



DAY 4

WHAT MAKES SOMEONE A GOOD FRIEND?

How would you answer that question? Go ahead and fill in this thought bubble with as many ideas as you can imagine. Take your time—think of all the reasons your friends mean so much to you.



All right—good job! When you look back at your list, you'll probably see some shared interests ("Likes soccer." "Lets me play video games at his house.")

You'll probably also notice some words about character. ("Nice to me." "Includes me." "Asks me how I'm doing.")

All of those ideas come down to one thing: LOVE. A good friend isn't afraid to show love. Maybe you don't say it like that all the time, but it's true. Real friends care enough to show love—with words and actions.

Now you've got a great collection of words to inspire you. Go out and be that kind of friend to the people around you!



LIVE FOR GOD



USING YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS TO SHOW OTHERS YOU CARE

READ 1 SAMUEL 20

DAY 1

Now let's take another look at verse 17. Write the last part below.

Jonathan . . .

Wow. THAT'S friendship! Jonathan wasn't David's friend because he thought it would be good for him. He didn't expect to get something out of being David's friend. He was David's friend because he wanted what was best for David. He loved David just as he loved himself!

Here's what real friendship looks like.

- We love each other.
- We forgive each other.
- We accept each other.
- We encourage each other.

Did you notice that all of those actions are focused on the other person? Friendship isn't about you. It's about **treating others the way you want to be treated.**

Friendship takes action—like how Jonathan defended David to his father, and how he warned David to leave since it wasn't safe for him to stay. You get to be that kind of friend. You get to be there for your friend—whatever that might look like for you.

Because that's what friends do.

FRIENDS LOVE ONE ANOTHER.



HEAR FROM GOD



DAY 2

Do you ever pray for your friends? One of the greatest things you could possibly do for one of your friends is to **pray for them**. It doesn't just have to be when they're going through something really tough or when you're having a disagreement with them. You can pray for your friends when things are good, too.

You can thank God for the friends He's given you. You can ask Him to help them with whatever they might be facing. You can ask Him to help you know how to show love to them.

Do you know what would mean SO much to your friend? For you to tell them, "I've been praying for you."

So go for it! Think of three friends you want to pray for today, and take some time to talk to God.



DAY 3

Here's our Memory Verse for this month.

"A FRIEND LOVES AT ALL TIMES. HE IS THERE TO HELP WHEN TROUBLE COMES." PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

Basically, a friend has got your back—always! A friend helps you out when you need him. A true friend is there for you, whatever comes your way.

Who is that for you? Who's been a friend for you through thick and thin? Who's been there to help when trouble comes?

Sometime this week, take a minute and tell your friend that they've been that person for you.

"You've always got my back. I remember when . . ."

"Thanks for being there for me when . . ."

"I probably never told you this, but it meant a lot to me that you . . ."

You know what? Everyone loves to hear that you appreciate what they've done. If you're willing to share your gratitude with them, it'll probably make your friendship even stronger!



DAY 4

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ACCEPT A FRIEND?

All right—it's survey time! Fill in your favorites below.

What's your favorite . . .

Candy: _____

Movie: _____

Hobby: _____

Sport: _____

Restaurant: _____

So you've got your favorites. We all do! Everybody you know would probably answer those five simple questions a little differently. And just like you might not understand the people who like Tootsie Rolls (I mean, really?), there are plenty of people who literally say it's their favorite candy.

Think about it. How boring would it be if everyone liked the same things you liked? If everyone dressed like you, had the same things as you, or the same abilities . . . life wouldn't be very interesting. Thankfully, God made life very interesting by making people very different from each other. And that's a good thing!

So don't get hung up on differences. Don't let that get in the way of getting to know someone who could end up being a great friend. Ask them questions. Find out what makes them unique. Be brave enough to accept someone who maybe isn't like you at all. Isn't that what you'd want someone to do for you?



LIVE FOR GOD

FRIENDSHIP

USING YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS TO SHOW OTHERS YOU CARE

READ ROMANS 15:7 AND ACTS 9:26-28

DAY 1

Friendship is easy when you "get" the person—when you feel like you can relate to them so freely. But that's not always the case, is it? Sometimes it's hard to accept the things about someone that you don't understand.

