



SEPTEMBER THEME



BIBLE STORY

1 Kings 19:14-21; 2 Kings 2:1-15
Friend Like Me | Elijah and Elisha

BOTTOM LINE

Friends encourage 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

●● THEME OVERVIEW

This week we'll head to **1 Kings 19:14-21** and **2 Kings 2:1-15** and take a look at a different sort of friendship between Elijah and Elisha. God knew Elijah needed help and directed him to Elisha. Elisha came alongside Elijah and stayed with him to the very end. Elisha knew the importance of encouragement.

Bottom Line: **Friends encourage one another.** Sometimes it feels like everyone is out for themselves. God has a different way for us to live. God wants us to take time out to encourage others. This week, families will find out how they can be friends who use their words and actions to build others up.

●● THEME VIDEO

What You Do: Watch this week's video in the comfort of your family's @ home prayer + worship spot. The video can be found on popmn.org/cm or facebook.com/popchildrens. Then use this Family Guide, GodTime & ParentCue cards, and FAITH5 daily devos to keep the conversation going...

●● EliJAH or EliSHA Jumping [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

What You Need: 2 pieces of paper, pen/marker/crayon

What You Do:

- Write “EliJAH” on one piece of paper and “EliSHA” on the other. Underline JAH on the first and SHA on the second.
- Set the papers on the floor, about two feet apart from each other.
- Encourage family members to stand somewhere between the EliJAH and EliSHA papers.
- Point out the differences between the two names, placing an emphasis on the endings (“JAH” and “SHA”).
—You can also point out that “J” comes before “S” in the alphabet, just like Elijah was a prophet (*person who spoke for God*) BEFORE he met and befriended Elisha.
- Instruct your family to jump between the two pages as you read the story recap below.
—You'll notice there are a few instances where you need to stay put instead of jumping.
—You'll need to listen closely for these tricky spots in the story!

Story Recap

- EliJAH (*jump*) was a prophet who spoke for God. He was discouraged, feeling like he was the only prophet left.
- God sent him to find EliSHA (*jump*) to be the next prophet.
- EliJAH (*jump*) found EliSHA (*jump*) working in the field.
- When EliJAH (*jump*) asked him to follow him, EliSHA (*jump*) agreed.

- From then on, everywhere EliJAH (*jump*) went, EliSHA (*jump*) followed, watching and learning.
- The two men traveled to Gilgal. They knew that soon God was going to take EliJAH (*jump*) up to heaven.
- EliJAH (*stay put*) told EliSHA (*jump*) to stay in Gilgal.
- EliSHA (*stay put*) replied, "I will not leave you." So they continued on together. This happened two more times until they arrived at the Jordan river.
- At the river's edge, EliJAH (*jump*) struck the water with his coat. The water parted, and they walked across on dry ground.
- EliJAH (*stay put*) stopped to encourage his friend, EliSHA (*jump*).
- They walked farther. Then, a chariot and horses made of fire appeared and separated EliJAH(*jump*) and EliSHA (*jump*).
- EliSHA (*stay put*) watched as EliJAH (*jump*) was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind.
- EliSHA (*jump*) picked up the coat that had been left behind. He hurried back to the river, struck the water with it, and walked across on dry ground!

What You Say: "I love this story, even though the two names can be SUPER confusing. (*Hold up the Elijah sign*) EliJAH was a prophet who told other people about God. But he felt alone. Then, God sent him to find EliSHA (*hold up the Elisha sign*). The two men traveled together and EliSHA watched and learned all he could from EliJAH. Before EliJAH was taken up to heaven to be with God, EliSHA said, 'You have been like a father to me.' They were good friends who encouraged each other. And we can be good friends, too, when we remember that **[Bottom Line] friends encourage one another.**"

•• **EGG-COURAGEMENT** [Application activity]

What You Need: Egg carton, 12 pennies (*or other small objects*)

What You Do:

- Line up your family and set an empty egg carton about 20 feet away.
- Hold the 12 pennies (*or other small objects*) and stand next to the lead player.
- One at a time, players will grab a penny from you, run to the egg carton, and drop the penny from waist height without bending over.
- If they miss the carton (*or get it in an already filled compartment*), they pick up the penny, run back to the family, hand it off to the next player, and go to the back of the line. If they get it in an empty compartment, they run to the back of the line and the new lead player takes a new penny.
- The game ends when your family gets one penny in each of the 12 cups of the egg carton.
- Explain that the main point of this game is to cheer one another on as you play.
—Make a BIG deal out of this requirement, explaining that the more you encourage each other, the more fun the game will be!
—As the game is being played, assign points to family members at different times, depending on how excitedly they cheer and encourage.
- The player with the most points at the end of the game is the winner!

What You Say: "We did an awesome job filling our egg carton with pennies! But do you know what the best part of the game was? When we chose to encourage each other. What are some other ways we can encourage our family and friends? (*pause for ideas*) Can you share a story about a time you were sad and a friend encouraged you and helped you feel better? What did they do? (*Maybe they wrote you a note, prepared a meal when you were sick, gave you a thoughtful gift, or told a silly joke to cheer you up.*) And what about people you don't know, but just see throughout your day? How could you encourage them? (*Offer a smile, hold a door, wave as they drive by, notice something they did and tell them you appreciated it*). Remember, we're not just focusing in on those people we call "friends" —but also thinking about how we might live differently with everyone we meet along life's journey.

"This week, we're learning that **[Bottom Line] friends encourage one another**. Since **[Bottom Line] friends encourage one another**, let's do just that by following through with one (*or more*) of the great ideas we just discussed!

●● PASS IT ON [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

What You Need: Bible, paper, and scissors

What You Do:

- Cut a large heart out of paper.
- Look up and read Proverbs 17:17 with your family.
- Sit in a circle and pass the heart as you recite the verse.
- The person who ends up holding the heart when you say, "Proverbs 17:17," should stand in the center of the circle.
- Once that person is standing in the middle, lead your family in saying, "Way to go, [name]. You're awesome!" Then, take turns sharing something specific you think is awesome about this person.
- Repeat reading the verse and passing the heart among the remaining players. Continue until everyone has had a turn in the center.

What You Say: "A friend loves at all times, it's true. But the second part of our memory verse is important too. A friend is there to help when trouble comes. One big way we can help is to encourage each other. Sometimes people are sad, or something frustrating happened and they need someone to remind them just how awesome they are! You can be that kind of friend. So this week, let's pay attention to the people around us. Is someone sad? Is someone sitting by themselves? Is someone acting different than they normally do? Maybe they're not laughing or joining in to play? Let's pay attention and use kind and encouraging words and actions. Because **[Bottom Line] friends encourage one another.**"

●● PRAY

What You Say: "Let's pray: God, you are awesome! Help us remember this week that **[Bottom Line] friends encourage one another.** We want to be the kind of people who love at all times, especially when others are sad or need encouragement. Help us remember to use our words and actions to show others how important they are to us. Thanks for loving us, God. We love you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

●● ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Download the **GodTime Card**, **ParentCue Card**, and **FAITH5** at popmn.org/cm. Use them this week to continue the conversation around our bottom line: **[Bottom Line] Friends encourage one another.**

●● WHAT'S NEXT

Set a reminder to join us for WOW @home on Wednesday 09/30 at 6:00 pm live at facebook.com/popchildrens or anytime after that at popmn.org/youtube for a time of worship centered around the **[Bottom Line]: Friends forgive one another!**