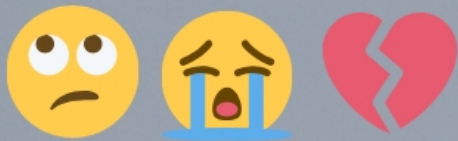
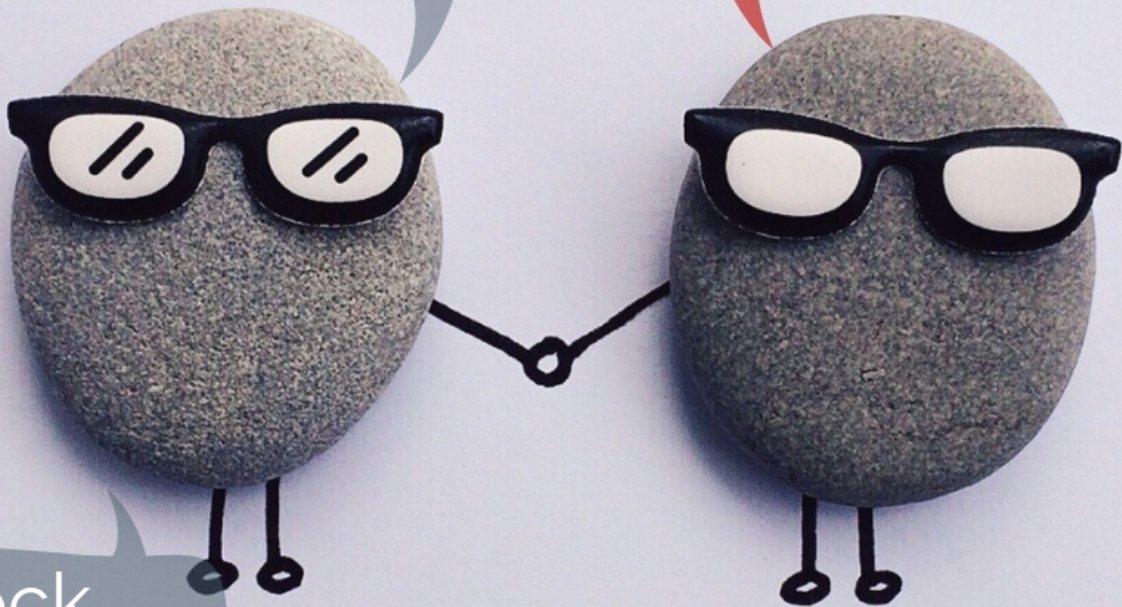


2day ...



Here 4 U!!!



U rock



Friends with Everyone ...

Tween Small Group

Week 3: Who Does God Say our Friends are?

BIBLE BESTIES

Activity: People & Pocket Journals

Supplies: Spiral notebook, any size. Stickers to decorate.

Peeps Journal: We've talked a lot about how God places people in our lives purposefully. Last week, I challenged all of you to look up and say "hi" to everyone you passed in the hallways at school. This week, we're going to take it one step further.

Your challenge is to dedicate a page of your journal each day to a person in your life. They can be a friend, relative, teacher, person in your community ...etc. Fill the page with a prayer for this person!

1. Praise God for how awesome He made that person! There is good in everyone. Find the good, and focus on that!
2. Thank God for that person. You don't even have to know someone to thank God for them, but if you do know them, you can thank Him specifically for the difference they make in your life.
3. Ask God how to help you bless this person, either by being a good friend, writing them a note to tell them they are awesome, or doing something to help them without being asked. The possibilities are endless. God LOVES when we love people.
4. Pray for God to bless that person. If you know they are going through a hard time, ask God to heal or help them.
5. Close every prayer asking God to help you love the people in your life well, and to forgive us when we spend too much time thinking about ourselves and what we are going through. Pray for good friends to love you well, too.

Pocket Journal:

It's important to set aside time with God in prayer and His Word everyday.

If you don't have a Bible or a devotional book, search for a free app to put on your phone or device. There are many! If you don't have access to either, put your name on this list - I will make sure you have one by the end of the week.

When you read and pray everyday, truth nuggets will just start popping into your head like CRAZY. Write things you want to remember throughout the day in your pocket journal and ...keep it in your pocket! You may also run into people through the day that you want to remember to pray for ...you can write their names in your pocket journal so you don't forget!

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN: "Consider the power of your presence in another person's life."

Jesus experienced life on earth. He grew up and had a family and friends. He felt the very things you feel. The difference? Jesus is God ...so He dealt with everything perfectly. However, he felt what we feel, which is why He is the only one truly fit to be our best friend.