Here's some good news, God gave us a great example that we can follow. He made the first move. In Romans 15:7, draw a big arrow from the first sentence leading to the second sentence. Now draw a big 1 and 2 above them.

God loved us enough to send Jesus to this earth, to die for our sins. We were all "unacceptable" because of the wrong things we've done. We've all messed up and fallen short of His perfect standard. But that didn't stop Him from accepting us!

So we follow His lead and accept each other. And when we do, we give others a clear picture, so they can see the way God accepts *all* of us. See how that works?

Barnabas accepted Paul even though others doubted that Paul could have really changed. And just like Barnabas did, you can stand in the gap for someone else. You can be the one to give them a chance.

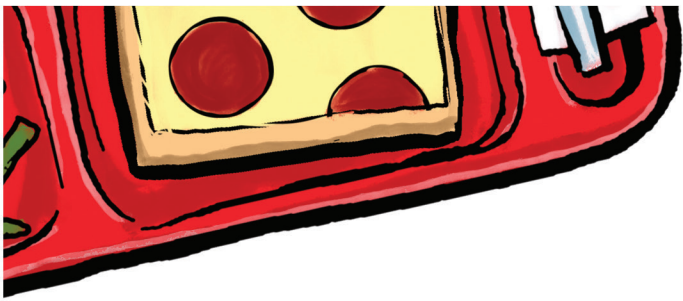
After all,

FRIENDS ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER.

WEEK 2 - PRETEEN



HEAR FROM GOD



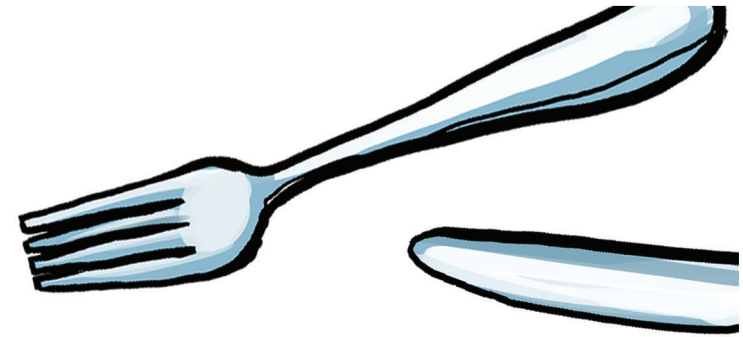
DAY 2

What if you could see someone the way God sees them? Would that change the way *you* see them? What do you think?

The truth is, God created each person on purpose—people you feel like you understand completely, and people who you maybe don't get along with quite so well.

We don't have to be best friends with everyone. But we *do* need to accept them.

Think of someone who you have a hard time accepting. Talk to God about it. Ask Him to help you see them the way *He* sees them.



DAY 3

Today, start by drawing a big circle on this page. Inside the circle, write down the names of your best friends, your people, your squad.

All right. Now, think about this question. Do you think you only need to be friends with the people in that inner circle? No. Friendship is something you can offer to everyone!

Maybe there's someone you've never even talked to before who could end up being one of your closest friends. You'll never know until you try.

Now, some people are super outgoing and love to talk to new people. Other people . . . not so much. Just keep in mind it's a good challenge and shouldn't feel like torture to you.

The next time you find yourself waiting for the bus with somebody, or working on a school project together—especially if it's not someone you'd normally hang out with—take a chance. Start up a conversation and see if you can find out some more about them.

You never know—you reaching out might be just the kind of acceptance they really need!



PRAY
TO GOD



TALK
ABOUT GOD



DAY 4

WHEN A FRIEND HURTS YOU, HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

That's a good question.

In the moment, you can't even believe what they've done. This is your friend—someone you trust. How could they do this to you?

Write down some words that describe the emotions you feel when they first hurt you.

It's a good thing we don't have to stay that way, right? God helps us to find a better way to respond that isn't based on the way we feel. It's not about whether or not they deserve it. It's not even about whether they're really sorry. It's about taking a leap of faith, trusting that God's way is best and deciding to forgive.

Do you know what forgiveness does for you? It sets you free! It releases you from the heavy burden of carrying around anger in your heart. It cancels out the "bad blood" between the two of you, and replaces it with love and acceptance.

Now let's come up with a *new* list. Write down some words about how you feel when you forgive.



