



Large Group

LESSON 2: LARGE GROUP

My Friends and Neighborhood

MAIN IDEA:

Jesus is a friend to sinners, and he can be our closest friend. He can protect us from all the dangers that surround us in our neighborhoods and world.

BIBLE PASSAGES:

- John 11:1–15
- Matthew 20:29–34
- Matthew 14:15–21
- Luke 19:1–10

MEMORY VERSE:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.”

Hebrews 12:1, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10-15 minutes)



Play large group games.
(25 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the student this week? Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any changes and additions needed for the Large Group Lesson?
- Is there anything specific you need to communicate to the small group leaders?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- Posterboard with the memory verse written on it (Hebrews 12:1)
- Microphone (working or non-working)
- Sheet of blank posterboard
- Marker
- Printout 1

Large Group



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10-15 minutes)

INTRODUCTION:

Welcome the students to Crossroads and tell them you are glad they came this week.

(Optional) Go through the “Who is Jesus” call and response.

(Optional) As a group, say the memory verse for this week.

Pray with the students.

HOW JESUS BEFRIENDED PEOPLE

Do the following activity (use Printout 1):

Assign each small group one of the following Bible passages to read and study together. Leaders will read a Bible passage to their small group. Tell them that they will have five minutes to read the passage together and to discuss how Jesus showed the people that he was a friend to them.

- John 11:1–15 (Going to see Lazarus)
- Matthew 20:29–34 (Jesus heals two blind men)
- Matthew 14:15–21 (Feeding the 5,000)
- Luke 19:1–10 (Speaking with Zacchaeus)

After the groups have read the passages, discuss Jesus’ actions and how he befriended people.

Say: **As we read, imagine that you are there watching this happen.**

We will be reporting on these events for the 5 o’clock news—you are all eyewitnesses to the events you read about and they all happened TODAY! An eyewitness is someone who was there and saw what happened.

Bring up one or two representatives from the first group, and interview them using a microphone as a prop. Ask them questions in a very excited tone of voice such as:

- **What did you see Jesus do?**
- **How did the people react?**
- **I’ve heard that Jesus is a really good friend. In light of what you saw, what do you think?**
- **After seeing this take place, will it change the way that you relate to others? How?**

Interview representatives from each of the other groups in the same way.

On a poster board, write the words “Good friends...”. Place the poster board where the students can see it, and then ask them to complete the sentence. Write their responses on the poster board.

Say: **Jesus is the best friend a person could ever have. He listens to us, and he is always there for us.**



“Who is Jesus”
Call and Response

WRAP IT UP

Say: **Jesus showed that he was a good friend by loving those around him. He was willing to sacrifice for the sake of others. He helped them when his friends were in need, and he put their needs above his own. We can learn a lot about who Jesus is, and we can also learn how we can be better friends today.**

Wrap up with prayer, and dismiss to Small Group.

Games



Play large group games.
(25 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Blanket
- Giant beach ball
- Chairs

LARGE GROUP GAME: TURN OVER A NEW LEAF

Materials: Blanket (or similar, i.e., carpet circle)

Object of game: Flip the blanket upside down without touching the floor.

How to play: All players begin by standing on one side of the blanket. Players must flip the blanket upside down without any player touching the floor. If any player touches the floor, players must start over.

Depending on the size of your group, consider splitting into several groups and seeing who can finish first to win.

LARGE GROUP GAME: GIANT BALL

Materials: Giant beach ball

Object of game: Have fun with an oversize ball

How to play: This game is actually no different than crab soccer, volleyball, or dodgeball. However, this game uses what is known as a giant beach ball. Depending on your space and equipment, it is fun to play crab soccer, volleyball, or even dodgeball with a big ball.

For volleyball, divide the students into two teams, and have them hit the ball across a volleyball net, keeping score of how many times the ball hits the ground.

For soccer, have two teams try to kick the ball while walking crab-style).

Finally, for dodgeball, any student that is hit with the ball is out!

LARGE GROUP GAME: MUSICAL CHAIRS

Materials: Chairs (one less than the number of players), music player with a selection of songs, space to set up the chairs and move around them

Object of game: Be the player to sit on the last remaining chair

How to play: Arrange the chairs in a circle, with the seats facing outward. There should be one less chair than the number of players. Make sure there's enough space around the chairs for players to walk or run without obstacles.

All players start by standing in a circle around the chairs while music plays. When the music starts, players walk or dance around the chairs in a clockwise direction. As the music plays, the designated person in charge of the music (could be the host or a designated DJ) stops the music at random intervals. When the music stops, players must quickly find a chair to sit on.

