

BEING FRIENDLY IN JESUS' NAME

January 29, 2022

Meet Min-jun. He's ten. Min-jun's new to your church. He goes with his mom but last week was his dad's weekend, so Min-jun didn't come. Last night, Min-jun and his mom showed up to the Wednesday night cookout, where you saw Min-jun talking to Justin, the children's ministry leader.



Do you know a new kid in your church? What can we as families do to welcome Min-jun and his mom into the church community? How can we teach our children to be friendly to new kids and their families?

God looks at the heart. Talk often with your children about what it means to love your neighbor ([Matthew 22:37-39](#)). Share the story of ([1 Samuel 16:7](#)) and talk about how God looks at the heart and doesn't judge someone's outward appearance. Let's push ourselves out of our comfort zones, depend on God, and reach out to a new family like Min-jun and his mom. Teach your child how to make space by making the circle bigger in your church, in your home, and in your daily life. Read [Philippians 2:3-4](#), [Romans 15:7](#), and [Ephesians 4:2-3](#).

Show the love of Jesus with words. Demonstrate good manners to your children, because they show directly how we love our neighbors. Teaching kids to treat family members with respect—and using manners at the table, online, and on texts/phone—are good things!

Let's show our kids how to use welcome words and practice what to say when they meet a new person. Talk about becoming family greeters at your church. Model welcoming and hospitality to new visitors at your church.

Help them expand their welcome words by learning a few phrases in other languages to help people in your town. What words would make people feel comfortable and included? Some examples of phrases to learn in other languages are: "Hello," "Thank You," "Welcome," "Good to see you," and "How are you?"

Active empathy and "The Golden Rule." Help your child live out [Micah 6:8](#) and be a safe person for new kids like Min-jun:

- Encourage them to sit with or play with a child who is alone and invite others to join.
- Challenge them to point out the positives in people when others are looking at negatives.
- Pray together for new people that your children meet.

Matthew 7:12 says, "Treat others as you want them to treat you." We often call that "The Golden Rule." It's one of the easy ways to love your neighbor. Ask your child "What does it mean to walk in someone's else's shoes? How might Min-jun and his mom feel about coming to a new church?" Read the [Parable of the Good Samaritan](#) and [1 Thessalonians 5:15](#). Talk about a time when you understood what someone else was feeling.

Next time your family reaches out to a neighbor or stranger in your midst—like Min-jun and his mom—remember Jesus' own words: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

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