LIVE FOR GOD



FRIENDSHIP

USING YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS TO SHOW OTHERS YOU CARE

DAY 1

READ COLOSSIANS 3:13

Write a star each time you see the word "forgive." Seems pretty important, doesn't it?

NOW LET'S RECAP HOW JESUS TREATED HIS FRIEND PETER.
READ JOHN 21:1-17.

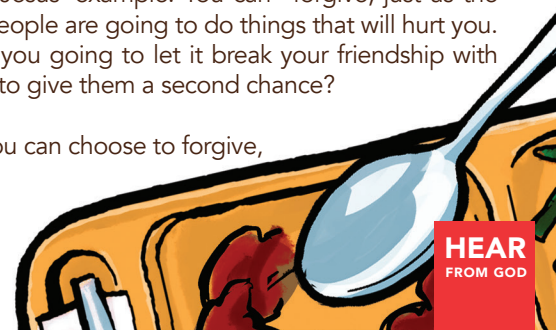
Wow. Even though Peter had denied even knowing Jesus when things had gotten really bad, Jesus didn't hold it against him. Jesus loved him and forgave him. Why? Because Peter was His friend and that's what friends do. Friends forgive one another.

Jesus had big plans for Peter. He knew Peter would be an incredible leader of the church and Peter's past mistakes weren't going to get in the way. Jesus made sure of that.

Guess what? You get to follow Jesus' example. You can "forgive, just as the Lord forgave you." The fact is, people are going to do things that will hurt you. And you get to decide . . . are you going to let it break your friendship with them forever? Or are you going to give them a second chance?

It's not easy but you can do it. You can choose to forgive, because

GOD FORGAVE YOU FIRST.



HEAR FROM GOD



DAY 2

God showed us once and for all what real friendship looks like. He sent His only Son, Jesus, to die for our sins—to repair our relationship that was broken by the wrong things we’ve done.

God is perfect and we’re not. But He loves us so much that He’s willing to forgive ALL the times we mess up and fall short. He made it possible for us to have a true friendship with Him and be part of His family forever!

When Jesus had dinner with His friends right before He was about to go to the cross, He told them something really important. He told them what true friendship is all about.

CHECK IT OUT IN JOHN 15:12-13.

Take some time to thank God for sending Jesus, who chose to lay down His life for us—His friends.



PRAY
TO GOD



DAY 3

Have you ever been forgiven before? You know how that feels. It’s amazing! It’s like a huge weight has been lifted off your shoulders.

You knew you were in the wrong. But the other person chose to say, “It’s OK. I forgive you. It’s all in the past. I don’t hold it against you anymore.”

The people closest to you have some great stories about times they were forgiven—or maybe some times they forgave somebody else. After all, life is messy. At some point, it’s going to happen—we’re going to frustrate, disappoint or hurt the people around us.

Ask them about it! Ask your mom if she ever had to forgive somebody. Was it hard to do? What made her do it? Tell your aunt or uncle that you’re learning a lot about forgiveness, and you wondered if they ever had to forgive somebody, or to ask for forgiveness.

You’ll find that adults have a lot of really powerful stories about forgiveness and how important it is to a friendship.



TALK
ABOUT GOD



DAY 4

HOW CAN YOU BE A FRIEND THIS WEEK?

There are SO many ways to encourage a friend. The possibilities are endless! And it's important for us to take the time to do it. God has given us a chance to *encourage* each other, and to build each other up with our hope in him!

So what does that look like? Write a friend's name to each of these ideas, and see if you can make them happen this week.

Give a compliment.

Want to make your friend feel like a million bucks? Tell her that her hair looks great. Tell him his presentation was awesome. It's so simple, but it means so much!

Share a Bible verse.

Maybe you have a favorite verse that always reminds you to trust God. Or you can Google "encouraging Bible verses" and find a ton of great ones. Write out a verse on a piece of paper and give it to a friend.

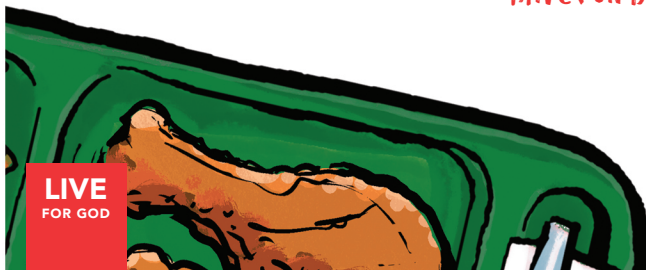
Pray by name.

