

ALLEY SG – September 2- 4, 2023

Today's Bible Story: It Takes Two (Two People Are Better Than One) • *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*

Today's Key Question: What makes someone a good friend?

Today's Bottom Line: Choose your friends carefully.

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

1. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Music Staff Poster (1 per group), "Musical Friends" cards (1 set per group), roll of blue wall tape, tacky tape (note: you will reuse posters and cards for each service)

What You Do:

- Ask kids to think about what makes a great song.
- Give them a chance to raise their hand and share what they came up with. (*ie: catchy tune, quality singer, relevant topic, etc.*)
- Allow time for discussion, if needed.
- Use tape to hang the sheet music poster on the wall in your group space.
- Ask kids to think about what makes a good friend.
- Place the "Musical Friends" cards out and spread them out where everyone can see them.
- Allow kids to take turns choosing characteristics that they would want in a friend.
- Be sure to explain that we all have different things that are important to us when we choose our friends.
- When they choose one, they will attach it to the sheet music with tacky tape.
- Once everyone has had a chance to add characteristics to the staff, read out loud what everyone chose.
 - Then spend time discussing the importance of choosing carefully when it comes to our friends.
 - Explain that when we surround ourselves with people that have these good qualities, it's like a song we love to hear.

2. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: JENGA® sets (one per bin) and Bible

What You Do:

- Open the Bible to Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 and read it out loud to your group.
- Encourage the kids to work together to play Jenga.
- If a kid pulls a piece and all the blocks fall down, instruct all of the other kids in your small group to shout, "We can help!"
- Direct the kids to build it back up.
- Invite the kids to continue play.
- Start the conversation below.
- Point out that when they helped each other set the blocks back up, it was so much easier than if one person did it alone. God made us to live in community and have friends! These blocks might be a small example, but when we live our lives helping and encouraging others, it can really make a big difference.

3. Discussion Questions

- What makes a good friend?
- Think about the friends you have. Why do you think they have chosen to be friends with you?
- Have you ever had to end a friendship with someone?
- Is it difficult to choose friends carefully?
- Why are friendships important?

4. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Index cards, pens or pencils, bowl or cup

What You Do:

- Invite kids to sit in a circle and hand each kid an index card and a pen or pencil.
- Place the bowl or cup in the middle of the circle.
- Ask kids to think of something they would like prayer for in the week ahead.
- Explain this should be something they feel comfortable sharing with the group.
- Tell them to write that prayer request down on their index card, fold it, and place it in the bowl or cup in the center of the circle.
- Once every kid has had a chance to place their card in the bowl, shake it up to shuffle the cards around. Hand the bowl to a kid.
- Tell them to choose a card and then pass the bowl to the kid next to them. Continue passing the bowl around the circle until every kid has chosen a card.
- Lead kids through a group prayer, letting each kid take turns praying out loud for the person whose card they received.
- After praying, remind kids how praying for our friends can strengthen and deepen our relationships with each other. Encourage them to take the card they drew home so they can pray for that person throughout the week.