Since there is always one less chair than the number of players, someone will be left without a chair. The player who doesn't find a chair is eliminated from the game. After each round, remove one chair from the circle and resume playing the music.

Repeat the process until there are only two players left and one chair remaining. The player who manages to sit on the last remaining chair when the music stops wins the game.

LARGE GROUP GAME: FOUR CORNERS

Materials: None needed (Optional: Paper with corners 1, 2, 3, and 4 written in each corner)

Object of game: Be the last one standing

How to play: Choose an assistant, preferably the leader for the first rounds, to come to the middle.

The entire group must choose to stand in one of the four corners of the room, which are numbered from 1 to 4. Once the caller starts counting, players must move to a corner they chose until the caller counts down from ten and gets to zero.

The caller stands in the middle with their eyes closed and counts from ten aloud. While the caller is counting, the other players must quietly move to one of the four corners. After counting to zero, the caller calls out a number from 1 to 4. The players in the called corner are out and must leave the playing area. The remaining players then move to a new corner while the caller counts down from ten again. The caller repeats the process of counting and calling out a corner. The game continues until only one player remains. This player is the winner and becomes the next caller for the following round.

Variation: Instead of numbers for each corner use character traits for each corner of the room (i.e. good listener, kind, trustworthy, helpful).



LESSON 2: PRIMARY SMALL GROUP

My Friends and Neighborhood

MAIN IDEA:

Jesus is a friend to sinners, and he can be our closest friend. He can protect us from all the dangers that surround us in our neighborhoods and world.

BIBLE PASSAGES:

- John 11:1–15
- Matthew 20:29–34
- Matthew 14:15–21
- Luke 19:1–10

MEMORY VERSE:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.”

Hebrews 12:1, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?
- How can you connect with the students outside of the club over the next few weeks?
- Is there a sporting event or performance you can go to? Can you plan a casual park or fast-food meet-up with them and their families (as a group or individually)?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- Name tags
- Snacks, 1 per child
- Large piece of paper or whiteboard
- Crayons or markers
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- Tape or glue sticks
- Box or hat
- Printout 2, 1 per group
- Printouts 3-4, 1 per child
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 cinnamon red hots, 1 per group
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 mini marshmallows, 1 per group
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 M&Ms, 1 per group
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 gummy bears, 1 per group
- Pens or pencils, 1 per child
- Memory Verse Cards, 1 per child

Connect



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICE BREAKER:

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER:

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

ACTIVITY: FRIENDSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Say: **We will be talking about our friends and what makes someone a good friend.**

It's important to have good friends. Friends can help us feel happy, encourage us, and support us.

Using Printout 2, ask the kids to think about qualities that make a good friend. As they share, write these qualities inside the circle. (Examples might include: kind, funny, helpful, honest, etc.)

Follow up by asking your students these questions to help them share more about their friends:

- "What is your favorite thing to do with your friends?"
- "How do you make new friends?"
- "What do you like most about your best friend?"

Give each child a strip of colored paper.

Ask them to write one quality they think is important in a friend on their strip of paper. For younger students, you may need to write the friendship characteristic on the paper for them.

Once everyone is finished, loop the strips together with tape or a glue stick to create a "friendship chain".

Encourage students to take the chain home and place it where they can be reminded of the qualities they value in friendships.

Say: **Think about how you can be good friends to others and how you can appreciate the friends you have.**

HELPFUL HINT

There are several parts to this activity. Depending on timing you may need to choose which part of this activity you would like to do with your student. You may also choose to do part of this activity in Small Group Session 1 and the rest in Small Group Session 2.

As we get ready for Large Group, we can see some great characteristics of friendship. Even if you don't have a best friend or a lot of friends, we can learn who God is and see that we can know him and trust him.

God wants to have a relationship with us, and he is always looking for ways to help and support us.

Dismiss to Large Group.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

MY NEIGHBORHOOD MAP

Distribute pens and neighborhood maps (Printout 3) to the students.

Say: **We have been talking about friends today and what it means to be a good friend. Something closely related to the topic of friends is the idea of neighbors and a neighborhood. We are going to spend some time looking at your neighborhood.**

Have the students look at the map and locate where their own home is. Ask them to draw a house to represent where they live on the map.

HELPFUL HINT

If you don't have access to these varieties of candy consider using other choices of candy or have student use different color markers, crayons, or colored pencils.

Next, ask them to place a red hot anywhere on the map where they feel unsafe in their neighborhood. Ask any students who put red hots on the map to explain why they put the red hot where they did.

Tell the students to place a mini marshmallow in any places on the map where they feel safe. These places might be parks, churches, schools, friends' houses, etc. Ask each student to explain why they put the marshmallows where they did.

Ask the students to put gummy bears in places on the map where they think there are people who might need some sort of help. Again, ask them why they placed them where they did.

Finally, ask the students to put M&Ms on the map anywhere where they like to hang out—their favorite places in the neighborhood. Ask them to explain why they put these M&Ms where they did.

Point out to the students, **Jesus was a good friend and neighbor. He helped people in need.** Return the discussion to the places in the community where there were people in need of some sort of help.

Ask:

- **Can you think of ways that you could help meet those needs?**
- **How can you be a friend to those people?**

Pick one or two passages to reread from Large Group.

John 11:1–15

Matthew 20:29–34

Matthew 14:15–21

Luke 19:1–10

Ask:

- **How does Jesus show his love and care for others?**
- **What was Jesus willing to do to help them?**
- **What can we learn about Jesus from this passage?**
- **Do you believe Jesus wants to help you when you are in need?**

Say: **Jesus loves each and every one of you very much! Even if you don't know Jesus or believe in him for salvation, he still loves you and cares about you.**

The Bible says that God loves us even before we love him (1 John 4:10).

Jesus wants to be our friend, for us to know him and spend time with him. He is always looking for ways to connect with us. Even if we feel alone, scared, or worried, Jesus is always there when we need him.

ACTIVITY: MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

Pass out one "My Friends and Neighborhood" (Printout 3) to each student. Allow them to write or draw, and discuss the material after everyone finishes.

If time allows, ask the students questions about their friends.

- What is your friend's name?
- What do you like most about your friend?
- What is something fun you do together?
- What is your friend good at?
- Why is your friend special to you?

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP:

Recap with the students.

Tell the student: **I am glad you are here, and I want you to know that you are important, both to me and to God.**

As you go from this place, remember that Jesus is with you wherever you go. If you turn to him as your Savior, he will also be your very best friend. Just as Jesus served others around him, we should go and love and serve others in our neighborhood as well.

Consider reading Matthew 28:20b, NLT.

And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Pray with the students and dismiss them.

RESPONSE & REFLECTION:

Print out the memory verse, Bible Memory Verse Games.

Practice the memory verse for this unit (Hebrews 12:1).

Pray with the students, and dismiss them.



Bible Memory Verse
Games



HEROES OF THE FAITH

INTERMEDIATE
Small Group

LESSON 2: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

My Friends and Neighborhood

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Hebrews 12:1, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
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QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
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(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

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Follow up by asking your students these questions to help them share more about their friends:

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- "How do you make new friends?"
- "What do you like most about your best friend?"

Give each child a strip of colored paper.

Ask them to write one quality they think is important in a friend on their strip of paper. For younger students, you may need to write the friendship characteristic on the paper for them.

Once everyone is finished, loop the strips together with tape or a glue stick to create a "friendship chain".

Encourage students to take the chain home and place it where they can be reminded of the qualities they value in friendships.

Say: **Think about how you can be good friends to others and how you can appreciate the friends you have.**

HELPFUL HINT

There are several parts to this activity. Depending on timing you may need to choose which part of this activity you would like to do with your student. You may also choose to do part of this activity in Small Group Session 1 and the rest in Small Group Session 2.

As we get ready for Large Group, we can see some great characteristics of friendship. Even if you don't have a best friend or a lot of friends, we can learn who God is and see that we can know him and trust him.

God wants to have a relationship with us, and he is always looking for ways to help and support us.

Dismiss to Large Group.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

MY NEIGHBORHOOD MAP

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Say: **We have been talking about friends today and what it means to be a good friend. Something closely related to the topic of friends is the idea of neighbors and a neighborhood. We are going to spend some time looking at your neighborhood.**

Have the students look at the map and locate where their own home is. Ask them to draw a house to represent where they live on the map.

HELPFUL HINT

If you don't have access to these varieties of candy consider using other choices of candy or have student use different color markers, crayons, or colored pencils.

Next, ask them to place a red hot anywhere on the map where they feel unsafe in their neighborhood. Ask any students who put red hots on the map to explain why they put the red hot where they did.

Tell the students to place a mini marshmallow in any places on the map where they feel safe. These places might be parks, churches, schools, friends' houses, etc. Ask each student to explain why they put the marshmallows where they did.

Ask the students to put gummy bears in places on the map where they think there are people who might need some sort of help. Again, ask them why they placed them where they did.

Finally, ask the students to put M&Ms on the map anywhere where they like to hang out—their favorite places in the neighborhood. Ask them to explain why they put these M&Ms where they did.

Point out to the students, **Jesus was a good friend and neighbor. He helped people in need.** Return the discussion to the places in the community where there were people in need of some sort of help.

It's important to know you have good friends, but it is also important to be a good friend to others.

Ask:

- **Can you think of ways that you could help meet those needs?**
- **How can you be a friend to those people?**

Pick one or two passages to reread from Large Group.

John 11:1–15

Matthew 20:29–34

Matthew 14:15–21

Luke 19:1–10

Ask:

- **How does Jesus show his love and care for others?**
- **What was Jesus willing to do to help them?**
- **What can we learn about Jesus from this passage?**
- **Do you believe Jesus wants to help you when you are in need?**

Say: Jesus loves each and every one of you very much! Even if you don't know Jesus or believe in him for salvation, he still loves you and cares about you.

The Bible says that God loves us even before we love him (1 John 4:10).

Jesus wants to be our friend, for us to know him and spend time with him. He is always looking for ways to connect with us. Even if we feel alone, scared, or worried, Jesus is always there when we need him.

ACTIVITY: MY FRIEND'S PORTRAIT

Pass out one "My Friends Portrait" (Printout 4) to each student. Allow them to write or draw. Have each child think of a friend they want to describe.

Ask them to draw a portrait of their friend. Encourage them to include details like hair color, eye color, and favorite clothes.

Once the portraits are complete, ask the kids to write 3-5 sentences about their friend on a separate piece of paper or on the back of the portrait.

If time allows, ask the students questions about their friends.

- What is your friend's name?
- What do you like most about your friend?
- What is something fun you do together?
- What is your friend good at?
- Why is your friend special to you?

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP:

Recap with the students.

Tell the students: **I am glad you are here, and I want you to know that you are important, both to me and to God.**

As you go from this place, remember that Jesus is with you wherever you go. If you turn to him as your Savior, he will also be your very best friend. Just as Jesus served others around him, we should go and love and serve others in our neighborhood as well.

Consider reading Matthew 28:20b, NLT

And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

This is a promise for all those who believe in Jesus for salvation and who are his friends.

Pray with the students and dismiss them.

RESPONSE & REFLECTION:

Print out the memory verse. Try out some Bible Memory Verses Games.

Practice the memory verse for this unit (Hebrews 12:1).

Pray with the students and dismiss them.



Bible Memory Verse
Games

Memory Verse Cards

MEMORY VERSE:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.”

Hebrews 12:1, NLT

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Printout 1A

GROUP 1

Each group will have five minutes to read the passage together and discuss how Jesus showed the people that he was a friend to them.

Leaders are encouraged to let students read out loud to the group whenever possible using a Bible. But for convenience, the passage is printed below.

JOHN 11:1–15 (GOING TO SEE LAZARUS)

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."

But when Jesus heard about it, he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this." So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?"

Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him."

Printout 1B

GROUP 2

Each group will have five minutes to read the passage together and discuss how Jesus showed the people that he was a friend to them.

Leaders are encouraged to let students read out loud to the group whenever possible using a Bible. But for convenience, the passage is printed below.

MATTHEW 20:29–34 (JESUS HEALS TWO BLIND MEN)

As Jesus and the disciples left the town of Jericho, a large crowd followed behind. Two blind men were sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was coming that way, they began shouting, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”

“Be quiet!” the crowd yelled at them.

But they only shouted louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”

When Jesus heard them, he stopped and called, “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord,” they said, “we want to see!” Jesus felt sorry for them and touched their eyes. Instantly they could see! Then they followed him.

Printout 1C

GROUP 3

Each group will have five minutes to read the passage together and discuss how Jesus showed the people that he was a friend to them.

Leaders are encouraged to let students read out loud to the group whenever possible using a Bible. But for convenience, the passage is printed below.

MATTHEW 14:15–21 (FEEDING THE 5,000)

That evening the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.”

But Jesus said, “That isn’t necessary—you feed them.”

“But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!” they answered.

“Bring them here,” he said. Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people. They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

Printout 1D

GROUP 4

Each group will have five minutes to read the passage together and discuss how Jesus showed the people that he was a friend to them.

Leaders are encouraged to let students read out loud to the group whenever possible using a Bible. But for convenience, the passage is printed below.

LUKE 19:1-10 (SPEAKING WITH ZACCHAEUS)

Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.

When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today."

Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled.

Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!"

Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."

Printout 2

FRIENDSHIP

Printout 3

MAP OF MY NEIGHBORHOOD

(Leaders: Use Google Maps to create a neighborhood map for your school.)

Printout 4

MY FRIEND'S PORTRAIT

Who are your friends? Describe your friends in the chart.

WHAT IS YOUR FRIEND'S NAME	WHAT YOUR FRIEND IS LIKE?	WHAT DO YOU DO TOGETHER?	DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR FRIEND.
Jimmy	Kind, honest, loyal	Play soccer, watch cartoons	