Talk to God about one of your friends and what's going on in her life. Let her know you're praying for her.

Write a note, draw a picture, play a song

A fun way to encourage someone is to use your artistic talent, or to share something you love like a favorite song. The point is, you're showing your friend that you're thinking of them and that you care!

HAVE FUN BEING AN ENCOURAGER!



LIVE FOR GOD



USING YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS TO SHOW OTHERS YOU CARE

READ 1 THESSALONIANS 5:11 AND JOB 2:11-13

DAY 1

What is Paul saying in his letter to the Thessalonians? (It's something that applies to us today, by the way.) He says we should encourage each other with the hope we have. What do you think he means by "the hope we have"? Write out what you think.

As Christians, we can have hope in Jesus that can never be shaken. We can encourage each other with that hope. And what does Paul say will happen when we do that?

We _____.

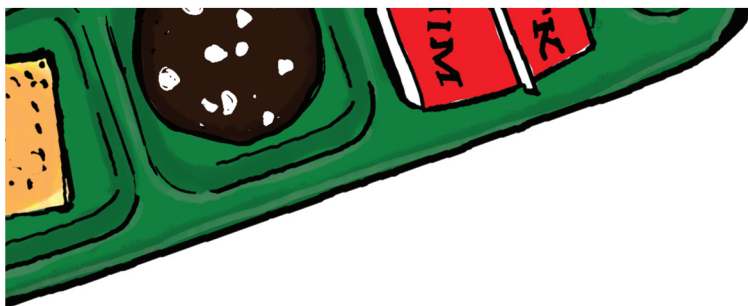
Draw out a city skyline across this page, with some cool tall buildings. Write one of your friends' names under each skyscraper.

Your friends are facing tough things too—things you see, and some things you don't even know about. You can encourage them and comfort them, like Job's friends did. You can show them that you care.

THAT'S HOW YOU BUILD THEM UP!



HEAR FROM GOD



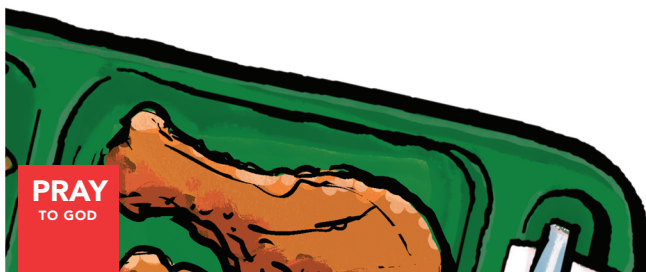
DAY 2

We've talked about praying FOR your friends. It's an incredible privilege to be able to share the joys and struggles of someone you care about, and to be able to talk to God about what's going on in our lives.

God knows you, and He knows your friends, better than anyone! He knows exactly what's going on—the good, the bad, and the ugly. And He's right there with you through it all. He'll never leave you! Isn't that great for you and your friends to know?

How about this—have you ever prayed WITH your friends? Talk about encouraging! It's amazing to hear someone else talk to God about you and for you.

If you have a friend who you know loves and follows God, praying together can be a game-changer. Give it a try and ask him if you can pray for him. Tell her you'd like to ask God to help her with what's going on. It may be one of the coolest experiences you've ever had as a friend!



PRAY
TO GOD



DAY 3

Do you have a best friend? Best friends are great because you can talk about anything. You know they've got your back, no matter what!

When's the last time you talked about life—you know, the important stuff? Not just joking around, or what you're going to do this weekend. Do you ever talk about what's going on at home? Do you talk about the things that make you feel stressed out, excited, or afraid?

Take some time to sit down with your best friend and have a heart-to-heart talk. Maybe you do that anyway. But maybe it's been a while. See what's going on with her. Tell her what's going on with you.

You never know what things she might just need to talk about, with someone who cares. And you might find that you need the encouragement of having your friend's listening ear. That's what friends are for!

Don't miss the chance you have to stop, talk, and encourage each other.



TALK
ABOUT GOD