



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 the following questions, encouraging each child to share:
 - Have you made any new friends recently?
 - Who is your new friend?
 - How did you meet your friend?



●● **SIT HERE!**

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

What You Need: Optional—smart phone with stopwatch (*from home*)

What You Do:

- Have your group sit in chairs around your small group table. Make sure you have only one extra chair by clearing away any others.
- Lead the kids in a round robin-style get-to-know-you game.
 - To play, guide the child who's sitting to the left of the empty space (*provide help as necessary*) to invite another child to sit beside him by saying, "Eleanor, will you sit by me?"
 - To which "Eleanor" replies, "Thank you, Javier," and moves to the empty space. (*Use kids' actual names.*)
 - The child who's now sitting to the left of the empty space (*again, provide help as necessary*) then invites another child to sit beside her.
 - The game continues until each child moves once.
 - HINT: Direct the kids who've changed seats to fold their hands, cross their arms, and touch their knees, or do another motion to signal that they've had a turn.
- **Optional Variation:** Guide kids through the first round, and then challenge them to complete a second round in the exact same order...while timed! Repeat as time allows, clocking the kids each round to see if they can best their record.
- **HINT:** Keep this game in your back pocket throughout the month. It's a great way to help the kids get to know each other, practice friendship skills, and stretch their memory muscles!

What You Say: "Way to go! You did a great job welcoming new friends to sit beside you. [Transition] In Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship we'll hear/we heard about someone who also did a good job welcoming a new friend."

[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.

●● **BARNABAS AND FRIENDS** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

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:

- Choose one child to be "Barnabas."
- When you say "Go," kids should mingle around your small group space.
- After a while say "Freeze!"
- While kids are frozen, give Barnabas a characteristic to use to group the kids (*i.e. hair color/boys/girls/tall/short/clothing color/shoe type*) and work with him/her to quickly get the kids into groups. After Barnabas has grouped the kids, he/she should introduce them to one another.
- Play multiple rounds, choosing a new Barnabas and giving him/her a new characteristic to use to group the kids.
- Briefly review the Bible story, highlighting how Barnabas introduced Saul to Jesus' friends. Talk about how they can accept others,



too.

What You Say: “When Saul tried to be with Jesus’ friends in Jerusalem, they were all afraid of him. They didn’t believe that he had changed. But Barnabas accepted Saul and introduced him to Jesus’ friends. You can be kind to others just like Barnabas was kind to Saul. You can choose to accept others and treat them the way that you would want to be treated. You can invite someone who’s lonely to play your favorite game with you -- and then play theirs with them, you can invite the new kid to come to your house to play, or you can choose someone you don’t know very well to be on your team. The Bible says it this way: *‘Christ has accepted you. So accept one another’ (Romans 15:7 NIV)*. So remember: **[Bottom Line] Friends accept one another.**”

●● **LUNCH TRAY BINGO** [Live for God | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: “Lunch Tray Bingo” activity pages; one for each kid, “Lunch Tray Bingo Scenario” cards, crayons

What You Do:

- Give each kid a “Lunch Tray Bingo” game board and a crayon.
- Randomly select a scenario card. Read the scenario and direct the kids to cross off that scenario if it’s on their lunch tray.
- Continue until a child crosses off all five of their scenarios.
- Briefly unpack how each scenario shows a way that friends can accept each other.

What You Say: “God wants you to accept one another just like Jesus accepted you. **[Make It Personal] (Share about a time when you accepted someone who was new, lonely, or somehow different. Talk about how it affected both you and the other person.)** What are some ways that you can accept others? *(Pause. If kids are stuck, invite them to use their game boards for ideas.)* So remember: **[Bottom Line] Friends accept one another.**”

●● **THERE TO HELP** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: “Memory Motions” activity page

What You Do:

- Read this month’s memory verse (*found on the left column of page 1 of this leader’s guide*) aloud, encouraging kids to say it with you.
- Using the “Memory Motions” activity page, review the motions for “friend,” “love” and “help.”
- Guide kids to say the verse using the motions.
- Play freeze tag as a way for kids to practice helping when “trouble” comes.
—Invite a child to be “Trouble.”
—Guide the other kids to mingle around your environment, (*walking only; no running*) doing their best to stay away from Trouble.
—When Trouble tags someone, they must freeze with their legs spread apart. (*They can also make the sign for “help.”*)
—The only way the kids can be unfrozen is if a friend helps them by crawling between their legs.
- **Note:** If you don’t have a large environment or you have a lot of groups in one room, consider playing the game outdoors. If that’s not possible, limit the kids’ movement by directing them to tiptoe, baby step, or move in slow motion.

What You Say: “Proverbs 17:17 tells us that friends help each other when trouble comes. How did Barnabas help Saul? *(Pause.)* Yes, he accepted Saul and introduced him to Jesus’ friends. Can you accept others, too? Yes, you can accept others and treat them the way you want to be treated. Can you accept others who are like you? Can you accept others who are different than you? Yes, you can accept others because Jesus accepted you. So remember: **[Bottom Line] Friends accept one another.**”