In everything we do, we can follow the example Jesus modeled for us, including friendship! Jesus was open to being friends with anyone, and often took time to talk to people others would normally avoid. But even Jesus had a close circle of friends. Eventually, he had 12 apostles that were particularly close to Him. Of those 12, three were even closer friends with Jesus. Peter, James, and John.

Did you know Jesus had a best friend? Yep, the Apostle John. He wrote one of the Gospels, and refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” quite a few times (John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 21:20). John was the only apostle who remained at the cross as Jesus died (John 19:25-27). Can you image being besties with Jesus? We don’t think He could be that relatable, do we? I promise you, He is.

Jesus is often referred to as the Good Shepard, referring to the way sheep listen to a shepherd’s voice. The sheep know their shepherd. He protects them and cares for them, so they follow him and listen for his voice, as we listen for Jesus’ voice. He is our Shepard, caring for us and guiding us through life.

Jesus understands how important friendship is, and places people in our lives for that reason. Friendship is much more than just having people to laugh and have fun with. The most important command Jesus gave us is to love one another. Friendship is all about love. If we only talk to our friends when we need something, or only call them when we feel like doing something fun, we’re missing a few big pieces of the friendship puzzle.

David and Jonathan were Bible besties, too. Before King David was King David, he was just David ...the boy who defeated Goliath with a slingshot and was anointed to be the successor to King Saul. King Saul’s son was Johnathan. Even though Jonathan technically should have been angry David was going to be king instead of him ...the technical next in line for the throne ...Jonathan believed God had chosen David and they became friends.

“And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.” 1 Samuel 20:17

David and Jonathan are a great example of an unlikely friendship that didn’t look like we expect most friendships will look like. We don’t typically look for friendships that are going to be too hard or talk to people that are too different from us. It’s normal to drift towards people with obvious common interests, but if God placed them in your life, dig for the thing in common you have with that person. Maybe it’s something you both went through, or can’t see unless you get to know each other better.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN: "You are always forgiven, and never loved less."

THE TRUTH ABOUT FINDING GOOD FRIENDS

This is why our prayer and people journals are such important habits to set and keep in our daily lives. It helps remind us to keep in touch with THE FRIEND ...Jesus. He is constantly watching out for us, and everyone else, connecting people that need to be loved. Remember Jesus' bestie, John? The Gospel he wrote begins with this:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning." John 1:1

Jesus is the Word. Yep ...the Bible. As you grow and learn more about it, you will understand more that the story of Jesus is present throughout the entire book ...not just after He was born.

"To find out who God says our friends are, we need to seek more of God." Friends with Everyone ...

So, how do we know who our friends are?

1. Look around you. God knew it was not good for Adam to be alone, so He created Eve. He knows we need community, and places people purposefully in our lives.
2. Love everyone. Follow Jesus' example. He didn't pick and choose who He thought was worthy to be His friend. Though Jesus had close friends and even a bestie, He was open to friendship with everyone.
3. Stick it out with people. Don't disappear when your friends go through hard times. It's then we need each other the most. Be there before they ask you to be.
4. Forgive. We discussed when healthy boundaries are important, but most of the time we can choose to move past hurt and misunderstanding with honesty, empathy, kindness, and compassion for one another.
5. Pray and know your Bestie. The more we know Jesus, the better we understand everything ...friendship included. Pray for good friends. He hears, and will answer.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN: "Keep the conversation going."

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends,

for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” John 15:13-15

Wrap UP:

Remember this week’s peep and pocket journal challenge. One a day! You’ve got this!

Remember, when in doubt, ask yourself ...what would Jesus do? He was unbelievable kind, fair, forgiving, and compassionate towards others. But He wasn’t a pushover, either! It’s Ok to say no, have healthy boundaries, and accept and give constructive criticism with the right intentions. Get to know Him! He’s your BFF.

Tween Break Off:

Prayer circle.

Praying is like any good habit, a little hard and awkward at first.

So today, we’re going to practice praying out loud.

Everyone, sit in a circle. When it’s your turn, just say something that you are thankful for, anything you need help with, and someone you’d like to pray for. Try not to repeat what the people before you said. Really think about it.

God promises that where two or more are gathered in His name, He is there with them. He also promises us that He hears our prayers. This is what Jesus died for ...the opportunity to lift anything and everything up to God.

Remember, everything we share here stays here.

Heads bowed and quiet hearts ...let’s pray.

Mom Discussion Questions.

-Do you pray for your daughters’ friendships?

-Do you help them pray for good friends?

-It can be hard to read the Bible or even devotionals with our kids, but there are many ways we can take the Truth of God into our everyday lives.