

CITY LG - September 9 & 10, 2017

Bible Story: Take on Thee (Accept One Another) • *Romans 15:7, Acts 9:26-28 (Supporting: Acts 9:1-25, 26:12-18)*

Bottom Line: Friends accept one another.

Key Question: What does it mean to accept a friend?

Memory Verse: “A friend loves at all times. They are there to help when trouble comes.” *Proverbs 17:17 NIV*

WORSHIP: *Never Gonna Stop Singing and Higher than the Sky*

Welcome:

“Hey, everyone! You know what? It’s been so much fun hanging out and seeing what happens in our lunchroom in The City! How about we keep this thing going? Whose favorite subject is P.E.? *(Pause for response.)* I thought so! Well, we have a fun exercise video to get us all going and ready to learn more about friendship today. All you have to do is follow along with the video. Are you ready? Ok! Let’s do this!

CG: Faith Fitness Video

“Awesome job everyone! Well, last week we mentioned that we find a ton about God’s plan for friendship in the Bible. Listen to what the apostle Paul had to say about friendship. *(Open your Bible and read Romans 15:7.) Christ has accepted you. So accept one another in order to bring praise to God (NIV).* Basically, what Paul is saying here is:

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “**Friends accept one another.** The really cool thing about this friendship principle is that Paul himself had been on the receiving end of this. Let me back up and explain more.”

“Paul was also known as Saul—NOT King Saul who we talked about last week. That was a different Saul. Our Saul for today is one who ended up writing a bunch of letters that became books of the New Testament. But when you read his story, you’ll find that Saul did not start out as the sort of person who would write books of the Bible. See, Saul had made it his mission to eliminate followers of Jesus one way or another. He had them thrown into prison or worse. Saul was in the crowd watching the day Stephen, a Jesus-follower, was killed outside the city of Jerusalem. Saul was a dangerous man, and Jesus-followers—people like Barnabas—had every right to fear him. Let’s take a look at our story today...”

CG: Lesson Video

“Since his new friends decided to accept Saul, he stayed with the believers, and he told all sorts of people about Jesus. Later Saul would travel to many different cities preaching the good news with his good friend, Barnabas. Later on in his life, he wrote a letter to the church in Rome, encouraging them to accept each other, just as the apostles had accepted him.

Accepting others is going to look different every day. It could mean letting the new kid sit with you at the lunch table or standing up for the kid on your sports team who doesn't play very well but always tries his best. It could mean letting your little sister hang out with you and your friends when her friend has to go home sick. Whatever it looks like, you don't have to do it alone, though. Let's ask God to help us accept one another.”

PRAY: “Dear God, thank You for always accepting us, even when we don't deserve it. We are thankful for the example the early Jesus-followers showed us by how they accepted one another. Please help us to accept one another too, so that others can see Your love in action. We love You and pray this in Jesus' name, amen.”

“What a great story we heard today, huh? I have a question for you. Have you ever walked into a room and not known ANYONE there? Maybe it was the first time to you came here to [your environment's name] or your first time at dance lessons or soccer practice. Maybe it was even the first day of school this year when you met your teacher and the other kids in your class for the first time. Has that ever happened to you? *(Pause for response.)* Yeah, it's happened to me too. It can be a little scary to walk into a room where you don't know anyone. But when someone comes up to you and says hi or asks you to play or says they're happy to see you, everything changes and you feel more comfortable because someone has welcomed and accepted you!

“I think that's something that every friendship needs. It needs someone to take that first step of kindness. For Saul, it took Barnabas believing his story and standing up for him.

CG: Memory Verse Slide

“Barnabas is a great example of our memory verse for this month too: *A friend loves at all times. He is there to help when trouble comes*, Proverbs 17:17. What will it take for you to accept someone? For some people, that's an easy one. Some of us can walk up and start a conversation with almost anybody. For other people, it's a little harder. Some of us are shy and uncomfortable talking to new people. But no matter which category you fall into, chances are you want to be accepted for who you are. So maybe it's up to you to accept others the way they are just like Jesus has accepted you. Jesus proved He loves you and wants you to be part of God's family when He died on a cross for your sins. You can accept others because God accepted you through Jesus. Let's take one last look at our Bottom Line.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Friends accept one another. Say that with me.”

“Be on the lookout for ways you can take that first step of kindness. You may make a friend for life! It’s time for Small Group, where you’ll have a chance to talk more about what it means to accept one another. Have fun together, and we’ll see you next time!”

(DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS)