especially for the kids who have a hard time accepting those who are different from them or those they don't have chemistry with. Pray that they would understand that God wants us to accept all people, no matter who they are. Ask God to give kids the wisdom to be accepting of everyone and also discerning of whom they choose to befriend.

•• **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: Would you rather be a 12-year-old still in second grade who is liked by your 8-year-old classmates and your teacher OR be a 12-year-old in college who is brilliant but totally stands out?
- Let students discuss their answers to the question.
- Encourage them to ask each other why they chose the answers they did.
- Another Option: Ask students to talk about a time when they felt left out.



●● **WHY DO YOU LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR?**

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

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask one group member to stand, Move his chair (*and any extras*) away from the table.
 - The person standing points at two people sitting beside each other and asks one person, “Why do you love your neighbor?”
 - The person being asked has to say something that the two of them have in common. For example: “I love my neighbor because, just like me, he’s wearing jeans.”
 - What kids decide to say can be anything, but the phrase needs to be consistent. “I love my neighbor because, like me, _____.”
- Some more examples include: she has long hair, he has two eyes, he is wearing sandals, she is wearing a dress, etc.
- Then anyone in the circle not wearing jeans (*or having the characteristic mentioned*) has to get up and change seats.
 - While this is happening, the standing person tries to sit down in an empty seat.
 - The new person caught without a seat will choose a new pair of people for the next round.

What You Say: “It’s pretty common to like people who are similar to us in some way, but there’s a very important thing that makes all of us alike and means that we should show love to everyone even if they seem different. **[Transition] In Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship we’ll learn about/we learned about someone who had a hard time being accepted by the early church members.**”

[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.

●● **TAKE A SNAPSHOT** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: Copy paper, markers

What You Do:

- Challenge students to think of a time when someone helped them to be accepted with others or a time when they helped someone else to be accepted in a group. (*You may want to share a personal story to help them start thinking in the right direction.*)
- Encourage students to draw an object to represent some part of their story.
- When everyone is close to being finished, ask your group to partner up, show their drawings, and tell about the time they thought of that involved someone getting accepted.
- Remind them to really listen because they are going to share their partner’s story with the group, and will need to remember it.
- Go around the group, letting volunteers share the other person’s story until everyone has had a turn.
- Encourage students to ask questions about the drawings as they are being shared. This will promote discussion and conversation amongst the group.

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



Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: Bible, one chair or “hot seat”

What You Do:

- Ask for a volunteer to look up and read aloud Acts 9:1-25.
- Ask another volunteer to look up and read aloud Acts 26:12-18.
- Put the “hot seat” chair in the front and center.
- Let students take turns sitting in the “hot seat” and making a case for whether or not Saul should be part of the disciples (*people who believe in and follow Jesus*).
- Remind students to be respectful of whoever’s in the hot seat, giving that person time and space to speak.
—They can call out questions to ask of the person in the seat.
—The person in the hot seat will then be challenged to respond to the questions, and they can refer back to the passages in Acts for help.
- Wrap Up and Ask:
—How do you think Paul felt when Barnabas stood up for him and accepted him into the group of Jesus followers?
—Have you ever had a friend explain your situation or make a case for you to be accepted into a group or with another person? What happened? How did you feel?

•• 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 the following questions...
—When are some times that kids have to deal with whether or not they are accepted? Can you think of some examples?
—What makes it hard to accept people sometimes?
—If you’ve ever felt not accepted before, what do you wish you could say to the people involved? (*No names*)
—If you’ve ever tried to help someone get accepted with other friends, what worked? What didn’t?
—Do you have a story of something that really changed you? You were one way before this thing happened but different afterward.
—Does following Jesus make you different than before you knew and trusted Him? In what ways?

•• A VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Divide your group into three smaller groups and instruct them to move around to make a left side, middle, and right side.

